Nixon wants $36.7M more for Mo. higher education

JEFFERSON CITY • Gov. Jay Nixon called Wednesday for another tuition freeze at Missouri’s public universities while also proposing to boost state funding for the schools.

Nixon said his budget recommendations for next year would include an additional $36.7 million for the institutions. He also urged the four-year schools to freeze tuition for Missouri undergraduates for the 2014-2015 academic year.

The governor announced the higher education plan at Missouri State University in Springfield. He said Missouri had been working to keep college affordable and called for the universities to “help us build on this momentum.”

“Nothing will have a greater impact on the future of our economy, and our state, than the commitment we make now to education,” Nixon said in a statement.

Missouri’s state operating budget that took effect in July provides public colleges and universities an additional $25 million distributed based upon how schools’ performance in areas such as student retention and graduation rates. The governor’s proposed 5 percent increase also would be distributed based on performance.

The idea of an undergraduate tuition freeze is not new in Missouri.
Most recently, public colleges and universities struck a deal with Nixon to hold undergraduate tuition flat for Missouri residents in 2010-2011 in exchange for receiving no more than about $50 million in cuts to their core state funding. Institutions also had agreed to keep tuition flat the previous school year.

Southeast Missouri State University President Kenneth Dobbins said the funding proposal would result in a $2.1 million increase. He said the university’s budget review committee recommends funding for budget proposals and priorities, which includes tuition increases. It goes to the university president who makes a budget recommendation to the Board of Regents.

Dobbins said Nixon’s announcement would influence the committee’s process.

“The significant increase will allow the committee to not only balance our budget without increasing instate student fees, but will also allow us to address other needs such as starting and expanding academic programs needed in our state, and working on the reduction of the deferred maintenance backlog,” he said.

University of Central Missouri President Charles Ambrose said state funding currently accounted for 39 percent of annual revenues for the campus compared with 65 percent in 2000. The school also received $5 million more from the state in 2000 than now. Ambrose said the proposed funding increase could mean about $2.6 million for the university. He plans to recommend holding tuition flat to the university’s governing board if the governor’s funding proposal is enacted.

“Missouri’s commitment to maintaining the lowest tuition increases in the nation was strengthened by today’s announcement,” Ambrose said in a statement. “We strongly affirm keeping costs low and are prepared to recommend to our Board of Governors a tuition proposal that will keep our tuition flat.”

Last month, Nixon said he also planned to include an additional $15 million in his budget recommendations for expanding Missouri’s merit-based Bright Flight scholarship. The plan would give students receiving the scholarship the option for an extra $5,000 annually for agreeing to work full-time in Missouri immediately after graduation day. Students would need to work in Missouri for each year they accepted the enhanced scholarship, and those leaving early would be required to pay back whatever remained.

The Bright Flight scholarship is awarded based on ACT or SAT scores.
Illicit Bitcoin mining discovered at MU's Reynolds Journalism Institute

Wednesday, December 11, 2013 | 7:55 p.m. CST; updated 11:29 p.m. CST, Wednesday, December 11, 2013
BY JAMES GORDON

COLUMBIA — Two MU computer science students have been accused of running an unauthorized Bitcoin mining operation on computers in the Reynolds Journalism Institute.

MU Police Capt. Brian Weimer said that Eric Wichmann and Josh O'Steen were arrested by MU police Friday on suspicion of tampering with computer data, a violation of state statute that could carry charges of either a class A misdemeanor or a class D felony. Weimer said Wichman and O'Steen were released the same day on a summons. Boone County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Brouck Jacobs said there was no decision yet whether Wichmann and O'Steen will be formally charged since the MU police report had not yet hit his desk.

Bitcoin is a new digital currency that operates independent of any government or central authority. Instead of relying on third-party financial institutions to verify each electronic transaction, Bitcoin uses a peer-to-peer network of computers to maintain a public record of all exchanges of the digital currency, which is called the block chain. These networked computers constantly run an open-source application that works out a complex math problem, resulting in an update to the current block of most recent transactions, which is then broadcasted to peer computers. The process is called "mining" because the operators of whichever computer completes the current block are awarded newly minted Bitcoins.

MU Journalism department IT Support Specialist Justin Giles said he and his co-workers started investigating the case when a lab instructor noticed that one of the iMacs in 45 Walter Williams was behaving oddly. They quickly discovered that someone had bypassed an administrative password and installed the unauthorized mining application on eight separate computers — five more in 45 Walter Williams and two
more in the Futures Lab. Giles said the unauthorized activity was a breach of the UM System's [Acceptable Use Policy](#).

The security compromise was only possible through physical access to the computers. A combination of activity logs on the computers and security cameras in the building were used to identify suspects.

Wichmann and O'Steen were arrested Friday in connection with the unauthorized application.

Giles said it was the first known incident of this kind in the 10 years he has been working for MU's Journalism School.
Missouri woman wins $3 million on scratch-off ticket

December 12

COLUMBIA, Mo. — A 49-year-old Columbia woman has won a $3 million prize in a Missouri Lottery game.

The Missouri Lottery said Wednesday in a release that Antoinett Ivicsics' the winning ticket was a scratch-off called "$3,000,000 Taxes Paid." She bought in on Dec. 2 at a Petro Mart in Columbia.

Ivicsics said she thought the prize was $3,000, until she took a closer look at her ticket. She says she plans to use the money to pay off their mortgage and other bills and help family members.

But she doesn't plan to quit her job as a cook at the University of Missouri Women's and Children's Hospital.

Read more here: http://www.kansascity.com/2013/12/12/4687751/missouri-woman-wins-3-million.html#storylink=cpy
Laying Waste to All That Waste

By CADE CLEAVELIN of MU's Undergraduate Research Office

Wednesday, December 11, 2013 at 2:00 pm

When you flush a toilet or drain the bathtub, have you ever thought about where all that water goes?

Wilson McNeary has. He is a chemical engineering student from Charleston, Mo., studying at the University of Missouri, and he is spending this semester reinventing the way we recycle wastewater.

In Columbia, all drains lead to the Columbia Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant in McBaine, which purifies as much as 16 million gallons of waste water per day — that's almost 25 Olympic swimming pools!

To scale down this expensive process for communities around the world, McNeary is building a radically different system that uses a smaller amount of water — really, really hot water — to obliterate waste on contact.

When water is heated, you can prevent it from becoming steam by applying lots of pressure around it, forcing it into an unusual state called "supercritical water."

"It oxidizes the waste really quickly, so it's almost like burning it, but you don't get the same products," McNeary explained. "Everything just breaks up."

Supercritical water is neither liquid nor gas, but a fluid with the characteristics of both. It has enough energy to break up waste into harmless molecules, so the water that's left is nearly drinkable. A simple filter takes care of the rest.

"The thought of coming up with something better than the flushed toilet sounded really interesting," McNeary said. "I also like the humanitarian aspect of helping people who live without much water or technology."
FROM READERS: MUTV debuts on Columbia Access Television
Thursday, December 12, 2013 | 6:00 a.m. CST

Staff members of MUTV smile for a group photo. MUTV's five shows are all written, produced and anchored by MU students. | LIZ SOLOMON/MISSOURIAN READER

BY JESSIE GOLDBERG/MISSOURIAN READER

Jessie Goldberg is the account executive for MUTV Promotions. MUTV is a student-run television station on MU’s campus. We are excited to announce our new partnership with Columbia Access Television. Now, viewers all over Columbia can tune into our shows.

We have worked with CAT in the past, but our partnership faded as we transitioned to High Definition. This year, with the help of the Missouri Students Association, talks surfaced about reconnecting with CAT. Next, we set up a meeting with them and discussed the possibility of airing our shows on its channel. CAT encouraged the partnership and was excited to share our shows with the public. As a result, our shows began airing at the beginning of November.

“Thanks to this partnership, we're able to share our original content with an audience beyond students who live on campus,” said Amanda Sohaney, MUTV general manager. “Now, any member of the community with a TV can watch and enjoy MUTV.”

CAT will air our five shows – 23 News, The Prowl, This Week in 23 Sports, Tailgaters and Triple Play. Our shows are all written, produced and anchored by MU students. Our
traditional news show, 23 News, covers current events around MU, Columbia and Mid-Missouri. It keeps viewers up-to-date on campus and local issues. Our entertainment show, The Prowl, covers the arts and entertainment scene on campus as well as Columbia. One of our three sports shows, This Week in 23 Sports, recaps Mizzou’s biggest games, plays and sporting events of the previous week. Tailgaters is a show for the modern sports fan. It features news on current popular sports topics and sports analyses. Our third sports show, Triple Play, is a game show. It consists of sports trivia questions and offers students the chance to participate.

In the late 1990s, the Missouri Students Association founded MUTV. When MU’s Student Center began renovation in 2007, the MUTV general manager helped design the new studio. It opened in the 2012 spring semester and is furnished with a full set, green screen and production room. We also offer popular movies for view on our campus channel.
Student opera singer has low voice, high hopes
Thursday, December 12, 2013 | 6:00 a.m. CST; updated 7:17 a.m. CST, Thursday, December 12, 2013

COLUMBIA — The tiny room in Hatch Hall is filled with 10 men laughing and joking before singing practice begins for the Add9 a cappella group. A piano is jammed in the corner, and the group stands in a circle in the middle of the room.

Ben Worley, a music major at MU and president of Add9, is music director of the group, which practices on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Add9 was founded in 2003 by men in the University Singers. It has performed at the Rotary Club and events such as Relay for Life and Mizzou Idol.

Worley started off thinking he wanted to be an archaeologist. After receiving a music scholarship to attend MU, he changed his mind. He is now studying opera and hopes to be a professional singer.

Singing opera professionally takes ambition, perseverance, talent and practice.
"It's as difficult to be an opera singer as it is to be a professional athlete," said Christine Seitz, an associate teaching professor of music at MU.

"He has the talent, he has the voice for it," she said. "There's no reason he can't make it."

Worley became fascinated with singing at age 4. Both of his parents were involved in their local church choir on Sundays, exposing him to music at that early age.

During performances, Worley would stand under his father’s church robe and hum the tunes with the choir because he was too nervous to be seen by the parishioners.

Two years later, he began participating in church, middle school and youth choirs to stay involved and continue growing.

In high school, he sang in musical performances around Missouri. He attended an Add9 a cappella group performance during a stop in Columbia and fell in love with the style of music.

He said he felt in sync with the group as he observed the performance from cushioned theater seats in Jesse Auditorium. During the fall of his freshman year, Worley joined the group.

“My favorite aspect is being able to make music with a bunch of different people," he said. "It’s extremely fun to get together with a group of people and just start making things with incredible sounds."

Worley’s 10-year plan includes standing in front of a large crowd at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, though he knows this is a stretch.

"That dream is rather lofty, but I will be happy being able to sing beautiful music anywhere," Worley said.

Taking note of his steep goal, he hopes to graduate and pursue a career at the Chicago Lyric Opera by the time he reaches 30.

Worley has set high external goals to achieve in the future, but he also has one important internal goal.

“I just want to make myself feel better and other people feel better," he said. "That’s the purpose of music.”