Police: Students less likely to 'snitch out' Mizzou athletes

Columbia Police have consistently declined to comment on any pending investigation into Sunday's alleged burglary involving Missouri wide receiver Dorial Green-Beckham. That changed Wednesday.

Jill Schlude, the department's assistant chief of police, went on KFRU 1400 AM's The Morning Meeting to discuss local crime with co-hosts Simon Rose and Renee Hulshof.

Before we get to her comments, here's what Columbia Police have essentially offered in recent days regarding Green-Beckham's status: No comment.

The department's public information officers have told the Post-Dispatch and other media outlets that Green-Beckham has not been arrested but would not say whether he was being investigated for a crime. That's typical for a criminal investigation.

On Monday, the Kansas City Star reported that Green-Beckham is “part of an ongoing investigation by Columbia Police, according to Sgt. Joe Bernhard, but has not been arrested.” Bernhard did not comment further, the Star reported "but said information about the investigation would be available later in the week."

Asked to clarify those comments, Bernhard responded to the Post-Dispatch with an email saying he did not tell the Star there was an investigation.

On Tuesday, Columbia Police responded to the Post-Dispatch’s records request with a one-page information report on Sunday’s alleged first-degree burglary at Brookside Townhomes.

The suspect, victim and witnesses are all listed as confidential, though the file included Green-Beckham's name in the title. The report lists the incident as forced entry. Listed under weapons used are “hands/fist/feet.”

Back to Wednesday's radio interview:

Schlude told the hosts that police are "actively investigating" Sunday's incident but could not comment whether Green-Beckham will be arrested.

“Do we have probable cause to arrest?,” she said. “We have to treat it like any other investigation.”
The hosts asked Schlude whether Mizzou students who witness such incidents are less likely to cooperate with a police investigation.

“Absolutely less likely,” Schlude said, according to a transcript of the show provided by KFRU. “I think it’s difficult, and I understand the difficulty, but it’s difficult because we have folks who feel like, especially if you’re a Mizzou student, do you want to be the person, to use their terminology, who ‘snitched out’ somebody who’s this big athlete star on campus, whatever? But honestly that’s why we accept anonymous tips as well and we’re OK with those.

"But I do think there’s a lot of pressure there sometimes on the students that are there, even people who aren’t students who are there. But I think it’s even more so on the students.”

That’s slightly more than “no comment.” Schlude’s response could suggest police are having difficulty with witnesses or perhaps a potential victim cooperating with the case. Earlier this week, two male Mizzou students were quoted in stories about the incident in The Maneater and Columbia Missourian but neither claimed to see Green-Beckham having an altercation with a woman — they only heard about it from an unidentified neighbor. Neither student has responded to emails from the Post-Dispatch.

Fear of 'snitching' keeps students from reporting incidents involving student athletes

Wednesday, April 9, 2014 | 5:32 p.m. CDT

BY DOMINIQUE FELDMAN

COLUMBIA — No one wants to be a snitch, especially when the person being reported is well-known Missouri wide receiver, Dorial Green-Beckham.

When police investigate a crime involving MU student athletes, witnesses are often afraid of being called a snitch, which causes potentially crucial information to be withheld, Jill Schlude, the Columbia Police Department's assistant chief of police, said on a radio show Wednesday morning.

This "no snitching" phenomena is prevalent in Columbia and keeps investigations from moving forward, Schlude said.
MU students who witness such incidents are "absolutely less likely" to cooperate with the police, Schlude said on KFRU/1400 AM's morning show, "The Morning Meeting."

"I understand the difficulty, but I think it's difficult because we have folks who feel like, especially if you're a Mizzou student, do you want to be the person who, to use their terminology, 'snitched out' somebody who's this big athlete," Schlude said.

To help students report incidents without fear of repercussions, Columbia police accept anonymous tips through Crime Stoppers.

The conversation soon took to Twitter, where one user attributes the silence to "hero worship as well.

"I do think there's a lot of pressure there sometimes on the students that are there, even people that aren't students that are there," Schlude said.

The investigation about Dorial Green-Beckham's actions early Sunday morning is still ongoing and no arrest has been made by the Columbia Police, Schlude said.

Mizzou's Ross filed restraining order against teammate Price

By Dave Matter dmatter@post-dispatch.com 314-340-8508

COLUMBIA, Mo. • A day before he was arrested twice on four counts of assault, Missouri basketball player Zach Price was the target of a restraining order filed by former MU teammate Earnest Ross.

The Columbia Daily Tribune first reported the ex parte order of protection on Wednesday.

Ross, a senior on the 2013-14 team, filed the petition against Price on April 2 at the Boone County Courthouse — less than a month after Ross spoke glowingly about his teammate as the Tigers prepared for their regular-season home finale.
“Ever since he got here me and that dude have been connected,” Ross said on March 4. “We’ve been kicking it ever since day one. We haven’t been apart. He knows my family really well. I know his family really well. We’re just like brothers. Whenever I’m off the court, that’s who I’m kicking it with.”

Since then, their relationship somehow led to Ross fearing for his safety.

According to the petition, Ross listed their relationship as “were good friends,” but Ross alleged that on April 2, Price stalked him near Rock Bridge Elementary School in Columbia, along with the following passage: "reckless driving near car, hit my car a few times, was following me and trying to steer me off the road, tried to harm me and and put me in danger. He performed illegal traffic violations in order to harm me and my vehicle, followed me while i was going to police station. My girlfriend was also in the vehicle."

Ross also wrote, “I feel threatened by this activity and violated. He endangered my life and not only me but others around me. All I want is to feel safe.”

Ross, 23, requested the court restrain Price from entering his dwelling, coming within 100 feet of Ross and having any communication with Ross.

A day after the alleged incident described in Ross’ petition, Price was arrested twice by Columbia police.

Officers responded to a disturbance call in the early hours of April 3 where Price was in a fight with an unnamed man and woman, both 23, according to the probable cause statement. Price followed the alleged victims in his vehicle to Stadium Boulevard where he blocked the man’s vehicle with his own to prevent him from leaving the area. Price exited his vehicle and punched the man in the face. The woman tried to intervene and Price pushed her to the ground. Both alleged victims received minor injuries. Price was arrested on suspicion of third-degree assault and third-degree domestic assault with bonds set at $1,000 and $500 and was released after posting bail.

Later that day, an officer arrested Price at his apartment on suspicion of second-degree assault and second-degree domestic assault stemming from an incident the previous day, April 2, when he was accused of ramming his vehicle into a vehicle belonging to the same man from the other incident.

The initial police report does not identify Ross as the male victim, but the age (23) matches Ross’ age, and the location of the incident, the area of Bethel Church Road and Route K, is nearby Rock Bridge Elementary.

Missouri basketball coach Frank Haith suspended Price from all team activities following the first arrest. When asked Wednesday if Price’s status had since changed, team spokesman Dave Reiter referred to Haith’s initial statement that Price was suspended indefinitely.

As of Wednesday, Price had not been charged with a crime for either incident.

The 6-foot-10 transfer from Louisville joined the Mizzou program last summer and was expected to be part of the frontcourt rotation next season after sitting out the 2013-14 season per NCAA transfer rules.
"I'm looking for him to be able to do big things next year," Ross said of Price on March 4. "I just tell him, 'Man, you've just got to work on your game each and every day and never take a day off, because as you can see now, your time is going to come sooner than you think.'"

Earnest Ross: Zach Price 'put me in danger'

Wednesday, April 9, 2014 | 9:43 p.m. CDT
BY JOSEPH TREZZA, RYAN HOOD

COLUMBIA — Just a few months ago, Missouri basketball players Zach Price and Earnest Ross were such close friends that Ross would leave his dog — a labrador and coonhound mix named Sady — at Price's apartment when Missouri played road games.

Price couldn't travel with the team on the road because of transfer rules, but on nights before home games, the friends would eat crab legs together for dinner.

Fast forward to April 2, when Ross filed a restraining order against Price.

In the restraining order, which the Missourian received a copy of on Wednesday, Ross alleges that Price attempted to cause Ross physical harm, stalked Ross, harassed Ross and followed Ross from place to place on April 2 — one day before Price was arrested twice for assault.

The 6-foot-5, 228-pound Ross wrote that Price "tried to run me off the road" with his vehicle, and that "all I want is to feel safe."

"Everybody involved is very surprised that this is happening," Patrick Eng, Price's lawyer, told the Missourian on Wednesday night. "I think it boils down to a big misunderstanding between two good friends."

Eng declined to elaborate on that misunderstanding.
"It'll play out and I think it'll blow out to be nothing quite frankly, but we'll see," Eng said. "I'm hopeful that that is the case, but it's up to the prosecutor who has this under review and they will make that judgement."

Price's first arrest on April 3 was in the early morning, for an alleged assault against a 23-year-old male, according to the Columbia Police Department. Price was accused of
punching the male in the face and pushing a female companion to the ground in the area of Heather Lane and Ash Street.

He was arrested again around 3 p.m. on suspicion of second-degree domestic assault and second-degree assault in connection with an incident that occurred in the afternoon of April 2. Both are Class C felonies (the third most severe out of four types in Missouri).

Eng told the Missourian that Price is not currently charged with any criminal charges.

"When someone gets arrested, normally they're charged right away. Most of the time, they're charged right away," Eng said. "In his case, when I got involved, I assumed he was already charged, but it turns out he is not charged."

Ross, 23, provides details of an incident in his petition for the protective order. "He (Price) has tried to harm me and my girlfriend in my vehicle, tried to run me off the road several times," Ross wrote in the order. "I feel threatened by this activity and violated. He endangered my life and not only me but others around me. All I want is to be safe."

Ross wrote that the violent incident between him and Price occurred near Rock Bridge Elementary.

Although previous police reports have said that Price was arrested for assaulting a roommate, Ross' protective order says the two "never resided together." When asked to describe his relationship with Price, Ross wrote that they "were good friends."

"There's a good explanation on that, I'm not going to comment further," Eng said, when asked about the discrepancy in the two's living situation.

In another section of the order, Ross is asked to describe the nature of Price's abuse or stalking. "Wreckless (sic) driving near car, hit my car a few times, was following me and trying to steer me off the road," Ross wrote. "Tried to harm me and put me in danger. He performed illegal traffic violations in order to harm me and my vehicle. Followed me while I was going to police station. My girlfriend was also in the vehicle."

The order demands that Price not come within 100 feet of Ross and not communicate with Ross in any manner or through any medium. The restraining order went into effect immediately after Ross's paperwork was filed to the Boone County Court at 4:04 p.m. on
April 2. Price will have a chance to tell his side of the story to a judge when the case is heard on April 16 at 9 a.m. in the circuit court.

The case is notable not only because Ross and Price were so close just a short while ago, but also because an overwhelming number of restraining orders are filed between men and women, according to Boone County Sheriff Department detective Tom O'Sullivan. "I've been a cop for 26 years and I don't recall many times when a man got one against another man," O'Sullivan said.

The 6-foot-10, 250-pound Price sat out this season after transferring from Louisville. He did not return a phone call requesting comment.

Missouri coach Frank Haith suspended Price immediately following last week's arrests. It's unclear whether Price will play for the Tigers next season.

Tipsheet: SEC athletes keep lawyers busy

By Jeff Gordon jgordon@post-dispatch.com

The Southeastern Conference has had plenty to brag about in recent years, but athletic citizenship isn’t one of them.

Various SEC programs have made headlines for transgressions ranging from relatively minor (disorderly conduct) to extremely serious (assault, robbery and rape).

 Athletic misbehavior is not a new phenomenon in major college programs. Sports Illustrated and CBS News did data research on the preseason Top 25 teams and found that 7 percent of the athletes had been arrested or cited for lawbreaking.

 The New York Times took a long look at what became of the 2008 national champion Florida Gators. The findings were not pretty.

 The University of Missouri has racked up a series of arrests and citations since joining the SEC. They range from pretty silly (Maty Mauk’s scooter misadventure) to extremely serious (swimmer Sasha Menu Courey’s suicide after claiming three football players raped her.)
With three Mizzou basketball players in the news lately along with star receiver Dorial Green-Beckham, folks are wondering if MU is an extreme case.

Sadly it is not. Here is a quick scan of transgressions at some of the other schools:

VANDERBILT: At the Harvard of the SEC, former football players Brandon Vandenburg, Cory Batey, Brandon Eric Banks, 19 and Jaborian McKenzie are facing five counts of aggravated rape and two counts of aggravated sexual battery for an alleged incident with an unconscious co-ed. This case is headed toward trial.

ALABAMA: Freshmen defensive back Eddie Williams, defensive end D.J. Pettway, linebacker Tyler Hayes and linebacker Brent Calloway were arrested on robbery charges after two separated instances. They were dismissed from the team.

SOUTH CAROLINA: Linebacker Angelo Watley got nabbed on charges of grand larceny, credit card theft and violent burglary. He had an earlier arrest in Gwinnett County on six counts of terrorist threats and acts. The most recent Gamecock arrest was for more typical college activity; defensive tackle Nalty Rodgers was cited for disorderly conduct and consumption of alcohol by person under the age of 21.

MISSISSIPPI STATE: Linebacker Chris Hughes was dismissed from the team after his third arrest in two years on domestic abuse charges. Overall, he was arrested five times for a misdemeanor violent crime in a three-year span.

LSU: Tailback Jeremy Hill was arrested last month after a bar fight, reminiscent of the incident that got then-quarterback Jordan Jefferson suspended. That left him with some explaining to do to NFL teams. Coach Les Miles was pleased that this was just the sixth LSU arrest in three years. “We’re way ahead of most of the pack,” he said, according to NOLA.com. “We address it uniformly, right away and our guys recognize we’re all attached.”

FLORIDA: Some of their more recent arrests include cornerback Loucheiz Purifoy (possession of marijuana), offensive lineman Jessamen Dunker (motor scooter theft) and Antonio Morrison (punching a bouncer and barking at a police dog). At least Aaron Hernandez waited until he got into the NFL to land in jail on a murder beef.

OLE MISS: The team’s rap sheet includes Philander Moore (domestic violence and simple assault), quarterback Barry Brunetti (possession of drug paraphernalia), linebacker Denzel Nkemdiche (excessive 21st birthday celebration) and linebacker Serderius Bryant (public drunkenness on Oxford Square).

TENNESSEE: Several football players were recently arrested or cited after an off-campus party got out of hand. Linebacker A.J. Johnson was charged with purchasing alcohol for a person underage and resisting arrest. Defensive tackle Danny O’Brien was charged with criminal impersonation, resisting arrest and underage consumption of alcohol. Former linebacker Dontavis Sapp was also arrested for resisting arrest and other charges.
KENTUCKY: Some of the recent beefs include offensive lineman T.J. Jones (weapons law violation back in his hometown), linebacker Pancho Thomas (possession of a controlled substance) and running back Khalid Thomas (ditto).

GEORGIA: Safety Tray Matthews, defensive linemen Jonathan Taylor and James DeLoach all got rung up for theft by deception). They generated double payments on meager $71.50 checks, depositing the checks with a mobile device and also cashing them at a convenience store. This was not the crime of the century, but it did stir negative press.

TEXAS A&M: Some of the more recent arrests include cornerback Deshazor Everett and safety Floyd Raven (assault causing bodily injury) and defensive lineman Kirby Ennis (disorderly conduct and display of a firearm).

None of this excuses the activity at Missouri, of course, but it does put the recent news in some context.

Thompson Center teams up with Mercy Autism Center in St. Louis
Wednesday, April 9, 2014 | 7:15 p.m. CDT

BY CECILIA MEIS

COLUMBIA — After more than a year of discussions, MU's Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders announced plans Monday to partner with the Mercy Autism Center in St. Louis.

The partnership will work to expand clinical care, professional education and research for individuals and families affected by autism spectrum disorders, according to a statement released by the university.

The partnership is focused on long-term goals, and Columbia won't see an immediate increase in health care professionals, said Jesslyn Chew, health information specialist at the MU News Bureau.

The announcement came just two weeks after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released new statistics on the overall prevalence of autism spectrum disorder.
disorder. The study, conducted in 11 states in 2010, estimated 1 in 68 children who are 8 years old have been identified with autism spectrum disorder, according to the report. Autism spectrum disorder is a group of neurodevelopmental disorders that can cause significant social, communication and behavioral challenges, according to the CDC website.

The partnership is not a direct result of the recent statistics but reflects the need for expansion, Chew said.

Groundwork for the partnership was laid when representatives from both centers began working on the Missouri Autism Guidelines Initiative, which is a guide to best-practices regarding autism. Stephen Kanne, executive director of the Thompson Center, and John Mantovani, medical director of the Mercy Kids Therapy and Development Center and chairman of pediatrics at Mercy Children's Hospital, were members of the initiative's leadership team.

As part of the partnership, Mercy Autism Center will adopt the initiative's best practices for autism, which are already used by the Thompson Center. The guidelines address screening, diagnosing and creating an intervention plan centered on a community collaboration model, according to the document.

"Dr. Mantovani and I have worked together for years, and a great example of our prior collaboration was our work on the Missouri Autism Guidelines Initiative Best Practice guide, which is used across the state and even nationally," Kanne said in a statement.

Plans to partner with Mercy Autism Center began more than a year ago and the Thompson Center anticipates the partnership to be finalized within six months to a year, Chew said. Officials from both centers will meet in May to discuss final plans.
First openly gay Missouri athlete Greg DeStephen returns for LGBTQ panel

Wednesday, April 9, 2014 | 11:14 p.m. CDT; updated 11:31 p.m. CDT, Wednesday, April 9, 2014

BY BRANDON FOSTER

COLUMBIA — Wednesday marked the first time a Division I men's basketball player came out as openly gay. University of Massachusetts guard Derrick Gordon made the announcement to ESPN and Outsports.

Wednesday was also the first time diver Greg DeStephen, Missouri's first openly gay athlete, returned to Columbia since Michael Sam's coming out put him in the news.

DeStephen spoke on a LGBTQ Alumni Panel on Wednesday evening as part of Pride Month. The All-American came out in 2008. His story gained national publicity in February after the Missourian published a profile of him days after Sam's announcement.

DeStephen spoke Wednesday about the struggles he experienced after being outed by another member of the Missouri swimming and diving team. He hopes that being a public face can help other athletes struggling to publicly embrace their sexuality.

"My hope is that my reaching out to the gay community and athletes specifically helps somebody who's younger, who's in the closet in the incredibly masculine atmosphere of being an athlete," DeStephen said.

DeStephen said that while the older swimmers did not want to initially interact with him after he was outed, the atmosphere improved during his time at Missouri. He also believes the environment in the sports community has improved drastically in the past decade.

After Sam's announcement, Jason Collins became the first openly gay NBA athlete to play a game.
"When I saw the reaction to Michael Sam coming out ... all the media support was immense," DeStephen said. "It was not only surprising, but it was awesome to see that the sports world is moving in that direction. Because thinking about four or five years ago, that would not have been the case."

DeStephen now works as a college recruiter for Ernst & Young in St. Louis. He said the corporate world has also become more open.

"My whole (Ernst & Young) team knew I was coming down here to do this panel and speak on these issues, and yesterday, when I was leaving, they left me a good-luck card on my desk saying how proud they were of me," he said. "Just thinking back 10 years ago to what you would think the corporate world would be like, I think it's changed leaps and bounds."

The four-person panel spoke about the difficult situations they had endured at Missouri as members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community. Stories of insensitivity and harassment shed light on a city that wasn't always as open as the one that generally embraced Sam's announcement in February.

"But now, I just can't believe it. I mean, look at you. Look at you! It's wonderful. We would have never seen anything like this in an alumni center," panelist Pam Cooper said. "We're very open now."

DeStephen, who had never been a part of such a panel before, said he didn't take advantage of MU's LGBTQ resources, though he was aware of them. However, he believes they could be helpful to Missouri athletes.

"I trained 25 hours a week and was in school, as well, so it wasn't the first thing on my mind to go (to the LGBTQ center). I think it's a big opportunity for the center to reach out to the athletic department and have a dialogue and really be able to talk to student athletes who are afraid to come out."
Is Workout Motivation Hereditary?

It seems as though some people are just hardwired to exercise, doesn’t it? Well, according to a new study published in *The Journal of Physiology*, the desire to go after it might come from your parents.

**Scientists at the University of Missouri bred male and female rats that had voluntarily run the most on wheels in the lab. Then they did the same with rats that ran the least.**

The researchers found that the animals that were bred to exercise, given the opportunity, were more likely to exercise voluntarily than the offspring of more sedentary rats. Another interesting finding was that when scientists examined the brains of the rats, they found that the animals that were bred to run had more mature neurons in the nucleus accumbens, the part of the brain responsible for reward processing. In another experiment, researchers placed the less active rats on running wheels, encouraging them to exercise. After six days, although they had run less than the activity-bred animals, their brains began to show more mature neurons in their nucleus accumbens.

In other words, they were training themselves to enjoy exercise. Dr. Frank Booth, a professor of biomedical sciences at the University of Missouri, told *The New York Times* that the data suggest “that humans may have genes for motivation to exercise and other genes for motivation to sit on the couch.”

Now we might not have brains like rats, but this should tell us that even if we've picked up laziness from our parents, it's no excuse to skip the gym.
Ellis Fischel partners with M. D. Anderson Cancer Network

April 07, 2014 BY Kaylie Denenberg

The Ellis Fischel Cancer Center, a part of the University of Missouri Health System, has joined forces with a University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center program in the fight against cancer. The program, M.D. Anderson Cancer Network, aims to end cancer through nationwide collaboration with other health systems and hospitals, according to a press release from MU Health.

Both partners in this affiliation have proven success in the world of medicine. The University of Missouri Health System encompasses hospitals, physician clinics and a school of medicine, as well as health professions and nursing. M.D. Anderson has received the number one position in cancer care 10 times in the past 12 years in a survey conducted by the U.S. News and World Report.

Mutual emphases on multidisciplinary cancer care and shared goals to eliminate cancer make the organizations a good match, explains MU Health Care CEO Mitch Wasden. Ellis Fischel Cancer Center is the first academic member of the network and recognizes the need for innovation and constant improvement to achieve success.

The affiliation was officially approved at the University of Missouri System Board of Curators’ meeting on Jan. 31, 2014. Paul Dale, M.D., medical director of Ellis Fischel Cancer Center, is hopeful about the benefits it will have for the community, citing better access to a world-renowned cancer center and opportunity for more collaboration on treatment options for those with rare cancers as possible benefits.

According to the press release, the Ellis Fischel Cancer Center is the only cancer center in the region that does screening, diagnosis and treatment in the same building. It has a vast reach through the state, serving people from almost every county with inpatient and outpatient services.
MU family medicine ranked among nation’s best

April 04, 2014 BY Steven Benna

For the 21st consecutive year, the University of Missouri School of Medicine's family department has been ranked in the top 10 by U.S. News & World Reports Best Graduate Schools.

The school's Department of Family and Community Medicine is ranked eighth on the list for the specialty of family medicine.

“We are pleased to be recognized so consistently as a leader in family medicine education,” said Harold A. Williamson Jr., M.D., executive vice chancellor for health affairs at the MU Health System, in a press release.

“Through our hospitals and clinics and our health sciences schools, we touch the lives of Missourians across the state,” he said. “Being ranked for more than 20 years in the top 10 for our family medicine program, however, shows that our efforts as educators have been recognized nationally by our peers.”

This year, the U.S. News & World Report surveyed 153 schools in total: 128 medical schools and 25 osteopathic medical schools. MU was also ranked 29th for its primary care training program and 75th in research.

The MU School of Medicine offers three learning tracks – undergraduate medical education for medical students, graduate medical education for resident physicians and fellows, and doctoral and master’s degree programs in basic sciences and health management and informatics. Students can also study medicine and basic sciences through the Tom and Anne Smith MD-PhD Program.
MU researcher examines options for aging workforce

April 08, 2014 BY Torie Ross

By 2016, more than 25 percent of active Missouri state employees will be eligible for retirement. In a recent study conducted by Angela Curl, assistant professor at the University of Missouri School of Social Work, Curl suggests the state may need to reexamine deferred retirement incentives to protect the stability of the workforce.

“Employers need to ask if their organizations are designed to promote turnover or promote retention. States should recognize the benefits of promoting retention,” Curl said.

The concern with such a large amount of the workforce becoming eligible to retire all at once is that the “continuity, membership and institutional histories of the state government workforce” may be threatened, according to Curl. Additionally, Curl suggests that states should take necessary steps to retain skilled employees in positions that are difficult to fill.

The study specifically looks at Missouri’s Deferred Retirement Option Provision, or BackDROP. Under the BackDROP program, state employees who have worked at least two years beyond their normal retirement eligibility date are qualified to receive a lump sum payment of 90 percent of the benefits they would have received had they retired when eligible. The state has since discontinued this program for new hires.

The study, titled “A case study of Missouri’s deferred retirement incentives for state employees,” looked at 296 Missouri state employees to define what circumstances or predictors determined if the employee chose to defer retirement or not. The study found that the best predictors of this decision were the employees’ knowledge of retirement options, what their job entailed and the age they became eligible to retire. Employees who were aware of BackDROP and who had become eligible to retire at an older age were more likely to defer retirement. The study also found that social demographics such as race, sex, level of education and marital status did not play a significant role in an employee’s decision to defer retirement.
MU study finds small biomass power plants could help rural economies

April 09, 2014 BY Claire Boston

A recent MU study found that harnessing bioenergy through biomass power plants small enough to fit on farms could benefit people in rural areas.

Creating a power grid from a group of small biomass power plants in rural areas could decrease farmers’ electric bills and relieve the national power grid.

“Transporting power through power lines to remote, rural areas is very inefficient and can be expensive for farmers and other rural citizens,” MU agricultural economics professor Tom Johnson said. “If [farmers] had access to small biomass power plants, they could become close to self-sustaining in terms of power.”

Johnson said farmers have plenty of biomass left over after each harvest season, making a biomass power plant a cost-effective way of producing power. With an improved grid, the small power plants could even provide power to people outside each farm, which could stimulate rural economies.

Right now, Johnson’s idea for a rural bioeconomy is only hypothetical. He said before rural citizens could become bioenergy producers, policymakers must work with residents to grow infrastructure in rural areas.

If the bioeconomy were to be created, Johnson said safeguards would need to be put in place to protect renewable resources like biomass from farm waste. The distribution of investment rewards would also need to be monitored to prevent local citizens from becoming impoverished by biomass destruction or environmental degradation.
Johnson outlined the details of his biomass study in a paper entitled “Rural development opportunities in the bioeconomy,” which was published in the April 2014 edition of the journal *Biomass and Bioenergy*.

In addition to serving as a professor in MU’s College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources and the Truman School of Public Affairs, Johnson also serves as the director of the Community Policy Analysis Center, which brings together expertise from CAFNR, the College of Business and the Extension to study economic and social decision-making in rural areas.

**WHAT OTHERS SAY: MU professors explain disinterest in public office**

Wednesday, April 9, 2014 | 3:04 p.m. CDT

BY JEFFERSON CITY NEWS TRIBUNE

Political calculation is about winning, not competing.

That concept is among a number of reasons offered by two political science professors for the lack of contested races in upcoming elections.

In the aftermath of the March 25 filing deadline for state and county offices, we lamented in this forum how a seeming decrease in candidates is diminishing voter choice and, consequently, representative government.

*We invited feedback from political science professors at MU and received responses from Peverill Squire and John Petrocik. Among the reasons they cited are: political calculation; money, including the high cost of campaigning and low salaries; prospects for advancing to higher office; and the notion of public service.*

Squire characterized districts — primarily state legislative and congressional districts — as “heavily skewed in favor of one party.” The result, he said, is “potential candidates from the opposing party correctly calculate their prospects for victory are so remote that running almost seems foolish.”
Petrocik added: “Missouri legislative districts are designed to elect candidates of the party of the incumbent. It is a waste of mental resources, time, and money to run where prospects are generally hopeless. Ergo the incumbent is rarely challenged. Local offices often have the same trait.”

- **Issue: Money**
Squire said, for many prospective candidates, “a simple cost-benefit analysis argues against running. The financial rewards are insufficient to compensate for the time taken away from one’s family and occupation.”

He added: “Perhaps the biggest barrier ... is the prospect of having to raise campaign funds. Most people find having to ask strangers for contributions objectionable.”

- **Issue: Advancement**
In addition to low salaries for some offices, Petrocik said some seats “are not necessarily good stepping stones to higher office. If an office is not a part of the farm-system structure for higher office and a political career, ‘why bother?’ is the perspective of many who want a political career and think about running for office.”

- **Issue: Public service**
Petrocik said public service is not an “overwhelming force” for people.

Squire went a step further and said, “the psychological benefits that might accrue from a sense of civic duty have decreased as the level of abuse the public hurls at public officials has increased. Simply stated, for most people the thought of holding office is more unappealing today than it used to be.”

The trends identified by these professors are not encouraging.

Political non-compete efforts and public vitriol discourage participation in the process.

What can be done? First, we must insist that periodic redistricting be reasonable and fair, not a political spoils system. We must encourage honest, idea-oriented people to seek office. And we must temper our criticism and disapproval with citizen participation and proposed solutions.

Government is not an “us versus them” proposition. Our leaders and representatives are elected by us, from among us.
We have an obligation to hold them accountable, but that is very different from vilification.

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### MU composer to talk about new Civil War oratorio

**Wednesday, April 9, 2014 | 4:55 p.m. CDT**

**BY THOMAS DIXON**

COLUMBIA — To get Columbia involved in the premiere this month of his oratorio "The War Amongst Families and Neighbors: The Civil War in Missouri," MU composer Stefan Freund will give a presentation at 1:30 p.m. Friday at Commerce Bank, 2000 Bernadette Drive.

The event is free and open to the public.

Freund will be joined by Ralph Kreigh of the Mid-Missouri Civil War Round Table and will present to the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

The oratorio will be presented at 7 p.m. April 24 in Jesse Auditorium. Performers are the MU Choral Union, University Singers and the Columbia Civic Orchestra. Bass-baritone Timothy Jones is the featured soloist. Tickets are $15, and $10 for MU students.

### Mizzou Adventures in Education event is set

**Wednesday, April 9, 2014 at 2:00 pm**
The University of Missouri Graduate School is hosting Mizzou Adventures in Education, a free educational workshop for children this weekend.

The workshop includes more than 30 learning activities for families, taught by MU graduate students. The activities and subjects include cheese-making, computers, voting, stained glass, wildlife, physics and a real cow.

The event, scheduled for 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday in Jesse Hall, is open and free to the public.

Activities are targeted to children in kindergarten through sixth grade, but all families are welcome, according to a news release.