MU Life Science Business Incubator looks to foster software, IT startups

By JACOB BARKER

MU Life Science Business Incubator looks to foster software, IT startups

Since it opened almost five years ago, the University of Missouri Life Science Business Incubator has built a name for itself.

Medical and biotech startups, hatched by MU professors and researchers from afar, have used its inexpensive lab space, business consultants and connections to investors to grow their ideas from concepts to companies. Now its leaders are looking to extend its reach to information technology and software.

"We're well-recognized around the state for having a great infrastructure here in Columbia for helping the science and engineering-type startups," said Jake Halliday, president and CEO of the Missouri Innovation Center, the not-for-profit organization that runs the incubator on South Providence Road. "Somebody needs to provide the same level of 365-day-a-year support" for software and IT.

Halliday is pushing to raise about $545,000 to build out a 3,000-square-foot shell space at the incubator to dedicate to software and computer startups. Dubbed the "Software Innovation and Venturing Center," the IT incubator will focus more on business-to-business software and programs by seeking to recruit two kinds of people and get them working in the same room: The "idea people" with business experience who understand the need and value of software solutions, and those who can actually build the programs.

"It's very hard for the business-idea person to translate their needs to programmers in software houses," Halliday said. "Financially, and in scope, it can become a runaway train."
Right now, the Missouri Innovation Center focuses on high-tech science and engineering companies that are developing medical treatments and chemical products that often require years to get through clinical testing and earn regulatory approval. Halliday and his staff vet applicants looking for space in the incubator's laboratories, often requiring a fairly researched business plan.

The software incubator, however, likely will admit entrepreneurs at a much earlier stage and probably rent-free until the company grows to a more concrete stage. "We want as few barriers as possible," Halliday said.

He's working now to recruit consultants and partner with departments at MU to provide advice and aid at the incubator. The main thrust will be recruiting entrepreneurs on both the business and technical side who want to grow and own companies. "The process to make this happen, we don't have it yet, but we are determined to put the effort in to create the processes," he said.

Halliday's team is partnering with the University of Missouri Extension on the project, because in future years, it could be replicated in smaller, rural communities that don't necessarily have the infrastructure, capital and talent to grow high-tech companies. Those often have to be in larger cities, or near research institutions such as MU, Halliday said. With software and IT, all you really need is broadband, and there has been substantial investment throughout Missouri on those networks in recent years.

"The capital can be a lot less intensive and a lot lower obstacle than it would be for some other types of startups, so we're hoping to roll this out in some more rural communities," said Dave Schmidt, an associate professor and specialist in the Extension's Business Development Program.

But first, a successful model has to be developed here in Columbia. And to do that, the effort needs money. They are applying for grants and seeking matching funds from donors. "The lynchpin here is raising $250,000 from the community," Halliday said.

The effort is now one of many that Columbia institutions have launched to foster entrepreneurship. Private companies have started incubators, angel investors are active and Regional Economic Development Inc. has started its own incubator for very early-stage companies.

While there are other incubators out there, Schmidt said the Missouri Innovation Center's model, resources and reputation are well worth adding into the mix.

"We're not simply another incubator," he said. "It's one that's been successful. We're going to adapt that model to the IT space, and hopefully, it's one that's low enough in terms of requirements for capital that smaller communities can do it."

*This article was published in the Sunday, November 24, 2013 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "Incubator considers new niche: Software, IT seen as next areas for startup growth."
University of Missouri seeks 1.7 percent tuition raise

UM curators will vote in January.

By KARYN SPORY

Undergraduate in-state residents at the four campuses that make up the University of Missouri System will see a 1.7 percent tuition increase for the 2014-15 academic year, which is as much as the system can raise it because of state laws.

Yesterday, Tom Richards, interim vice president for finance and treasurer for the UM System, presented the tuition predictions to the Board of Curators during its meeting at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

Tuition percentage increases, according to SB 389, cannot exceed the percentage change of the consumer price index or zero, whichever is greater. According to board documents, the national average tuition increase for public universities is 2.8 percent. The board will vote on the tuition increase during its January meeting.

If the tuition increases are approved, MU in-state undergraduates would see a $158 increase, taking tuition from $9,257 in fiscal year 2013 to $9,415 in fiscal 2014. Richards said compared to its peers, MU’s tuition rate is fairly low. The average tuition for public schools in the American Association of Universities is $11,383, and the average was $11,296 in the Southeastern Conference.

The Rolla campus would have the highest tuition, rising from $9,350 to $9,510. UMSL would have the second-highest; its tuition would also rise $160 to a total of $9,474. Tuition at UMKC would be $9,441 after the 1.7 percent increase.

Richards also addressed the UM System’s efficiencies and effectiveness amid declining state financial support. Richards said as state appropriations have declined, enrollment numbers have continued to climb. He cited a 34 percent growth systemwide in the number of student enrollments.
annually since the fall of 2000. Richards said tuition has been able to offset some of the cuts to state appropriations, as well as tightening the belt whenever possible.

University of Missouri spokesman John Fougere later said state appropriations were about $422 million for the UM System in fiscal year 2001, compared to about $398 million in fiscal 2013.

Board Chairman Wayne Goode asked Richards if this was a good thing because the system has learned to operate more efficiently or if it was a bad thing because there's not much wiggle room.

"It's actually both. It's just a factual statement of looking at the revenues and defining the challenge," Richards said. Richards said it's good because the system has been able to manage through the challenge.

However, Richards said the UM System has seen a magnitude of deferred maintenance on each of the four campuses and faculty salaries that are near or at the bottom of salaries at comparable schools.

President Tim Wolfe said any new money allocated from the state will go directly to the four campuses to help fund their strategic plans.

This article was published in the Friday, November 22, 2013 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "University tuition to rise for undergrads: UM curators will vote in January."
MU seeks more than $21 million in state matching funds

By KARYN SPORY

Friday, November 22, 2013 at 2:00 pm

Wine was a topic of debate during the University of Missouri Board of Curators meeting Thursday as curators heard a university wish list of projects that would use state matching funds.

During the Board of Curators meeting held at the University of Missouri-St. Louis campus, MU officials sought board approval to send a $21,133,000 request to the Higher Education Fund, a 50/50 matching program, for fiscal year 2015.

MU requested matching grants for four construction projects, including a teaching winery within the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. The $3 million project would be a two-story, free standing facility. MU is requesting $1.5 million from the state for the winery.

Curator John Philips of Kansas City asked if these projects, specifically the teaching winery, are part of the campus' strategic plan or if MU is asking the state for matching funds simply because a family involved in wine and grapes decided to donate the money.

Phillips said he wasn't against the project, but he wanted to make sure the system and campuses weren't going to submit funding requests to the state every time someone has a match and desire to donate.

Curator Don Downing of Webster Groves said he doesn't want to discourage donors who are providing substantial funds to "help us out" but added that construction needs to be strategic.

Vice Provost Ken Dean said the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources has been expanding its wine program. "This has been a long-standing project that they've been trying to find" funding "for a facility that would enable them to do the research and teaching they need to do," he said.

Dean said all projects on the request are part of MU's strategic plan.
Tom Richards, interim vice president for finance and treasurer for the University of Missouri System, reminded the board that at this point the university is not asking to move forward with any of the listed projects but simply seeking permission to submit its requests to the state. "If these projects were to be funded, we would come back to the board for discussion and approval in terms of the overall plan, just like with any facilities project," Richards said.

Richards said the other three campuses within the system have already received approval from the board and submitted their state capital appropriation requests. The board unanimously approved MU's request.

Other capital projects include renovations to Lafferre Hall, or Engineering Building East, as it's also known. This renovation project would be the second phase to address critical facility needs. The first phase was done in 2009, replacing the underutilized footprint of a 1920s addition with a new 60,000-square-foot portion. The second phase, according to board documents, would renovate another part of the building and is currently ranked at the top of MU's capital state appropriations request.

The total construction cost is estimated at $12.19 million. MU will put up almost $6.1 million and is asking the state for the remaining amount.

The second of the four proposed projects is improving the Fine and Performing Arts Facility in the College of Arts and Science. The School of Music is currently spread across five buildings; part of this project would be building a new facility to house the program, which would free up nearly 31,000 square feet of building space to be used for other disciplines. According to board documents, the new School of Music would be 100,000 square feet and use MU property and facilitate the demolition of the Fine Arts Annex. The existing Fine Arts building would be renovated and expanded.

The estimated cost of both projects is $71.3 million, with additional operating costs expected to be $1 million to $1.4 million annually.

Right now, MU is requesting $2,766,000 from the state.

The third project is constructing the 232,000-square-foot Trulaske College of Business Applied Learning Center near Cornell Hall. The project, which according to board documents is estimated at $77.5 million, will help the college expand enrollment — officials are looking to increase future enrollment by 6,000, according to board documents. MU is requesting $10,772,000 from the state.

MU's portion of these funds has come from donations and fundraising.

This article was published in the Wednesday, November 22, 2013 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "Curators mull wish lists:
UM System sees 26 percent jump in number of students taking online courses

By KARYN SPORY

Saturday, November 23, 2013 at 2:00 am Comments (1)

The number of students taking online courses across the University of Missouri System increased by 26 percent over the past year, and officials expect much more growth in the future.

Hank Foley, executive vice president for academic affairs for the UM System, told the UM Board of Curators during its meeting Thursday that the number of students taking online courses has increased to 27,996 students in fiscal year 2013 from 22,151 last year. Currently, 32 percent of students are taking at least one online course, which is on par with the national average, which is also 32 percent, said Foley.

"Someday it's possible that every course would be 100 percent online," Foley said.

He said not all courses are offered fully online, but most have some sort of online component.

Jim Spain, vice provost for undergraduate studies at MU, said 70 percent of courses at MU have an online component and 97 percent of MU students have at least one course with an online component every semester.

Curator J. Michael Ponder of Cape Girardeau asked if it's possible to complete an economics degree online only.

Spain said MU has a list of programs that can be completed online, but an economics degree is not on that list right now. Among degrees that can be completed online only are a bachelor of science in heath sciences, a bachelor's degree in nursing for registered nurses and a doctorate in architectural studies.

Earlier this year, MU invested $10 million into developing online programs. "The investment was designed to take us beyond our current list of programs. … The intent is to grow more of those
programs, the challenge is to make sure the programs we develop for online have a strong enough market; I'm not sure an" economics degree "will attract enough students," Spain said.

Foley added that system-wide, 10 percent of degrees are earned completely online, but he expects that number to continue to grow.

Curators heard from each of the campuses. Devon Cancilla, vice provost for online and distance learning for UMKC, said his university was a little behind, with only 26 percent of students taking at least one online course.

"That means we have the potential for growth," Cancilla said, adding the goal and part of the strategic plan is to increase that number to 40 percent by 2018.

Henry Wiebe, vice provost for global learning at Missouri S&T, said the university had its first Web-enabled course under development in 1985. Wiebe said Missouri S&T has 19 online graduate degrees, 45 online graduate certificates and 18 out of the university's 19 departments have courses that blend classroom and online components.

Judith Walker de Felix, associate provost for academic affairs at UMSL, said the university’s goal is to grow online by 10 percent annually. Walker de Felix said that goal was achieved this year as the university’s number of students taking online courses grew by 11 percent from fiscal year 2012-13.

*This article was published in the Saturday, November 23, 2013 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "UM System sees online classes rise: Number of people taking courses is up 26 percent."*
Merger of St. Louis radio station, newspaper to benefit MU journalism students

By KARYN SPORY

Merger of St. Louis radio station, newspaper to benefit MU journalism students

Saturday, November 23, 2013 at 2:00 am Comments (5)

The merger of a not-for-profit online newspaper and a public radio station that was approved Friday by the University of Missouri Board of Curators will be the catalyst for a new partnership between two UM System campuses.

The merger between the St. Louis Beacon and St. Louis Public Radio, which is one of four NPR stations owned by the UM Curators, will be part of a four-way partnership between the two news organizations as well as the University of Missouri-St. Louis College of Fine Arts and Communication and the MU School of Journalism.

According to a news release, each of the four NPR stations — the other stations are on the Columbia, Kansas City and Rolla campuses — is largely self-sustaining from contributions from donors and listeners, with a small percentage of funding from the university's operating budget.

Funding for the merger, which will occur next month, will come from outside donations, the news release said.

"We've been able to raise close to $3 million that will sustain this operation for the next five years," UMSL Chancellor Thomas George said. "We see this as something that's cutting edge ... in respect to media, in respect to presenting news and in respect to how do we integrate all of them together through various outlets — print, audio and digital."

George added the merger and partnership fits in well with the university's strategic plan — community partnerships and fostering academic programming.

George said benefits of the partnership will be a national business model for a multi-platform news operation that can provide in-depth coverage as well as allowing UMSL and MU students the ability to apply "issue-based journalism in an urban setting across multiple delivery platforms."
"This will be a research arena and a teaching arena for the School of Journalism," George said.

Dean Mills, dean of the MU School of Journalism, said the merger and partnership will benefit students.

"This will give students from the MU campus a chance to work in an urban setting; obviously they don't get that on the Columbia campus," he said.

UM System President Tim Wolfe said the MU Journalism School's strength is the ability to apply the knowledge you learn in a classroom.

"What differentiates a graduate from the journalism school at Columbia is typically on their resume they can show that they've had practical application behind the camera, writing or whatever," Wolfe said.

The news staff for the merged organization will total 26 people, with three additional support staff positions coming from the Beacon. No staff members are being cut.

Margie Freivogel, founder and editor of the Beacon, will serve as the editor and leader of the merged operation. She spent 34 years at the St. Louis Post-Dispatch as a reporter, editor and Washington correspondent.

In a post on the Beacon website, Freivogel said many details remain to be worked out, including the name of the new organization.

Bob Staples, associate vice chancellor for communications at UMSL, said all Beacon employees will be classified as university employees after the merger takes place.

This article was published in the Saturday, November 23, 2013 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "Curators OK merger of news firms: Partnership to benefit MU journalism students."
The University of Missouri Board of Curators gave its unanimous blessing to a merger of St. Louis Public Radio (KWMU 90.7 FM) and the St. Louis Beacon.

Also party to the agreement is the University of Missouri School of Journalism in Columbia, which will for the first time offer classes at UMSL. The pact also provides more student internships at KWMU/Beacon.

“We see this as cutting edge,” said Tom George, University of Missouri-St. Louis chancellor. “It could become a national business model” for new forms of media.

KWMU, a National Public Radio affiliate, is owned by UMSL and supported by taxes and private donations. The Beacon, an online news site started in 2008 by former Post-Dispatch editors and reporters, had been funded only by private contributors.

A study projected a $3 million revenue shortfall in the first five years of the new operation. University officials say about $2.5 million has been pledged to cover the gap, and they expect the $500,000 balance to be raised within five years.

Curator David Bradley, a newspaper publisher from St. Joseph, said he would monitor the financial aspect of the merger. “I hope at the end of five years, it proves to be sustainable.”

The joining of KWMU and the Beacon — which will operate under one, as of now undetermined, name — begins Dec. 9. The new entity will have 55 to 60 employees and an annual budget of about $7 million.

The 16 Beacon staffers will become state employees, eligible for the university retirement system. The staff will soon move one door to the east, into the KWMU facilities at 3651 Olive Street. Tim Eby, KWMU general manager, will be in charge of the new operation. Beacon editor Margaret Wolf Freivogel will head the news department.
The University of Missouri Board of Curators elected a new chairman Friday during the board meeting held at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

Don Downing of Webster Groves was elected to a one-year term as chairman. Donald Cupps of Cassville was elected as vice chairman. Their terms become effective Jan. 1.

Downing, who served this year as vice chairman, succeeds Wayne Goode of St. Louis, whose term as chairman expires Dec. 31. Downing is the chairman of the finance committee and is a member of the executive, audit and compensation and human resources committees, according to a news release. He was appointed to the Board of Curators in March 2009.

"I'm very honored to be elected by this board to be chair for this next year. I think we have a wonderful board, very collegial, very talented people with diverse backgrounds. I'm very much looking forward to working with them next year to get this university system where it needs to go," Downing said.

Cupps was appointed to the Board of Curators in January 2011.
UM System Board of Curators elects 2014 officers

Friday, November 22, 2013 | 4:31 p.m. CST; updated 8:50 p.m. CST, Friday, November 22, 2013

BY T.J. Thomson

COLUMBIA — Two lawyers will lead the University of Missouri System’s nine-member Board of Curators after the group elected new officers during its Friday meeting in St. Louis.

The group elected Vice Chairman Don Downing of Webster Groves as its chairman, effective Jan. 1. Downing replaces outgoing Chairman Wayne Goode of St. Louis.

Gov. Jay Nixon appointed Downing to the board in 2009. He chairs the Finance Committee and serves on the Executive, Audit, and Compensation and Human Resources committees.

The board also elected Donald Cupps of Cassville as vice chairman.

Nixon appointed Cupps to the board in 2011. He chairs the Compensation and Human Resources Committee and serves on the Finance and Audit committees.

Both men will serve one-year terms in their officer capacities.

More than 100,000 students, faculty and staff compose the UM System, which is governed by curators who serve six-year terms.
JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. • Gov. Jay Nixon is proposing changes to Missouri’s Bright Flight college scholarship aimed at encouraging top-ranking high school students to remain in the state for college.

Nixon was traveling Monday to Kansas City and Kirksville to discuss possible improvements to the academic scholarship. The Democratic governor told higher education officials in October that he would propose new resources for financial aid and scholarship programs.

Nixon said at that time he was working to enhance Bright Flight to ensure the best students remain in Missouri for college and afterward.

Scholarships are awarded based upon ACT or SAT scores. The Department of Higher Education reports the scholarship is worth $2,500 per award, which is less than the $3,000 authorized by state law.
Fan group The Antlers ejected from MU game

By STEVE WALENTIK

A season-low crowd of 6,738 walked through the doors of Mizzou Arena to watch the Missouri basketball team's game against Gardner-Webb, and arguably the Tigers' most rambunctious fans, The Antlers, were ejected from the building before it ever started.

In the latest spat between university officials and the unsanctioned spirit group over behavior since its founding in 1976, university police officers approached the group in the sparsely populated student section at the west end of the arena about 15 minutes before tipoff. They took its members to a room off the concourse, and MU junior Emmett Delaney, The Antlers' Grand Poobah, said they checked the driver's licenses and student IDs of each and told them they were being ejected.

One of their chants directed at the Runnin' Bulldogs as they made their way onto the court was deemed inappropriate and led to their dismissal.

"We have high expectations for our fans, and those weren't met," said MU spokesman Dave Reiter, relaying the decision of game-operations officials who had them escorted from their seats.

The decision came only a day after Delaney met with officials from the university and athletic department, including Cathy Scroggs, the vice chancellor for student affairs, and Nick Droegge, the Missouri Student Association president, for nearly an hour. The officials laid out a list of things the group had said and some of the things seen on the back of the The Antlers' black T-shirts that were considered inappropriate.

Delaney said they also talked to him about the need to cut out the group's use of vulgarity and warned that The Antlers would be asked to leave games if they did not comply.

"But even before that meeting Friday morning, we as a group Thursday night sat and decided — keep in mind we've only had four games — but we noticed the kind of theme of our jokes aren't where they've been in the past," Delaney said. "They were cheap, easy humor, and we just kind of
thought ourselves better and tried to make a little more humorous jokes and be less offensive and crude."

Delaney said members taped over the names on the back of their T-shirts — some of which were considered inappropriate — yesterday and made an effort to clean up their act.

But there was still a disagreement over their behavior yesterday.

Apparently, at issue was the "Scum, scum, scum, go back to where you're from … " chant that has been one of The Antlers' staples for many years when opponents run onto the court. The chant typically ends with "and die," but Delaney said the group substituted "and cry" yesterday, but they were still removed shortly after shouting it.

Delaney said no one from game operations met with The Antlers to discuss the decision.

After exiting the building, the group went to watch the game at Southside Pub & Pizza. News of the ejection spread on Twitter, with many expressing support for The Antlers' position.

Reiter said they will be allowed back at Mizzou Arena tomorrow night when the Tigers play host to IUPUI, though the dispute is still to be settled by a campus conduct committee.

The Antlers have been disciplined before, including a ban in 1996, but Delaney is hopeful it won't come to that.

"We want to be at the games," Delaney said, "and we want to do what we do. Obviously, the university doesn't want us to do what we do in the fashion we've done it for the past three or four games."

This article was published in the Sunday, November 24, 2013 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "Fan club The Antlers booted from MU game for inappropriate chant."
Arkansas school to keep logo despite trademark spat

GREEN FOREST, Ark. — A northwest Arkansas school board has voted to continue using a tiger in its logo despite warnings that the image violates an MU trademark.

The Green Forest School Board received a letter from Collegiate Licensing Company last month that said the district's logo was "nearly identical" to the University of Missouri's trademarked tiger head. Green Forest stands to "dilute the distinctiveness of the mark that the public associates with the university" if it keeps using the logo, the letter said.

School officials initially considered redesigning the logo but voted Monday to keep the original in place after hearing from members of the community. The teacher who designed the logo, Warren Utsler, noted there are differences in the eyes, nose and stripes of the Green Forest tiger, as compared to the MU logo. Utsler also said that Green Forest's school colors are red and white — unlike Missouri's black and gold.

"We don't feel like we are treading on their trademark," School Board President Bud Phillips said. "We don't understand how anybody could be confused as to our logo representing anybody but Green Forest."

Charles Harwell, an attorney representing the school district, told school board members this week that although the tigers are similar, he doesn't believe Green Forest's logo represents a trademark violation.

"Unfortunately," Harwell said, eliciting chuckles from attendees, "that's the nature of the beast. They're both tigers."

James Aronowitz, an attorney for Collegiate Licensing Company, said MU doesn't actively look for schools with tiger mascots but that the Green Forest logo was brought to the university's attention. He also said that trademark owners have to protect their trademarks or risk losing ownership of them.
Missouri made a similar request to the Bentonville School District several years ago. Bentonville has since reworked its logo and trademarked it.
MU offers grief counseling to pet owners

COLUMBIA (AP) -- **Grieving pet owners can now receive counseling through a new University of Missouri program.**

Clients of the university's Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital can get free counseling through the program, which is called Together in Grief, Easing Recovery, or TIGER after the school mascot.

The program builds on work by the MU Research Center for Human-Animal Interaction.
MU to test out new beacon alert system

Friday, November 22, 2013 at 2:00 pm

The University of Missouri will test its new beacon alert system at 9 a.m. Monday.

Earlier this fall, MU began installing more than 250 alert beacons from Alertus Technologies in buildings around campus. The beacons, which look like thermostats, are designed to alert anyone in the vicinity to an emergency, including weather emergencies and violent individuals.

During the test, the beacons will emit a light and siren while displaying a written message: "This is a test of the Alertus system. If this were a real emergency, you would go to mualert.missouri.edu for more information."

Campus officials anticipate installing additional beacons as money becomes available. All components of MU's emergency alert system are tested periodically.
ARE STUDENT LOANS THE NEXT BIG BUST?

November 24, 2013 3:00 am • By Jim Gallagher jgallagher@post-dispatch.com 314-340-8390

NO MU MENTION

Lenders hand out money with scant regard to the borrower’s ability to repay.

The borrowers use the money to make a big-ticket purchase, and the sellers happily stuff the money in their pockets. What do they care if the borrower can’t pay it back?

When borrowers ultimately default, the taxpayers pick up the tab.

Sound familiar? Does the great housing price bubble come to mind, along with the foreclosure disaster?

It sure does. But this column is about student loans. Could they be the next consumer bust?

Education debt is soaring. Student loans stood at $1.2 trillion as of May, up 20 percent since the end of 2011, according to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. That doesn’t include debt that students put on the credit card, or that their parents put on the house through home equity loans.

Student debt is now second only to mortgages on the list of things weighing down family budgets.

Tuition has been rising faster than personal income for decades, but that’s the smaller factor behind the recent debt explosion. The Great Recession gets the bigger blame. It squeezed family finances, and they haven’t yet recovered. Students borrow more because families have less in the bank.

Meanwhile, the weak job market is causing more people to seek new skills, taking on debt to pay for it.

Rohit Chopra is the consumer bureau’s student loan ombudsman. He was in St. Louis last week for a symposium on student debt sponsored by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

Chopra draws lots of parallels between the mortgage bubble and student loans today. In both cases, those making the loans and pocketing the money have little interest in seeing it repaid.

“Posh U” arranges a federal student loan and gets the money, but it’s not on the hook of Joe Student goes broke. Hence the bath of advertising from for-profit colleges on daytime TV, hoping to reel in the idle.

All this reminds us of mortgage lenders who made bad loans, then sold them off to the government-sponsored mortgage companies, which guaranteed them. Home sellers got paid. So did the lenders. They made Uncle Sam the sucker.
More than 80 percent of student loans are federal or federally guaranteed.

**A BET ON THE FUTURE**

To be fair, no lender can assess the credit of an 18-year-old. The loan is a bet on the kid’s future. (Private student lenders usually require a parent’s guarantee.)

So, the government must rely on the schools to admit people with ability, then give them the training they need to get jobs.

How are they doing on that? Well, the default rate on federal student loans stands at nearly 15 percent and rising. Any bank with such a default rate would be out of business, but Uncle Sam can’t go broke.

Default rates are truly spectacular among the for-profit schools, where tuition is often high. It’s common to see 20 and 30 percent of their students go broke three years after leaving school.

Obviously they’re admitting the wrong students, giving them poor training, or both.

The Obama administration proposed denying student loans at schools with the most horrid default rates. It eased the rule somewhat after strong lobbying from the for-profit schools, and they’re still beating the bushes for students.

It is very easy for a student to take on debt, as Paul Peanick can tell you.

Peanick, 26, will graduate from the University of Missouri-St. Louis soon. The good part: He’s a smart young man and he’ll have a degree in economics, one of the more valuable degrees in the job market.

More worrisome: He’ll have $56,000 in student loans. That’s well above the median student debt of $13,640.

Peanick grew up in south St. Louis, and graduated from Gateway High School, a city public school. His family couldn’t help much with college costs, so he embarked on the classic way to get a degree on the cheap. He went for two years to community college, then transferred to a state university.

But UMSL’s total cost — tuition, books and living expenses — is $24,000 per year, and his scholarship offer was lean.

Indecision was his pitfall. He started off wanting to be a doctor. After getting far into that course, he changed his mind and started looking for an alternative. He dropped out to help his family, then came back. He ended up taking lots of courses that wouldn’t count toward his degree. His quest stretched long beyond the standard four years.

“When you’re young, it’s kind of hard to know what to do with your life,” he says.

He’s not very worried about the big debt. He is hoping for a good-paying job in finance, and he expects to live lean while paying off his loans. “I don’t need an 80-inch TV or a $40,000 car,” he says.
That’s if a good job materializes. According to Chopra, student borrowers’ problems today are “astoundingly similar” to mortgage borrowers — the job they expected either never appeared or went away.

NO ESCAPE

If student loans do become the next big bust, it would not play out like the foreclosure mess. To the most part, homeowners could give up the house and escape the debt. There’s no escape from student debt — it usually can’t be erased in bankruptcy.

The federal government is a mean collector. “They’ll garnish their wages. They’ll take their federal tax return,” Chopra says.

On the other hand, the government is fairly lenient with people who ask for help before they default.

There are payment forbearance programs for people who can’t find jobs. An “income-based repayment” program limits payments to about 10 percent of income, and erases the remaining debt after 20 years. The forgiveness time is shorter for people working for government or charities.

By contrast, lenders of private student loans tend toward the unforgiving.

Chopra thinks the defaults are mainly among dropouts, but data on that is scarce. Many of those defaulting may simply not know about the federal forbearance programs.

“They are paralyzed by the magnitude of the situation. Some bury their heads in the sand and hope the loan will go away,” says Paul Combe of American Student Assistance, a nonprofit group that helps students plan their debt.

Despite all that, a college degree is still worth it, even if you have to borrow. The median pay for a high school grad is $36,000 per year. The median with a bachelor’s degree is $66,000. A master’s degree brings $71,000, and a professional degree (think doctor or lawyer) brings $105,000.

Over a lifetime, a college grad will earn $1 million more than a high school grad. That estimate has held for years, but the reason has changed. It’s no longer that pay for college grads is rising, notes Chopra. Actually, it’s fallen since the recession. But pay for high school grads has fallen faster.

The bottom line for students: “Return on investment is declining,” Chopra says.

Jim Gallagher is a reporter at the Post-Dispatch
MAC Scholars brings parents together to talk student success

By Catherine Martin

Sunday, November 24, 2013 at 2:00 am

Rock Bridge High School student Jazzmine Matthews said she was bored in school until she took an advanced placement course, and then she finally started to feel challenged.

She continued to sign up for AP classes, and her mother told her she also needed to take an honors course each semester.

"My mom … made me challenge myself and because of that I'm starting college halfway through my freshman year," Jazzmine told a crowd gathered for a parent summit hosted by the MAC Scholars program yesterday afternoon.

MAC Scholars — a program for high-achieving minority students — believes it takes a team effort for students to be successful, program coordinator Annelle Whitt said. Parents play a key role, she said, which is why she organized the summit. The event, which targeted parents of color, included information about resources available to help students be successful.

"We want to make sure parents have the tools and skills to help their child be successful," Whitt said.

The summit, now in its second year, included panels focused on helping students do well in school and preparing them for college and careers.

"There is a difference between college-ready and college-eligible," said Linda Garth, director of the academic retention center at the University of Missouri.

Dixie Grupe, an AP teacher at Hickman High School, echoed that point, stressing that AP classes show students what it's like to take college-level courses. Students of color who take and do well on the AP exam are four times more likely to graduate college in four years, she told the group.

Speakers also focused on the importance of communication and relationships with teachers. Columbia Board of Education member Jim Whitt stressed the impact of parents speaking out for the
kids together. He pointed to the example of the many parents at Mill Creek Elementary who have approached the board and administration about school crowding and boundary changes.

Annelle Whitt said Jim, her husband, has told her that parents of color don't "come in numbers" to school board meetings. "Their counterparts come in numbers and when you come in numbers, it makes in impact," she said.

Parent Tylisha Johnson said she thought the summit was "very well put together."

"The panel of speakers was amazing. They brought knowledge ... and answered questions," she said.

Johnson, who is a mother of three children ages 20, 11 and 2, said she would have liked to see more discussion about how to support children at the middle school level, noting that the focus was mostly on the youngest and oldest students.

Parent Terra Merriweather-Schultz, who has five children ages 21, 7, 5 and twin 2-year-olds, agreed and said she also would have liked to hear more focus on what parents can do to support kids at the elementary level.

"It's important for me. I think once you raise the bar at the elementary level, everything else is raised up," she said.

The two also said they would like to have a longer summit — yesterday's event lasted from 9 a.m. to noon — and would like to see similar gatherings held more frequently. For now, Annelle Whitt said she plans to continue it as an annual event.

About 35 parents came to the summit this year, which was about 10 more than last year, Whitt said. But she would like to see it grow much larger. "I want every parent of color" to come, she said. "The goal is to get 100 percent participation."

This article was published in the Sunday, November 24, 2013 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "Parents connect for kids' future: MAC Scholars is host of summit."
City ready for rush as deadline nears for alcohol servers to be certified

Certification is required Jan. 1.

By JACOB BARKER

City ready for rush as deadline nears for alcohol servers to be certified

Sunday, November 24, 2013 at 2:00 am

MU MENTION P. 2

The city has only issued about 400 certificates to bartenders and clerks who serve and sell alcohol, about 100 of them in the past few weeks.

Before the Jan. 1 deadline, when everyone who handles alcohol in the city limits is supposed to have server certificate, the city will probably issue a whole lot more.

"It's like with anything else where there's a deadline," said Andrea Waner, a spokeswoman for the Columbia/Boone County Department of Public Health and Human Services. "A lot of people, most people, wait until the very last minute."

The health department is issuing new server photo IDs under an ordinance approved by the Columbia City Council last November that requires anyone who sells or serves alcohol to complete a training course and obtain a certificate.

The health department doesn't know how many people might come through their doors before the end of the year. But when you consider that every liquor store clerk, grocery store checker, bartender and waiter in Columbia must get one, it could be thousands.

Steve Hollis, the health department's human services manager, said there could be a "bottleneck" if everyone comes in last minute, and the department has the ability to set up extra ID printing stations if that's the case. The IDs cost $5.

Servers must first complete a training course on how to tell if someone is at risk of being over-served, and how to avoid selling alcohol to minors.
The free, online "State of Missouri Alcohol Responsibility Training," or SMART, is a city-approved certification course.

**It takes about an hour and needs to be completed with 100 percent accuracy, said Kim Dude, director of the University of Missouri's Wellness Resource Center, which oversees the SMART online training course.**

At Shakespeare's downtown, manager Jonathan Medley said the restaurant is keeping a list of employees who have completed the certification process and is checking and reminding the people who still need to do it.

"A handful a week are being knocked out," he said.

When the council passed the ordinance, it gave a year-long grace period for servers to complete the training and get their certificates.

How the health department, Columbia Police Department and business services, which oversees liquor licenses, will enforce the ordinance is still being finalized.

"We would be enforcing it very similarly to the food handler's ordinance," Hollis said.

Health department inspectors will check when they do restaurant inspections. Columbia police will cite uncertified servers when they do compliance checks and walkthroughs at bars.

The city is working to draft a schedule of administrative penalties for establishments with employees without a certificate.

It could go hand in hand with other rules the city uses to enforce liquor license regulations, which the state used to more vigorously enforce but spending cuts have curtailed.

"A lot of municipalities are looking at their own enforcement on liquor licenses," Hollis said.

Columbia police also have to finish setting up guidelines for enforcement. A government grant that funded compliance checks is going away, but Sgt. Candy Cornman said the department has other grant funding and would still conduct them.

"There will be a little less," outside funding "but in reality I don't see that as a detriment because the compliance checks have to be done, and I'm sure the department will assist," Cornman said.

Cornman leads the downtown unit, which does walk-through checks at downtown bars and will begin checking for server IDs.

But that unit will be short two to three officers through around January, she said, and it's also unclear how the department will enforce the ordinance in bars outside of downtown.
She said there has been some discussion of combining checks for city ordinances from the health, fire and police departments.

"If we were to create a task force where we could go in and check everything at once, that would be easier not only for us but also the business," Cornman said.

This article was published in the Sunday, November 24, 2013 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "Server rule to take effect: Certification is required Jan. 1."
Students from overseas flock to U.S. colleges

November 22

BY MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS
The Kansas City Star

MU Mention on Page 3

Before Wallace Entringer Botacim left his home in Brazil to study at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, he ate french fries maybe once a year.

“Now I eat them once a week, sometimes every day,” Botacim, 24, said with a laugh. They’re so hard to resist, he said — and so American.

A chance to learn American culture is one of the big reasons why record numbers of international students are coming to the United States for school.

They’re also being recruited more heavily than ever, and university officials say it’s because they help compensate for the dwindling pool of U.S. high school graduates, build a more diverse student body and boost revenues with their higher tuition dollars.

Until recent years, U.S. schools didn’t need to recruit, said Sandy Gault, director of international student affairs at UMKC.

“The best and brightest wanted to come here,” Gault said. “And they still do. But it’s no longer enough to just assume those students will come here. There are other competitors.”

In 2012-2013, a record 819,644 international students enrolled in U.S. colleges, up 7.2 percent from the previous year, according to a recent report from the Institute of International Education.

China accounts for 28 percent of international students in the U.S., followed by India, South Korea and Saudi Arabia.

No matter what country they come from or what state they land in, most of the students come for degrees in engineering, business, life sciences, digital media and computer science.

Missouri ranked 12th nationwide in number of international students, with 17,300, a 7.7 percent increase from 2011-2012. Kansas was No. 24, with 9,568 international students, up 3 percent.
“When international students look at us in the Midwest, they see us in the heart of the U.S., safe, less expensive but just as competitive, so we become a very good place to be,” Gault said.

Increased recruitment by U.S. colleges might be the top reason for the jump in international students, but some international governments encourage it by paying the full freight for their students to come to the U.S.

“When you come to study in the U.S.,” Botacim said, “one thing you can be sure will happen, you will meet people from all over the world. You will be a global professional.”

His government plucked him, along with thousands of other high-achieving students, out of the public college system in Brazil to study abroad.

“I chose the U.S.,” Botacim said.

The Brazilian government pays his full out-of-state tuition, room and board and a $300-a-month stipend.

Brazil is not the only country paying big bucks for its students to study in the United States.

“Saudi Arabia is doing it on a huge scale,” said Bruce Inwards, director of international student services at Avila University, which saw its international student enrollment increase by 8.8 percent this year.

Most international students, though — 64 percent — rely primarily on their personal and family funds to pay for their studies in the U.S.

Chinese students are pouring into the U.S. because an improved economy there has meant many more middle-class families can afford a U.S. education for their child.

Little to no U.S. scholarship money goes to international undergraduate students. But some international students do receive tuition breaks.

Northwest Missouri State University this year is allowing high-achieving international students to get the same in-state tuition deal offered to high achieving out-of-state U.S. students, said Jeffrey Foot, the university’s director of international affairs.

Northwest Missouri has nearly 400 international students, about three times the number enrolled there a decade ago.

The new offer “has really sparked a lot of interest from countries that we had not been able to recruit from — Eastern Africa, Turkey, Bulgaria and Eastern and Northern Europe,” Foot said.

Schools with more resources send faculty to teach abroad — generating interest in their home school — and open recruitment offices in other countries.
Last year, Kansas State University opened an office in Vietnam and beefed up recruitment in about eight African and several South American nations, said Marcelo Sabates, interim associate provost for international programs.

“Two years ago K-State had only four countries with more that 40 students enrolled, and those were China, India, South Korea and Saudi Arabia,” Sabates said. Now there are nine, including Brazil, Paraguay and Kuwait.

International students make up only 5 percent of K-State’s undergraduates, but they contribute 15 to 20 percent of the tuition revenues, Sabates said.

**But it’s about more than money, said David Currey, assistant director of the International Center at the University of Missouri.**

“These international students really do add to students' education,” he said.

Read more here: [http://www.kansascity.com/2013/11/22/4643529/students-from-overseas-flock-to.html#storylink=cpy](http://www.kansascity.com/2013/11/22/4643529/students-from-overseas-flock-to.html#storylink=cpy)
Saudi woman embraces year abroad at MU

Monday, November 25, 2013 | 6:00 a.m. CST

BY Lindsey Davison

COLUMBIA – A black Toyota Camry creeps around an empty lot at Cosmopolitan Park on a late October evening.

After parking the car at a cockeyed angle between two painted yellow lines, Haneen Mohammed takes her foot off the brake and her hands off the steering wheel.

She lets out a sigh.

"It wasn't as scary as I thought it would be," she said with a laugh.

Although she had driven a couple of times before, this was her first opportunity to drive without a parent in the car. It was also the first time she could drive in a country that openly accepts women behind the wheel.

**Gender gap at home**

Haneen's home country, Saudi Arabia, prohibits women from driving. Last year her father taught her to drive in the middle of the Arabian Desert, where she had an empty landscape to navigate.

**Driving is one of many ways she's embraced the opportunities of spending a year at MU.**

Before moving to Columbia as a foreign exchange student, Haneen, 21, had spent her entire life in Saudi Arabia, a country with one of the largest gender gaps in the world, according to the World Economic Forum. She said the gap is enforced by Islamic customs, which encourage the social separation of men and women.

Haneen was itching for something new, so when she was given the chance to study abroad, she took it.

"If any other place would have been available, I would have gone," she said. "Every young Saudi secretly dreams of traveling outside of Saudi — or maybe it's not so secret."

Life in the United States has been a series of firsts for Haneen, who is studying computer engineering. She has seen autumn for the first time and sampled traditional American experiences — an MU football game, the Renaissance Festival in Kansas City and the City Museum in St. Louis.
Her experience has also been challenging on some levels. She's a practicing Muslim in a nation that doesn't prioritize it the same way her country does. She also attends classes with male students. Schools in Saudi Arabia, both private and public, are segregated.

Daily routines such as walking from her dorm room to the shower worried her at first, but she was comforted when she discovered she would be living on an all-girls floor.

But in the midst of embracing a different culture, Haneen has learned to better appreciate her own.

"I love it here, but recently I've found myself missing home," she said.

**The Saudi gender gap**

The World Economic Forum's 2013 Global Gender Gap Report, released Oct. 25, ranked Saudi Arabia No. 127 out of 136 countries for gender equality. It is the first time since the report began in 2006 that the country wasn't in the bottom five.

Women in Saudi Arabia cannot drive or vote, though the king has decreed that they can participate in the voting process in 2015.

In attempt to find a balance, Haneen joined Saudi Students Association, an MU co-ed club, but she discovered that some of the members still have what she perceives as "a Saudi state of mind."

"They are nice, but I think the way they were raised taught them to avoid talking to girls," she said of some of the male members. "So even here, there's still a barrier."

Under Saudi law, women in public places must have a male guardian, usually a father, brother or husband. Hospitals, police stations and banks uphold that law. A woman may need permission to travel, marry, divorce, go to school, get a job or open a bank account, depending on the guardian.

Having a guardian isn't meant to be oppressive, she said, but rather as a way for men to protect their families.

"I like having a guardian, but it didn't have much effect on me because I have an open family," she said. "I know it affected other families, the most close-minded families."

Haneen's father, Abdurashid, was planning to stay in an apartment in Columbia to ensure her safety while she was at MU.

"We trust her, but it was her first time to go outside the country without us," he said during a visit with his wife to Columbia this semester. He gave up on the idea after he realized his daughter would be safe in Columbia.

**A tradition for herself**

The toughest part so far for Haneen has been meshing her school schedule with fulfilling one of Islam's five pillars of worship — salat, a ritualized prayer performed by Muslims five times a day as they face Mecca, Islam's holy city.
Children are hushed, shops are closed, and streets are emptied when it's time to pray in Saudi Arabia, but life doesn't stop when it's time to pray in Columbia.

Haneen uses the compass on her phone to turn herself toward Mecca and prays as her class schedule allows, rather than following the standard times. The times are calculated daily for specific locations around the globe using astronomical measurements.

"You have to put in extra effort over here at the beginning, but then you get used to it," she said.

She has been pushed to determine the best way to practice her religion in other ways. For example, Haneen was told that wearing a hijab in Missouri might be problematic.

She braced for the lack of acceptance, which sparked an internal debate over whether she would wear it. Since arriving, she's come to realize the importance of her hijab: Wearing it serves as a reminder of the social and physical limits she has set for herself.

"I feel more comfortable with it on," she said. "It's a tradition for myself now, and I'm mixed with boys here, so I think it's good to have it on."

**Family supports decision**

Haneen's family has long supported her dream to study in the United States. They encouraged her to travel, work hard in school and become an independent woman. Her mother, Aisha, said Haneen was quiet but wise growing up.

"She never depended on someone else to teach her how to do things," her father said.

In high school, Haneen focused on her studies. She won international chemistry and physics competitions for high school students in the Arab nations and earned a full academic scholarship to Effat University in Jeddah, her hometown.

When she told her parents she wanted to study abroad, they supported her through the application process. They knew a year in the United States would strengthen her English, which they believe will help her career down the road.

When Haneen forgot her I.D. card necessary to take the test for acceptance into the study abroad program, her entire family drove eight hours across the Arabian Desert, so she could take the next available test.

"Whatever she wants to do, we like supporting her," said her father.

**Learning from the present**

Although it's been an adjustment, Haneen said her time outside Saudi Arabia has helped her better understand her home country.

"I used to hate that place, but now I realize (the lack of social opportunities is) not anyone's fault," she said. "It's just life there. We don't have many places to socialize, but ... there's no one to blame for the way that life is in Saudi."
She said she's starting to grasp the social gap between men and women there, as well.

"Saudi men are raised to avoid talking to women unless they have to," she said. "I think it's out of respect for the women, and sometimes women take it the wrong way when a man approaches them.

"They might think a man is hitting on them when they aren't," she said. "So there are two sides to it."

Hassan Al Majed, an MU student who attends the same mosque in Columbia as Haneen, agreed that most Saudi men have a high regard for Saudi women.

"On the east side of Saudi Arabia, when males see a female being bothered by another guy, the males will approach him and the law will stand with the female," he said. "Whatever she wants, she will get."

Haneen said she'll view Saudi social life in a new perspective when she returns, approaching it with a more outgoing attitude.

"I changed a lot when I went to college, and I changed even more when I came here, so maybe people back home won't know me anymore."
MU student makes strides with hand-painted shoe company

Lauren Rundquist paints canvas shoes such as TOMS, Keds and converse with custom designs. Last fall, 21-year-old Rundquist launched LaQuist, a company specializing in hand-painted canvas shoes.

By CAROLINE DOHACK

Sunday, November 24, 2013 at 2:00 am

Lauren Rundquist knows shoes.

Just ask, and she'll tell you about the structural characteristics of a pair of TOMS, or about the way a pair of Keds wears over time.

Last fall, 21-year-old Rundquist launched LaQuist, a company specializing in hand-painted canvas shoes — mainly styles from TOMS, Keds and Converse. She started on Etsy, a website where people sell handmade and vintage goods, and the downtown boutique Elly's Couture later started stocking Rundquist's shoes, as well.

"Ever since I was little, I've always had my own businesses where I'd make something special like bookmarks or little pieces of jewelry or greeting cards, and I'd sell them and donate the money to charity," Rundquist said.

When she started college, the Wildwood native started looking for a new way to keep up with her crafting hobby, give to charities and make a bit of money for herself.
So she started buying and painting shoes from TOMS Shoes, the footwear company known for its "One for One" campaign. For every pair of TOMS Shoes purchased, the company donates a pair to a child in need. Within the past couple years, TOMS has released fashion-forward styles such as ballet flats, wedges and boots, but the company is best known for its simple slip-on "alpargatas" shoes. These — painted with tiger stripes, flowers, scenes from Disney cartoons or anything else a customer requests — are Rundquist's top sellers. To date, she has sold more than 220 pairs of hand-painted TOMS, meaning as many pairs have been donated to children around the world.

Rundquist is pleased with this contribution, but she's also pleased with some of the interactions she has had with customers.

For example, a deployed airman with the United States Air Force contacted Rundquist about designing a pair of TOMS emblazoned with the American flag to send to his fiancée as a Valentine's Day gift. After Valentine's Day, he sent her stills from the Skype conversation he had with his fiancée the day she opened her gift so Rundquist could see her reaction. Recently, his fiancée contacted Rundquist to collaborate on another pair of TOMS for their wedding.

"We're working on a custom design for that to replicate the lace from her dress. She wants the Air Force symbol, as well, and her new last name," Rundquist said.

Rundquist said custom orders generally take between two and four hours. Some of that includes the time she spends painting, but quite a bit is collaborating with the customer.

"It's a lot of work because there are so many back-and-forth conversations: Me trying to picture exactly what they're thinking, me explaining exactly what I'm thinking," Rundquist said.

Some of these conversations include steering the customer away from designs that won't work.

"People sometimes don't think about parts of the shoes that maybe will wear more than other parts. Keds, for example, tend to get a crease right in the very front portion of the shoe. Some people want a design right on that part, but I always make sure I explain that it will cause paint to wear faster," Rundquist said.

A lot of experimentation went into learning which materials would best serve Rundquist's purposes. To find the right type of acrylic paint, for example, Rundquist bought bottles from several brands in the same color and painted test swatches on a sheet of canvas, which she then abused in such manners as crumpling, stretching and running through the washer.

"I treated it as a pair of shoes would be treated," Rundquist said.

The winner was a formula she found to be waterproof, flexible, permanent and highly pigmented. To protect her finished designs, Rundquist finishes with a coat of clear sealant.
For the most part, Rundquist said painting canvas shoes isn't much different from painting on regular canvas, though the three-dimensional aspect of the shoe does offer some unique design possibilities.

"At certain angles, you can't see certain parts" of the shoe, Rundquist said, adding that this allows her to create designs that appear to trail from one shoe to the other.

All told, Rundquist estimates she spends about 20 hours a week emailing customers, updating her website and social media accounts, and painting shoes. This she juggles in between classes at the University of Missouri, where she is a strategic communication major and a business minor. Still, Rundquist said she is able to apply knowledge from any of these areas to others.

"I kind of feel like everything builds off each other. My education and internships have really helped me grow my business, but the things I've learned from my business have been so valuable in applying to school," Rundquist said.

Like all college juniors, Rundquist often is asked what she is going to do when she graduates.

"I'd like to be able to find a way to continue LaQuist and shape it into a brand that combines all those things I love and helps others," Rundquist said.

And she is taking steps to move forward. In April, Rundquist won first place — and a $5,000 prize — at Regional Economic Development Inc.'s #Boom pitch competition, which invited Mid-Missouri entrepreneurs to submit business plans to a panel of judges. Since winning, Rundquist has used part of the prize money to file a trademark application for LaQuist. She expects to find out in the next week or two whether her application was accepted.

The prize money also has allowed her to expand in new directions, such as experimenting with painting high-heeled shoes.

"That's always a risk when you're testing something out, investing money you won't be able to make back," Rundquist said.

This article was published in the Sunday, November 24, 2013 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "SHE'S A SHOE IN: MU STUDENT MAKES STRIDES WITH HAND-PAINTED SHOE COMPANY."
A CAUTION LIGHT FOR MISSOURI'S RED-LIGHT CAMERAS

November 23, 2013 11:45 pm • By Ken Leiser kleiser@post-dispatch.com 314-340-8215

MU MENTION P. 3

The issue is stopping drivers from running red signals, but it was a U-turn by a key Missouri court that put dozens of municipal photo-enforcement laws in a temporary freeze frame.

What some see as a major setback for automated enforcement was taken in stride by at least one major company providing the service.

If nothing else, the development prompted the city of Ellisville and its vendor, American Traffic Solutions Inc., to file an application last week to have the case transferred to the Missouri Supreme Court.

Short of a decision there, drivers will continue to wait for a definitive answer to the long-term prospects of a system both touted as a boon to safety and criticized as a money grab.

The Missouri Court of Appeals Eastern Division overruled itself in an opinion Nov. 5 on a challenge to an ordinance in Ellisville. A three-judge panel found flaws in that law, although a panel decision two years earlier has sustained similar provisions in Creve Coeur.

Ellisville attorneys wrote last week that the result left municipalities in the “unenviable position of having to defend against questions relating to the validity of their ordinances” that otherwise complied with state law.

At the heart of the issue is whether the Ellisville ordinance, and lots of others like it, are in conflict with a statute governing moving violations at traffic signals.

Many of the ordinances simply presume a vehicle’s owner is at the wheel — or at least liable for a fine — when the car is recorded running a signal.

But the appellate court decision says state law limits moving violations at a signalized intersections to drivers or pedestrians.

The law also provides that “points” be assessed against a driver. An accumulation of points can result in suspension or revocation of a driver’s license. Because most red-light camera ordinances do not seek points, they do not conform with state law, according to the ruling.

If sustained, the decision would require many cities to overhaul the way tickets are issued.
“They’re worried,” said Ryan Keane, the attorney who represented the plaintiffs in the Ellisville case. “It was a forceful opinion. It was well thought out, and it overruled the most significant appellate decision to date.”

But former U.S. Attorney Edward L. Dowd Jr., now an attorney here for American Traffic Solutions, based in Scottsdale, Ariz., said the ordinances are not in conflict with Missouri statutes but supplementary to them.

In their application last week for a Supreme Court review, Dowd and attorneys for Ellisville said that although Missouri law and the ordinance regulate the same conduct — a car running a red light — there is no conflict. Cities, they argue, have authority to pass “additional rules of the road or traffic regulations.”

Ellisville and other cities depended upon the Creve Coeur case to formulate their ordinances, the attorneys wrote. In addition, those cities relied on a recommendation by the Office of State Courts Administrator that red-light camera violations did not have to be reported to the Missouri Department of Revenue to have points assessed.

ATS spokesman Charles Territo underscored that the constitutionality of the red-light camera programs has consistently been upheld by state and federal courts. He added that the Ellisville ruling specifically affirmed that city’s authority to regulate traffic as part of its police power.

Territo added that courts have rejected money damages to challengers of such laws.

The firm representing American Traffic Solutions has brought in Michael Wolff, a former Missouri Supreme Court chief justice and current dean of the St. Louis University School of Law, to take the lead in the appeal, a company spokesman said.

In the Ellisville case, the court said a “voluntary payment doctrine” prevents someone who has already paid the $100 red-light camera fine from seeking a refund. Under that doctrine, the court said, someone who voluntarily pays a fine “with full knowledge of all the facts” cannot use a lawsuit to recover the payment, unless there has been fraud or duress.

In the meantime, at least 11 cities throughout Missouri confirmed that they have suspended issuing citations and will wait until the dust settles around the appellate court’s decision.

Ellisville City Attorney George Restovich said everything is on hold “until we are essentially guided by the decision of the Supreme Court.” City officials, he added, are “trying to evaluate what is in the best interests” of its residents.

In Kansas City, which has halted use of its 28 red-light cameras, the City Council is expected to consider some ordinance changes this week to comply with the ruling, said Chris Hernandez, a municipal spokesman. That law was patterned after the Creve Coeur ordinance the court upheld in 2011.

Communities that have suspended use of cameras insist that drivers still must pay for tickets already issued.
Earlier this month, the St. Peters Board of Aldermen approved an ordinance to assess penalty points against drivers caught on cameras that photograph both the car and driver. In addition, the city has appealed a St. Charles County Circuit judge’s ruling that concluded state law requires points for such moving violations.

The city of St. Louis, which has 70 red-light cameras at 35 intersections, said the Ellisville ruling does not affect its program because its ordinance is different. St. Louis, for instance, gives vehicle owners an opportunity to dispute that they were behind the wheel at the time the violation was photographed.

St. Louis officials credit the red-light cameras with reducing violations at photo-enforced intersections.

Officials in several red-light-camera cities — including Creve Coeur, Beverly Hills, Bel-Nor, Webster Groves and Hannibal — did not return multiple telephone calls from a reporter seeking comment on the status of their programs.

One legal expert said it makes sense that some cities are pausing to regroup.

“In this case, it is sensible for local governments that have ordinances that are similar to the Ellisville ordinance to take a step back and consider whether they want to continue with these programs in the absence of a higher court ruling,” said Richard Reuben, a professor at the University of Missouri School of Law. He specializes in state and local government law.

Reuben added that the red-light cameras do raise questions about fairness and procedural justice, and ultimately might undermine citizen respect for public authority.

“People’s willingness to comply with rules is a function of how fair they feel those rules were promulgated and implemented,” Reuben said. “When they’re implemented in a ‘gotcha’ way, it undermines people’s respect for the rule of law.”
Water quality, not the number of fish, will be the biggest factor determining what happens in the effort to save an endangered fish found only in a small area of southeast Missouri.

In September, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service added the grotto sculpin to the list of endangered species but decided against designating a "critical habitat," which local officials feared could have caused restrictions harming economic development.

The cave-dwelling grotto sculpin is a tiny fish with a pale skin color with reduced, and sometimes absent, eyes. It is found only in Perry County, about 75 miles south of St. Louis.

The Southeast Missourian (http://bit.ly/1cMIN7) reports that the Fish and Wildlife Service will review data in five years.

"We're going to base recovery on water-quality parameters. ... Counting fish can be tricky," Fish and Wildlife Service biologist Shauna Marquardt said at a public meeting Wednesday.

That doesn't mean the population won't be watched _ the Missouri Department of Conservation will try to keep count. But baseline data are limited, and "we can't always count those fish with 100 percent confidence," Marquardt said.

Water quality, though, can be tested more frequently, and monitoring will show how the conservation plan is working, Marquardt said.

At times, Perry County's water quality has fallen below the standards necessary to maintain aquatic life. The result has been occasional "fish kills" that raise concern about survival of the grotto sculpin, Marquardt said.

"The plan is not really going to be about the fish," said Frank Wideman of the University of Missouri Extension. "The fish is going to be an indicator to ... help us figure out if we're making the right kind of improvements or not."

Wideman said the county's geology includes sinkholes that allow surface water _ often containing sediments with sewage, chemicals and other contaminants _ to run into the caves, compromising groundwater quality and endangering the fish.

"If we keep the soil out of the caves, we've got a major part of the problem fixed," he said.
Doing that will require the use of buffer zones, no-till farming techniques, cover crops and other efforts by landowners to keep water clean, Wideman said.

Had Perry County been designated as critical habitat for the grotto sculpin, those measures would have been mandatory.
Ed Lambeth is a professor emeritus of the Missouri School of Journalism.

The day JFK was murdered, I was a Washington correspondent covering the Senate for the Gannett News Service. Among my colleagues were the late editor and political writer, Jack Germond, Pentagon reporter Jim Canan and House correspondent Dick Gale. We were finishing our coffee at the National Press Club. Suddenly, the news wires erupted in their piercing ring that typically announced a developing crisis.

the elevator. The first news from the wire came from Merriman Smith of United Press International. He later won the Pulitzer Prize for his unrivaled display of initiative and talent in covering the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Smith's report was the first to disclose that Kennedy had been shot. Not surprisingly, none of the telephones was accessible, having been flooded with both outgoing and incoming messages.

MU alumnus Germond, who was later to be awarded a Missouri Honor Medal and admission to the school's Hall of Fame, wisely stayed at the GNS office and coordinated our work from the newsroom, as telephone access became available. Canan, Gale and I ran to catch busy taxis already in heavy demand for rides to Capitol Hill.

My first instinct was to go — not to the Senate Office Building — but directly to the Capitol office of Democratic Majority Leader Mike Mansfield of Montana, located near the Senate floor. The secretary posted just outside his office nodded to me as I entered the small anteroom between his office and the Senate floor. Mansfield was advising his butler to expect a throng of reporters.

The first to arrive was not a mere scribe, but Mansfield's Republican counterpart — Illinois senator and minority leader Everett McKinley Dirksen, a colorful figure with an oratorical flourish as well as key insights into the "Upper Chamber." By contrast, Mansfield, once a manual
laborer in the mines of Montana, was a soft-spoken and highly educated scholar widely known for his diplomatic demeanor and durability in his leadership of what was once termed the most “exclusive club” in American politics.

As the two men began exchanging their thoughts on the horror of the assassination, I took notes for the story I filed. I remember Mansfield, with obviously heart-felt loss and anger, said: "Damn Texas! When Adlai (Stevenson, former Illinois governor and Democratic presidential candidate) went down there to help them solve their petty political quarrels, they spat on him. When Jack went down there, they shot him! Damn Texas!"

As for Dirksen, he declared, "In a dictatorship, where the hates and fears are congealed, you could believe a tragedy such as this. But in our democracy, it just can't be believed."

For context I would add that it was the conservative Dirksen who in the next year gathered the remaining required number of senators to shut off debate and enable enactment of the historic 1964 Civil Rights legislation. His friend and colleague, Mansfield, later served as ambassador to Japan for more than a decade — longer than any other to have held that office. For his service there, he was awarded a Presidential Medal of Freedom. Mansfield voted for all of the major legislation of President Lyndon Johnson’s "War on Poverty." But he strongly opposed the Vietnam War.
Generations embrace environmental movement

By JAN WIESE-FALES

Generations embrace environmental movement

Sunday, November 24, 2013 at 2:00 am

Environmentalism can be defined as our relationship with the natural world — our place within it and our responsibility toward maintaining its health and well-being because our health and well-being depend upon it. It's the simple idea that we must sustain the Earth, water and air that sustain us.

That idea first crept into my consciousness when I saw the Ad Council's Smokey Bear public service announcements on television as a kid. Smokey told us, "Only you can prevent forest fires."

In Mrs. Davis's sixth-grade science class, I signed an "I will never litter" oath. It made a small-scale environmental activist out of an otherwise shy and introverted kid.

The Keep America Beautiful organization's anti-littering "crying Indian" ad, which originally aired on the first Earth Day in 1971, has been an especially effective message to all of a certain age.

My children grew up surrounded by messages of the importance of their relationship with the world around them. They heard it at home, at school and at events such as Earth Day. And it's my impression — and hope — that their generation might hold those messages closer and dearer at a time when it is becoming increasingly important.

When I saw that the Environmental Leadership Office (ELO) at the University of Missouri had declared November "Ethical Consumerism Month," I reached out to chat about its efforts and spoke with student volunteer Jessica Hill, a senior sustainable agriculture major who is most involved with the ELO's Mizzou Food Coalition.

"No one in my family cooked. We ate processed foods from boxes and cans, and I started reading the labels," Hill said when asked what first influenced her to pursue environmental issues. "Then I saw 'Food, Inc.' a film made in 2008 about the America's corporate controlled food industry "and started to research food additives."
Hill said she visited farmers markets and saw the demand for organic produce, but because there were not a lot of organic growers, prices were higher. So she decided she wanted to be an organic farmer when she grew up.

"But I've learned how hard it is to grow vegetables in Missouri and how risky it would be to do it for living," she said, adding that an internship last summer has redirected her focus to urban and community gardening. She also is involved with the Tigers for Community Agriculture project with MU's Sustain Mizzou student organization.

Hill said one of her main goals with ELO is to team up with other campus groups to stage events and spread the word. She has joined forces with MU's Missouri Student Association to sponsor a local food dinner for students that will take place during sustainability week in April.

"It's something people my age care about," she said. "It's not just something hippies do."

Hill, who also works as a volunteer at MU's Bradford Research & Extension Center agricultural experiment station, said she believes soil depletion is the most important agricultural issue from an environmental standpoint.

"We've degraded the soil for many years, and we're just not adding enough organic stuff back in," Hill said, adding that the pervasive system of monoculture also is a great concern.

"There are a lot of economic and environmental trade-offs involved," she said. "If you don't want to use chemicals and you want to use no-till growing practices, there is a lot more labor involved."

Hill works closely with ELO-sponsored farmers markets held on Lowry Mall on MU's campus — two each semester. It's a high-traffic area, and Hill said vendors usually sell out of their offerings.

ELO's Bike Resource Center sponsors a free bike repair clinic for two hours each Friday on Lowry Mall. The group also offers a bike-share program and maintains the fleet. Anyone with a valid student ID can borrow a bike for a day at a time at no charge.

One of the events staged in celebration of Ethical Consumerism Month was the Thrift Shop Runway Review. ELO worked with other campus groups to do a fashion show of clothing from Truman's Closet, an MSA-sponsored effort to loan business attire to students for job interviews — at no charge.

Young people like Jessica Hill, filled with energy and the inclination to organize and spread the word about issues of sustainability and environmentalism, give this old hippie hope for a long and bright relationship with the world around us.
Columbia area reaches 100,000-plus jobs

By JACOB BARKER

Saturday, November 23, 2013 at 2:00 am

The U.S. Department of Labor said Friday that the Columbia area had more than 100,000 jobs, the first time the area has topped that mark and a continuation of the city's steady employment gains since the recession ended.

Preliminary numbers released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics show the Columbia area had 102,200 jobs in October, a record high, but a number that could be adjusted when the department revises its numbers next month. The previous record was set in September, when the area recorded 99,900 jobs. The September number no longer is preliminary.

Both of those stats were released at the same time yesterday because the September release was delayed by the government shutdown.

Columbia's employment typically swells by about 3,000 to 4,000 positions from August to September as students return to the city after the slower summer months of June through August. Year over year, though, September's employment numbers were 2,500 jobs higher than September 2012, and October would be 3,100 more jobs than the same month last year.

By 2011, Columbia had recovered its job losses in the recession, recording a 12-month average of 93,600 positions that year, 1,000 more than its 2008 peak. It added 3,000 more jobs in 2012, growing its 12-month average to 96,600.

Columbia’s labor market is highly cyclical, with the number of jobs falling dramatically when the University of Missouri isn’t in session. Its lowest employment month is usually January, which can be from 5,000 to 8,000 jobs lower than its peak around October and November.