COLUMBIA — A weekend screening of the film "Mongolian Bling" and panel discussion of hip-hop music and culture in Mongolia was the first in a rich roster of events for Black History Month in February.

**MU's Black Studies Department is teaming up with several campus and community organizations to offer educational events and entertainment throughout the month. The theme this year is "Living Civil Rights: Challenges for the 21st Century."**

A complete calendar of events can be found here. Events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.

Highlights include:

- **Wednesday:** Chuck D, a member of the rap group Public Enemy, will speak on "Race, Rap and Reality," at 7 p.m. in Conservation Auditorium at the Anheuser-Busch Natural Resources Building at MU.

- **Thursday:** Panel discussion on "Rediscovering the Civil Rights History of the University of Missouri and Columbia," at 6 p.m. at the Missouri Theatre, 203 S. Ninth St. The event is sponsored by the Association of Black Graduate and Professional Students and the Black Law Student Association.

- **Friday:** Free, confidential HIV testing in observance of Black AIDS Awareness Day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in rooms 2205A and B in the MU Student Center. Educational information about HIV, AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases and sexual health will be available.

- **Feb. 11:** Performance by Grammy Award-winning contemporary blues artist Keb'Mo' at 7 p.m. in Jesse Auditorium. Tickets start at $19 for the public, $14 for MU students.
- Feb. 11: Presentation on the history of early pioneers of Columbia's black community from 7 to 8:15 p.m. in the Friends Room at Columbia Public Library, 100 W. Broadway.

- Feb. 13: Performance by MU alumna, soul and jazz singer Alicia Olatuja at 7:30 p.m. in Whitmore Auditorium at the Fine Arts Building on Lowry Mall. A question-and-answer session and reception with Olatuja will follow.

- Feb. 22: Third Annual Social Justice Symposium, "Beyond Words: A Focus on Understanding and Activism," from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Leadership Auditorium, room 2501, in the MU Student Center.

- Feb 22: Oratory contest featuring spoken word poetry from anyone who wants to enter. The event will go from 1 to 3 p.m. at the MU Student Center and is sponsored by the MU Black History Month Committee and Cave Canem.

- Feb. 27: MU Deputy Chancellor Michael Middleton will speak on "Living Civil Rights: A Mizzou Challenge," at 7 p.m., at the Leadership Auditorium, room 2501, in the MU Student Center.

Council denies rezoning request for east-side student housing complex

By ANDREW DENNEY

The Columbia City Council voted Monday night to reject a rezoning request from Park 7 Group that would allow the construction of an 899-bed student apartment complex near Highway 63 and Stadium Boulevard in east Columbia.

The council voted 4-3 to reject the request, which would have rezoned a 43-acre tract from agricultural to planned unit-development zoning that would allow the
The New York-based Park 7 Group also is working with the city on plans to build a high-rise student apartment complex at Sixth and Elm streets in downtown Columbia.

Sixth Ward Councilwoman Barbara Hoppe, who represents the ward that encompasses the proposed development, said the project does not fall in line with the vision for the property as outlined in the East Area Plan, which calls for residential land use, and Columbia Imagined, a comprehensive land-use plan that calls for the site to be part of a “neighborhood” district.

“Mixed” residential housing would be a better use for the land, Hoppe said.

Hoppe was joined by First Ward Councilman Fred Schmidt, Third Ward Councilman Karl Skala and Fourth Ward Councilman Ian Thomas in voting against the rezoning request. Second Ward Councilman Michael Trapp joined Mayor Bob McDavid and Fifth Ward Councilwoman Laura Nauser in supporting Park 7 Group’s rezoning request.

Trapp, who said MU’s continued growth is creating the need for more student housing in the city, said he takes issue with an “anti-growth” sentiment shared by some residents. He said the fact that Columbia is a university town tends to give it a fluid population and make it a “city of immigrants.” Trapp noted that every council member except Schmidt came to Columbia from another city.

“Pulling up the ladder behind us strikes me as odd,” Trapp said.

Robert Hollis, an attorney for Park 7 Group, said in an interview after the council vote that the company likely would discuss alternative approaches, but he said the company would not rule out abandoning any effort at developing in Columbia.

He noted that city staff and the Columbia Planning and Zoning Commission recommended passage of the rezoning request and that the developer had made a host of changes to its plan to address neighbors’ concerns. Hollis said the council had shown that it was “unreasonable.”

“Why would Park 7 expect that this council would do something less unreasonable than this decision?” Hollis said.

Park 7 Group’s downtown proposal has not yet made it to the planning and zoning commission or the city council. It is one of several projects on hold while city leaders put together a plan to upgrade downtown infrastructure.

City Manager Mike Matthes has said that the city won’t grant permits for major development projects downtown until it can fund improvements to utility infrastructure. He says the best way to do that is by creating a tax increment
financing, or TIF, district, but the idea has run into opposition from county leaders. They say instead of diverting money from other taxing entities with a TIF district, the city should ask voters to approve a bond measure to pay for the infrastructure upgrades.

Columbia City Council denies rezoning for student housing

Monday, February 3, 2014 | 10:55 p.m. CST

BY VERONIKE COLLAZO

COLUMBIA — The Columbia City Council voted Monday not to rezone land in south Columbia for more luxury housing marketed to students.

The property, located near the intersection of Stadium and Maguire boulevard, would have been developed into an 899-bed complex — the second-largest, after Aspen Heights.

Karl Skala, Fred Schmidt, Barbara Hoppe and Ian Thomas voted against the zoning change; Bob McDavid, Laura Nauser and Michael Trapp voted in favor of it.

"It's too intense, too car-oriented, and there are other designs that would work," Skala said.

Park 7 Group, which is also angling to build a 25-story tower on Elm Street, applied to rezone the nearly 50 acres of agricultural land to residential zoning.

The Planning and Zoning Commission voted to recommend the rezoning on Nov. 21, 2013.

The more student housing is on the market, the cheaper it will become, McDavid said.

"Those who are willing to put their money on the line should be the arbitrator" of the property, he said.
The Domain, another student-oriented development, sits on the adjacent property.

At least a dozen residents voiced opposition to the development. Some residents said they were concerned about safety and the strain on Columbia's infrastructure.

**Other residents said the city shouldn't abide another luxury, student-oriented apartment complex at a time when MU enrollment rates are not increasing.**

The residents who spoke at the meeting — many of whom live near the proposed development — said they favor building student housing that is more affordable and closer to campus instead.

Vicki Carstens, chair of the MU Linguistics Department, said the downtown area thrives because of the large student presence. Pushing students further away to suburban apartment complexes will take away from downtown's vitality, she said.

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Is it art? Mizzou offers course on Kanye & Jay Z

By Alexandra Thomas

What does it mean when something is considered "art"? That’s what English professor Andrew Hoberek asks his University of Missouri students through a course focused on rappers Kanye West and Jay Z.

Hoberek, who specializes in 20th- and 21st-century literature, says he wants to give students the opportunity to figure out for themselves what makes something art, instead of simply telling them that something is art.

“Our department has courses on Shakespeare, Melville and other authors who are considered artists without question,” Hoberek told HLN in a phone interview. “So why
not give the students something and ask them what makes it art and if they believe it is art, instead of giving them something and just telling them it’s art?"

Hoberek first taught the course in fall 2013, and after receiving enthusiastic feedback from students, he decided to teach it again in fall 2014.

Here are the basic concepts of the class, according to the course description on Mizzou’s website:

*This course looks at the career and work of Jay Z and Kanye West from three perspectives: (1) Where do they fit within, and how do they change, the history of hip-hop music? (2) How is what they do similar to and different from what poets do?, and (3) How does their rise to both celebrity and corporate power alter what we understand as the American dream? In addition to listening to music and watching videos, we will also read Jay Z's [book] "Decoded": histories of and critical works on rap music by Jeff Chang, Adam Bradley, and others; and one or two good studies of how poetry works.*

So, what is it about these two hip-hop stars that caught Hoberek's attention? He said when he began thinking about teaching a course like this, West and Jay Z stood out to him, because he considers what they do with words and music comparable to what poets and authors have done with literature in the past. They're changing the way society views music. Hoberek compares what these rappers do with music to what writers like William Faulkner did with the novel in the early 20th century. Hoberek said one goal of the course is to discuss how the form of rap works. Since it's always against a backdrop of music, rap uses words differently from how traditional poets use words.

“Here are artists who have inherited a form of art, and they’re tired of the constraints of that form, so they’re trying to remake it,” he said. "I decided to focus on [Kanye West and Jay Z] because of what they're doing with words. There's a bridge to an English class."

Hoberek said one of the things he starts the course with is Jay Z’s “Death of Auto-Tune,” a song he co-produced with West that criticizes the increasingly popular use of autotuning across the music industry. The song’s controversial message was aimed at rappers who Jay Z said only use the effect to mask their lack of talent. The song questioned what rap is to today’s society, and where it’s going as an art form.

“I’m not necessarily interested in teaching the political or social issues,” Hoberek said. “What I’m interested in is how rap works as an art and talking about whether or not it’s moving from simply being a form of entertainment to being considered an art form. In the early 20th century, the novel did just that. The novel was just entertainment, and at the time it was ludicrous to consider a novel art, that was only for poetry. But now the novel has become art, and that’s what these rappers are doing as musicians.”
MU students provide free tax services to community

February 03, 2014 BY Kaylie Denenberg

COLUMBIA, Mo.–As of Tuesday, Jan. 28, 2014 free tax services have been available to the community, courtesy of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, or VITA, program.

According to their website, VITA is an IRS-developed program that aims to serve people who make $52,000 or less a year. Sites are located all over the country, with several available in Missouri, including two that recently opened on the University of Missouri campus. The sites on campus are organized through the Office of Financial Success.

Students at the University of Missouri and University of Missouri Extension take a tax course in the fall designed to familiarize them with the ins and outs of the income tax code. In this time, students also go through an IRS certification process to ensure they are prepared and qualified to volunteer for VITA in the spring as a component of another course, says Jorie Neech, a senior personal financial planning major and president of the Office of Financial Success.

“It’s really awesome we get to put everything into practice,” Neech says. “It makes it unique because a lot of majors don’t necessarily put you in a real situation until after you graduate or get an internship.”

Andrew Zumwalt, an assistant extension professor for financial planning and member of University of Missouri Extension faculty, has coordinated the VITA program for the past 10 years on the University’s campus and has helped refine the process.

“The surge in growth started about eight years ago,” Zumwalt reports. He attributes the growth in the program and its popularity to opening more locations, allowing students with related majors to participate and increasing marketing across several platforms. This year, the program has expanded even more to allow about 20 law students to participate, in addition to about 45 personal financial planning majors and several other students. When a law professor reached out to Zumwalt about including her students in the program, he welcomed the idea, he says.

Although the VITA sites are not limited to university affiliations, the majority of people who seek assistance are university faculty, staff and students, according to Zumwalt. For those seeking help with their taxes, it’s as easy as bringing a federal W-2 form and other tax-related documents to the office. For the student volunteers, it is not always as stress-free, Neech explains.
“It’s a great opportunity to work with people in a high-pressure situation,” Neech explains. “You want to be efficient and help people get what they want, but you don’t want to screw up because it’s other people’s money.”

The first few days since opening the sites have been slow, but it’s still early in the tax season, Zumwalt says. He estimates that VITA serves around 1,500 individuals and families between the day they open and tax day.

“Some people have been coming to us for several years now,” Zumwalt says. “We have built a lot of trust in the community.”

Offices on the University of Missouri campus will be open through April 15, 2014. They are located in Stanley Hall, room 162, and Cornell Hall, room 005. Hours of operation are Tuesday and Wednesday from 4:30 to 8 p.m., and Saturday 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m in the Stanley Hall location. The Cornell office is open Monday from 4:30 to 8 p.m.

**UPDATE: MU, Columbia Public Schools, other colleges cancel Tuesday classes**

BY MISSOURIAN STAFF

COLUMBIA — **MU, Columbia and Stephens colleges and Columbia Public Schools canceled Tuesday classes, citing the winter storm warning from the National Weather Service.**

The city of Columbia offices are also closed. The Schools District said the impending winter storm would compound the road problems that prompted Monday’s school closings.

The School District also declared Tuesday an emergency weather day, according to a media release, which means employees who would normally come to work during a snow day should stay home.

MU canceled all classes for Tuesday, according to the MU News Bureau. The Student Center, the Student Recreation Complex and residential dining halls will remain open. Ellis Library will remain open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., but no services will be available. MU branch libraries are closed.

Columbia Transit offices also will be closed Tuesday. This includes all fixed
routes, the downtown FastCAT and para-transit services, according to a news release from the service.

University bus lines, including TigerLine and Black and Gold routes, will not be in service.

Stephens College has canceled Tuesday’s classes, according to a tweet.

Columbia College has decided to close its day campus and will make a decision for the night campus by 3 p.m. Tuesday, according to a tweet.

Columbia Public Schools, MU cancel classes Tuesday
City offices closed Tuesday; county offices open with minimal staffing.

By the Tribune’s staff

Columbia Public Schools and the University of Missouri have canceled classes Tuesday, and city of Columbia offices will be closed as a winter storm is expected to dump up to 8 inches of snowfall on Mid-Missouri.

Superintendent Chris Belcher said the decision was made based on the forecast from the National Weather Service, which is calling for 4 to 8 inches of snow in Mid-Missouri. Boone County is under a winter storm warning from 6 a.m. Tuesday to 6 a.m. Wednesday.

“A winter storm warning has been issued by the National Weather Service. The timing of the storm’s arrival in conjunction with current icy road conditions on many of our rural routes and neighborhoods make safety a concern for our students and employees,” the district said in a news release.

Tuesday’s snow day is the fourth this school year for Columbia Public Schools. By law, school districts have to build a minimum of six snow days into their calendars, school district spokeswoman Michelle Baumstark said. These are built
into the [CPS calendar](#).

The University of Missouri announced shortly after 8 p.m. Monday that the campus would be closed Tuesday and all classes canceled.

MU Health Care hospitals and the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital will still be open. Only employees who are "situationally critical" are reporting to work, the MU News Bureau said in a statement.

“With forecasts predicting up to 8 inches of snow, we are concerned about the safety of our students, faculty and staff as they would be traveling to and from campus during the heaviest snowfall," said Gary Ward, interim vice chancellor for administrative services. “This also will allow our crews to adequately clear the campus in preparation for classes to resume when it is safe to do so.”

The MU Student Center, Student Recreation Complex, residential hall dining facilities and some dining facilities in the MU Student Center will be open. Ellis Library will be open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., but no services will be available. Branch libraries will be closed.

A decision on Wednesday’s operations will be made by 8 p.m. Tuesday, MU officials said.

Stephens College announced it will be closed on Tuesday, and Columbia College canceled day classes. A decision on Tuesday night classes will be made Tuesday afternoon.

City of Columbia offices and recreational facilities will be closed Tuesday, and transit services will not be available. Refuse and recycling will not be collected.

Tony St. Romaine, assistant city manager, said the decision was made after tracking the National Weather Service and other forecasts throughout the day Monday. Snow is expected to start during the morning rush hour and intensify in the afternoon.

“We had this last year and folks decided around noon they wanted to leave and it created a situation on the streets that wasn’t good for anyone,” St. Romaine said.

Essential employees such as police officers, firefighters and 911 operators will report to work as usual, he said.

The closing of city offices also includes the Department of Public Health and Human Services at 1005 W. Worley St. The Tuesday night STD clinic and Tuesday WIC appointments are canceled. The next STD clinic will be held 5 to 7 p.m. Feb. 11, and the WIC clinic is rescheduling appointments. To reschedule a WIC appointment, call 573-874-7384.

Boone County departments and offices will remain open Tuesday but with minimal staffing.
Columbia Public Works crews are preparing for the snow, which is expected to start in the late morning, pick up in intensity between noon and 6 p.m. and continue falling overnight. Total accumulation is predicted to be around 6 inches, with heavier accumulation in northern areas, Public Works said in a news release.

The city is asking people to keep roadways clear by avoiding travel if possible and by removing vehicles from priority routes so plows can clear roads.

City ordinance designates first- and second-priority snow routes as no-parking zones when the city gets 2 or more inches of snow accumulation. The city encourages people to move their vehicles off priority routes before snow begins falling.

Vehicles parked on priority snow routes will be issued a citation and might be towed at the owners expense if necessary.

A map of priority routes is available at www.comosnow.com.

Abandoned cars blocking traffic lanes also will be towed at the owners expense if necessary.

Latest winter blast set to bring 3-5 inches of snow to area today

By Jesse Bogan jbogan@post-dispatch.com 314-340-8255

MU MENTION P. 2

ST. LOUIS • It was March 8, 1960. Elvis Presley had just returned to Memphis after a two-year stint in the Army. Life no longer on hold, he took a moment to share a bit of advice for anybody else getting drafted.

“The only thing I can say is to play it straight and do your best, because you can’t fight ’em,” he told reporters, drawing laughs. “So you can make it easy, or you can make it hard on yourself.”
Today’s winter is Elvis’ Army. No matter the complaint. No matter the conviction. The seasons don’t care what you think.

Today, 3 to 5 inches of snow is expected, starting around 10 a.m. The temperature is expected to top out about 30.

And even though it won’t matter, people say they have had enough of winter.

“This is horrible, especially when you are catching public transportation,” said Amber Winsor, 23.

Waiting for a ride, she tried to keep her ears warm as she huddled next to her friend Tyler Smith. Both of them have 1-year-old babies. Both were dressed in blue scrubs. Both share the same hour and a half commute from south St. Louis to work as nursing assistants at Children’s Home Society of Missouri in Brentwood.

Smith, sporting a tall stocking cap, was less reactionary about the weather.

“We are dealing with it,” she said. “We have to.”

It still doesn’t mean they have to like it.

The cold weather also has school administrators scrambling once again. They are trying to figure out how to make up all the snow days this year without cutting too much into summer. Meanwhile, salt stocks for roads are running low.

And, of course, banter about the weather is endless.

The average temperature in January was 28 degrees, just 4 degrees colder than normal. Nearly 16 inches of snow fell, three times the average. And lots of wind. Adding to the frustration, January was never one-size-fits-all. The low was minus 8 degrees, the high 60.

That high temperature was tantalizing for tuck-point workers who need a few days of warm weather for new mortar added between bricks to dry.
Without the warmth, “it won’t expand, it’ll just freeze,” said Glenn James, an independent contractor ready for winter to end. “When it warms up, it’ll pop out because it doesn’t cure.”

The Wentzville School District in St. Charles County has already taken seven snow days. District officials plan to swap professional development for teachers and vacation days for class time.

“Like a lot of districts, this is the worst winter we’ve had since the 2010-11 school year,” said Matt Deichmann, a spokesman for Wentzville schools.

By early evening, school was still supposed to be in session there today. “We don’t call off on forecasts,” he said.

**The University of Missouri, however, did just that. Citing forecasts of up to 8 inches of snow, officials said Monday night that the Columbia campus would be closed today.**

So far this year, there’s been 21.5 inches of snow in St. Louis. During the entire 2013 winter season, there was 24.9 inches.

“It could pass last winter season (today),” said Jayson Gosselin, a National Weather Service meteorologist in Weldon Spring.

Todd Waelterman, the St. Louis streets director, said the city is well prepared for the incoming snow. Many of the city’s plows were damaged during last month’s storm, but they have since been fixed.

“We’ve been at 100 percent for about a week,” Waelterman said. “So we’re ready.”

The city came under fire for providing no snow removal on side streets after last month’s heavy snow. Waelterman said the city hasn’t made a decision about its side street snow removal policy; historically, city workers have left those areas untouched. He said the city will consider plowing and treating those streets if snowfall exceeds 6 inches and is followed by cold temperatures.

He also said the city will consider digging out places where cleared streets intersect with those that aren’t cleared.
“That’s where a lot of people got stuck last time,” Waelterman said.

It’s a record year for salt use in the city, he said, but St. Louis has plenty.

Other areas aren’t in as good of shape. On the riverfront Monday, at the Beelman barge terminal, a manager was too busy to talk about shipments. Salt mountains typical of the spot were mostly gone.

“We are running low and have feelers out for more salt,” said Bruce Murray, the Richmond Heights public works director. “We have enough to handle this upcoming storm and probably one more. You never want to run out.”

Richmond Heights is part of a co-op that buys salt for about $50 a ton. The next big shipment isn’t due until March.

Officially, winter doesn’t end until March 19. In 2013, most of the snow came late, including March 24, when a storm dumped more than 12 inches on the area.

Derelle Price, 20, a bagger at Schnucks in south St. Louis, said he was ready for anything, though he hadn’t heard much about the forecast. He racks up all the empty carts in the parking lot and hauls them inside.

“I can get it in,” he said. “I can work in the cold as long as I am bundled.”

Nicholas J.C. Pistor of the Post-Dispatch contributed to this report.

RecycleMania returns to MU for seventh year
Monday, February 3, 2014 | 6:14 p.m. CST; updated 6:25 p.m. CST, Monday, February 3, 2014

COLUMBIA — Alicia LaVaute has been emailing MU department heads to ask for their garbage.
LaVaute, an administrative assistant for the MU Sustainability Office, is spearheading the university’s efforts in RecycleMania, an eight-week competition between more than 500 universities to recycle the highest percentage of their waste.

This is MU’s seventh year competing in RecycleMania. In 2013, MU ranked 173 out of 523 schools with a total recycling percentage of 24. MU ranked 20th in the "Gorilla" category, which measures the sheer weight of recycled material. Last year's Grand Champion was MU's sister school University of Missouri-Kansas City with an 86 percent recycling rate.

More students are volunteering to haul compost to MU's Bradford Research and Extension Center this year, LaVaute said, and she hopes that will tip the scales in favor of MU.

"Last year we composted 2,000 pounds and this year we will be up to 8,400 pounds," LaVaute said.

LaVaute said she thinks MU's recycling rate is average, but it could be better if students knew what materials they can recycle and where they can recycle them.

"I don't know if there needs to be better education in place or why people would put a soda can in the trash when a recycling bin is right next to it," LaVaute said.

"When you recycle a can it can be back on the shelf within 60 days in some other form."

Students can see updated rankings of their school’s performance in each category at the RecycleMania website.

The winning school receives a gift made out of recyclable materials and the rights to host that category’s traveling trophy for that year.

The Sustainability Office will have a table in the Student Center every week until the end of the competition on March 29, except for spring break. The Sustainability Office will give away water bottles and other merchandise to promote the contest.

Students can recycle paper, cardboard, aluminum, plastics No. 1 and No. 2, steel and glass in recycling bins around MU.
Bill targets cancer treatment
Advocates seek equal coverage for chemo pills.

JEFFERSON CITY (AP) — JoAnn Shaw was first diagnosed with cancer at age 19. Then again at 25. And 37. And 53. Each time, she was treated with intravenous chemotherapy.

Today, she wears a wig, talks with a raspy voice and is in danger of losing sight in one eye — not because of the cancer, but because of the side effects of the treatment, she said. "I am a walking result of four cancer diagnoses with traditional infusion therapy," Shaw, 68 of St. Louis, told a Missouri Senate committee this past week. She added: "Although it saved me, it's destroyed most of the other systems" in her body.

Shaw came to the Capitol in support of a newer and less physically draining way to treat cancer through chemotherapy pills that are swallowed like most other medicines.

Legislation pending before Missouri Senate and House committees would require insurance companies to charge patients the same out-of-pocket costs for chemotherapy pills as they do for chemotherapy treatments pumped directly into the bloodstream.

Patients now often are charged more for oral chemotherapy, which is covered as a pharmacy benefit, than for intravenous therapy, which is covered as a medical benefit requiring only a routine co-payment for an office visit.

Twenty-seven states and the District of Columbia already have enacted laws requiring equal coverage for oral and intravenous chemotherapy treatments. The trend began in 2008 in Oregon and continued last year with new laws in more than a half dozen states.

Ruth Pirch of Oak Grove said her husband was diagnosed with cancer in his lungs in the spring, marking his fourth cancer diagnosis since 1990. She said an oncologist recommended an oral chemotherapy drug that would have cost
$6,000 to $7,000 every six weeks. But they decided that was too expensive on a long-term basis, so her husband has been receiving intravenous treatments covered by Medicare and private insurance.

"I feel like I'm speaking for a lot of families who are concerned and have to make this decision on what they're going to do," Pirch said. "I just think that we need to have parity."

An actuarial study by Overland Park, Kan.-based Lewis and Ellis Inc. found that Missouri health insurance premiums would rise by an average of 57 cents per month if a law were enacted requiring equal coverage for oral chemotherapy. That equates to a roughly $12 million impact statewide, said David Smith, a lobbyist for Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield of Missouri.

The Missouri legislation would prohibit health insurers from requiring higher co-payments and deductibles for oral chemotherapy than for intravenous treatments. It also would prohibit insurers from increasing the patient payments required for intravenous chemotherapy to make them equal to higher oral chemotherapy costs.

No one testified against the bill at a Senate insurance committee hearing. But Smith suggested the legislation could be changed to lower the costs to insurers. Smith pointed to a Kansas law, which lacks the prohibition on the costs of intravenous chemotherapy rising to create parity with oral treatments. He also cited a California law taking effect in 2015 that sets a maximum $200 co-payment for each chemotherapy pill prescription.

About half of the most common forms of cancer now can be treated with oral chemotherapy, said Carl Freter, chief of hematology and oncology at the Ellis Fischel Cancer Center at the University of Missouri-Columbia. The pills not only are more convenient for patients but also typically lack side effects such as vomiting and hair loss that accompany intravenous chemotherapy. "This is really the future of chemotherapy," Freter said. He added: "Oral therapy simplifies cancer care — it simplifies it for patients, it simplifies it for physicians, nurses and everybody taking care of cancer patients."

Shaw said her life has been far from simple as a cancer patient undergoing multiple rounds of intravenous chemotherapy.

"Infusion therapy worked, obviously — I'm here. But the effects," she said without finishing the sentence. "We know that there's not the same long-term effects with the oral chemotherapy."
Mizzou Baptist Student Union builds bonds during trip to Cuba

By ASHLEY JOST

Fourteen University of Missouri students had one item on their agenda when they went to Ciego de Avila, Cuba, this month: relationship-building.

The visit was unlike a normal mission trip, but the students and their three advisers from the Mizzou Baptist Student Union said it was still very rewarding.

"Normally on a mission trip we build something or help in a soup kitchen or do a lot of different menial jobs, and willingly," Baptist Student Union Director Jerry Carmichael said. "This time, there weren't any of those to do. The pastor said the first day we met, 'The only thing you're going to be building in your time here is building relationships.' That was a very significant part of the trip, and the best part for us."

Carmichael organized the trip with an old friend, Ned Walsh, who said he stopped counting the number of trips he has made to Cuba after he reached 40. Walsh, now retired, is a former Baptist minister and executive director of Habitat for Humanity in Smithfield, N.C.

The group left for Cuba on Jan. 7 after a two-day delay in St. Louis because of snow and stayed until Jan. 15, a few days before classes resumed at MU.

To travel to Cuba, the students needed a visa and a hosting group, and that was where Walsh helped. Emmanuel Baptist Church offered to host the students, as it often does when Walsh organizes these trips, and the students were able to get a religious visa.

Megann Whitaker, a sophomore at MU, said the trip showed her that despite the political and economic differences between Cuba and the United States, people from both countries have many things in common.
"They had the women making blankets and clothes for people in the hospital; they were doing food drives — a lot of the same community efforts that we do," she said.

Whitaker and Carmichael both cited the same experience as their favorite from the trip: a daylong celebration of Epiphany, a Christian holiday that celebrates the revelation of God the Son as a human being in Jesus Christ. They said Ciego de Avila children came to the church to get a few small presents, many of which were dollar-store trinkets purchased by the MU group.

That same day, Whitaker and the other students prayed during a baptism ceremony for a baby girl.

Whitaker said the baby is part of an annual program at Emmanuel Baptist Church in which, starting Jan. 1, church members collect everything a new mom would need to raise an infant for the first few years.

Collection stops Christmas Day, when the church then offers the collection to the mom.

"I didn't understand anything they were saying, but I understood exactly what was going on," Whitaker said about the baby's dedication ceremony.

During the trip, MU students and their advisers spent time with college students who were studying English and eager to share conversation with native English speakers, Carmichael said.

The trip cost $1,500 per student, and participants raised money to foot the price, which covered airfare and a hotel in Ciego de Avila. The trip was a first for Mizzou Baptist Student Union, but Carmichael said he hopes there are more in the future.
By CATHERINE MARTIN

MU MENTION P. 2

Since June, Chris Campbell has announced several opening dates for Tree Top Innovative Learning Center. During a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the unfinished building in December, Campbell said it would have a "soft opening" Jan. 10, but that date has come and gone, and the planned day care facility is not close to opening.

Last week, Campbell said the building would be finished today. However, he still has a long list of things to do — most notably getting a license to operate a child care facility — before Tree Top can open.

Darin Preis, director of Central Missouri Community Action, which administers the local Head Start program and previously funded a day care operated by Campbell and his wife, Tiffany, said he isn't surprised it is taking as long as it is.

"From what I understand, they're kind of building the car while they're driving it," Preis said. "I'm not too surprised it's taking so long; they really are pulling it together as it's going."

Campbell and his wife dreamed up the idea for Tree Top, and Larry Slates, owner of Mid Missouri Electric, has let them use his building at 4470 Highway 763 N. free of charge. Their plan is to start with a day care and eventually expand to offer other programs, such as GED classes, to make it a community center.

"I want to change the community," Chris Campbell said.

Companies have donated time, labor and materials toward completion of the facility, and most have not expressed concern with the missed opening dates.

Over the past few weeks, the Campbells have made headway on the building — floors and fire alarms were installed and emergency exits added. Chris Campbell said the group plans to have building work done by today.

But the Campbells still need to be licensed to operate a day care, and that, Preis said, can be a "lengthy process."

To open a child care center in Missouri, an organization must meet a long list of requirements — none of which the Campbells have completed. The facility must pass a safety inspection conducted by the state fire marshal; must be compliant with local or state, or both, sanitation requirements; and must be compliant with local building requirements.

Once those inspections are complete, then the group is eligible to receive a day care license.
"It's a matter of getting everything done and making sure they can cross everything off the list," Preis said.

The final consideration is funding. Campbell said Tree Top has raised $233,000 so far, but "97 percent" of it has been in-kind donations — materials, services or other non-monetary donations. The group's goal is to raise $1.5 million more in cash, which would pay for staffing, tuition and other needs. Chris Campbell is unemployed, and his wife works part time as a nurse.

"We really need funding," Tiffany Campbell said. "If anyone wants to see where the money is going, we're an open book. We have nothing to hide. The only thing we want to do is help families in need."

Tree Top describes itself as a "Non Profit organization" on its Facebook page, but Campbell said last week he has not yet filed the paperwork with the IRS to create a 501(c)3. Tree Top registered as a not-for-profit corporation at the state level in 2012, but the corporation was dissolved by the state in December because the Campbells did not file an annual report. Campbell said he plans to file a report soon, and he will apply for tax-exempt status with the IRS.

Steve Jeanetta, an expert on community development who works for University of Missouri Extension, said a group is "technically a nonprofit" if it only incorporates at the state level, but there are caveats. A 501(c)3 is not necessary for in-kind donations, Jeanetta said, but cash donations — especially of the size sought by the Campbells — require federal tax-exempt status.

"They can accept donations, but they can't accept money with" the donors’ "expectation that they will get a tax deduction," Jeanetta said. "If they are going out trying to get large sums of money, they need to do a 501(c)3, if possible. Once they get past $10,000, they have to file for exemption."

Despite all the delays, Tree Top's donors still have faith the Campbells will get the work done and open the facility.

"I firmly, strongly believe in those kids. They're pretty determined, and I think they'll find a way to get it done," said Dave Griggs, owner of Dave Griggs' Flooring America, which donated flooring for Tree Top.