MU AD Mike Alden on Green-Beckham dismissal, recent incidents involving athletes

By David Morrison

Friday, April 11, 2014 at 5:08 pm Comments (1)

Missouri Athletic Director Mike Alden met with the media Friday afternoon, shortly after the university announced it had dismissed star receiver Dorial Green-Beckham from the football program.

Here's the text of that interview:

(Are you worried about what's gone on recently?)

"Certainly it's been a challenging week. And, if you think about that too, it's been a challenging couple months. There have been a number of things that have taken place outside of the athletic competition arena over the course of the last two months that we don't feel very good about. That's something that we're addressing right away. It's unacceptable to be able to see that type of behavior, and something that I know our coaches and students are taking very seriously. I've had an opportunity to visit with all of them, and I'm looking forward to them making significant improvements going forward."

(Walk us through the process of deciding on dismissal for Green-Beckham)

Coach "Gary" Pinkel "are involved in a lot of things all the time, as I am with all my coaches. When we learned of this situation last Sunday, we were in communication right away. Together, as we talked about things not only through the week but all the time, we always try to compare things toward the values we have as a university. Respect, responsibility, discovery and excellence are the values of our university. We try to compare everything we do against that. When we see actions that take place that are inconsistent with what we expect to represent this institution, we have to address those. So Gary and I had an opportunity to visit on those this
week. Gary made that decision and I was with him and supported him with that. Together we talked about it and made that decision I supported. I respect that as he moves forward."

(So this was Pinkel’s call?)

"Yes. And Gary and I work together all the time on lots of things. He's been here a long time, done a lot of great things at Mizzou and made some tough decisions. I know this was very tough for him to make today, too. I support him in that and had an opportunity to visit with him this morning."

(What message do you hopes this send?)

"That actions such as what we have seen over the past couple of months are unacceptable. That is not the way that we're going to represent the University of Missouri. The thing that's so unfortunate is the significant majority of our kids are doing amazing things -- amazing things -- throughout this campus and throughout the community. And to be able to have the actions of a few individuals detract away from all those great things, that's unfortunate and that should not take place. That message to our kids and to our staff is that we have to be able to take that, learn from it and, as we move forward, see that these are not the types of actions we're going to be seen for and known for at Mizzou."

(What would you say to fans who bought Green-Beckham merchandise?)

"For anyone that's out there that is concerned for students, or may be concerned for Dorial, whatever that may be, I'd hope you'd look back and be able to say, 'We're going to be able to respect our university for making the decisions that are necessary to reflect the values of our university.' So those people, I'd hope they'd see it in that light."

(Did you get any indication MU football coaches contacted Green-Beckham's girlfriend about getting her friend not to press charges?)

"I saw that in the police report. I also saw the follow-up that said that didn't take place. We also looked into that. We talked with all of our coaches on that. We were assured by our coaches that that, in fact, did not take place."

(Did the police report's release impact today's decision?)

"I wouldn't say it made it easier. Certainly, it provided more information as we take a look at that. It was very troubling to be able to see that police report, and see those text messages going back and forth. It was just that much more information that was able to be provided to us as coaches to be able to make that decision."

(Does a further emphasis need to be made with MU’s male athletes on how they treat women?)

"You always have to look at that. This is an issue in our society. We understand that. There's no question that one of the most under-reported crimes in our country is domestic violence. We
know that. And, the reality of that is, for us at the University of Missouri, we want to constantly -- be reinforcing to our men and our women about how important it is to be appropriate in whatever relationships you have, or how you conduct yourself with other people. And when we see people step out of line from that, there are going to be consequences with that. For us, in many ways, those are very unfortunate situations. But they also provide teachable moments going forward."

(Did you get a chance to meet with Dorial?)

"I did. We got an opportunity to meet on Monday. I was in Dallas when I found out and, when I returned, we had an opportunity to visit. I was with Coach Pinkel, and we got a chance to visit with him."

(How did that meeting go?)

"We had a discussion to be able to find out from his perspective what had taken place. And certainly to be able to share with him what some of our concerns were and some of our thoughts."

(Explain the difference between burden of proof for committing a crime and it for being on scholarship)

"As we look at things, many times people will equate things with, 'What's the flashpoint?' Was it an arrest? A charge? Whatever that may be. But I think we always have to look at those types of situations individually and also comprehensively when you look at them individually. When you take a look at the actions of individuals, whether they result in charges or not, that still doesn't mean they're appropriate actions. For us, we want to be able to measure that against those values we talk about. Whether there are charges in place or other types of flashpoints that may occur that people see in the community, we want to measure those against our values."

(Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said today you two have had a discussion about what's been going on in athletics.)

"Chancellor Loftin, we're excited to have him here as our leader. I enjoy working with him and our conversations. Most of the time when I call Chancellor Loftin, you want to call him when really good things are going on, like winning a conference championship in wrestling, having a national champion in wrestling, whatever that may be. It's unfortunate that I've had to call him on some other issues over the last couple of months. But he's always supportive. I think he understands the nature of our business and higher education, that these things are going to occur. He shares in our frustration at the frequency of the number that have occurred over the last couple of months is certainly unacceptable."

(What does it say about the culture in the athletic department that the alleged victims of Green-Beckham were afraid to press charges?)
"I don't know if that directly says anything about the athletic department. I would hope it wouldn't, but it may. In itself, it may be saying something about these types of issues nationally. When we see high-profile people that perhaps have performed some level of transgression, that there are going to be other influences that are going to maybe encourage those people not to pursue things, because of the high-profile nature of things or the intensity that may take place in regards to the victim. It raises your awareness, makes you continue to be cognizant and continue to make sure you're completely transparent and always talking to your people about doing the right things."

(What's your reaction to the independent counsel report into how MU handled the Sasha Menu Courey case?)

"I haven't had a chance to read the report. I was able to listen to the press conference. I would tell you it would seem to me that Dowd Bennett did a good job and a thorough review. From what I heard on the press conference, there are probably going to be a number of things that all of us can take from that, to be able to learn and to be able to grow. I'm looking forward to getting a chance to read the report."

(Any indication from Columbia police that the investigation could lead to arrests of former athletes?)

"No, I have not gotten any indication either way."

(Is there any way Green-Beckham could be an MU athlete again? Could he continue being a student?)

"Dorial will no longer be a football player at Mizzou, will no longer be a student-athlete at Mizzou. For us, our focus for him would be he does the things necessary for him to be able to either learn from these things taking place or to be able to grow. I know he's currently a student at the University of Missouri. I don't know if that's going to continue for him. As far as from our position standpoint, he's no longer a part of our football program, nor will he be."

(Does he have the option to stay as a student?)

"I don't know the answer to that question."

(Are you taking specific steps to address the athletes in the wake of these incidents?)

"On Monday, I met with all of our coaches at 1 o'clock in the afternoon, and I spent about 30 minutes with them reminding them what our core values are, what our expectations are for all of us, how we're all accountable for the actions of our students and our staff and how it's critically important for every time we see something or hear something that we have to make sure we share it with other people. And I took it from there and met with every single student-athlete here at Mizzou over the course of the last four days. Every one of them. And I did it in team settings. I reinforced that message to our kids as well, to make sure I reminded them that the vast majority of all of our kids, our students and our staff are doing amazing things. And it's unfortunate that,
by the decisions of a few, that's impacted all of us. So how important it is that you've got to live with your core values, you've got to believe in them, and you've got to recognize that the logo never comes off. It never, ever comes off. No matter where you are, no matter what you're doing, you're always going to be representing Mizzou. So we did that pretty emphatically this week.

"At the same time, we think we have pretty solid student conduct processes that we have in our athletic program. However, based upon the fact that we've had a number of these incidents over the last couple of months, we're going to have a group that's going to come in and take a look at how we handle our student conduct issues in our athletic program, and kind of measure those against some other schools around the country. We'll be doing that this summer. We've hit it, I think, pretty aggressively this week. We're taking it head on. I had a chance to meet with every single person that's part of our athletic teams."

(Has this been a coincidence? Have standards for recruiting MU athletes slipped?)

"I don't know. I want to say it's a coincidence. I think it is, because I think over the course of the time I've been here, I've never seen this concentration of the number of incidents off the field. I'm thinking it's a coincidence, but we're not going to sit back and just think it is. That's why we're going to take a hard look at it. And we're going to make sure we're addressing it head on, consistently as we go forward."

(When you're recruiting a player, how much background checking do coaches do?)

"I think our coaches do a great job in that, that when we're going into the high school and the homes that we're spending time not only evaluating our students on how they're going to do academically and also athletically, but we're also taking a look at the background. What's their home life like? What's their character like? Who the people are that they hang out with, whatever that may be, to the best of our ability. Again, I think our staff does a great job of that. Are we going to be 100 percent? No, we're not going to be 100 percent. But I think they do a good job on that and certainly we're always going to be looking for ways that we can continue to vet our prospective students."

(Is there pressure on coaches to take a chance on people now that MU is in the SEC?)

"I don't think so. We understand the intensity and pressure we have to compete at the high level, nationally and our league. We had those same pressures in the Big 12. I don't think that we need to ever -- ever -- sacrifice those characteristics we're looking for in our students for the sake of trying to win ballgames. I will say that, at times when we have found that those students we have recruited to come to Mizzou are not consistent with those, I think we've made pretty direct decisions. As recently as today. I don't think so. Our coaches certainly focused on doing things the right way with the right values."

(How did Green-Beckham's previous legal troubles factor into the dismissal?)
"I think that played into the decision. When you have a series of incidents over the course of the last year and a half with regards to one individual, certainly those aren't things you can disregard. I think you've got to add all of those together."

(Why not suspend rather than dismiss?)

"For us, we always try to apply toward those values we talk about. And in our opinion, over the course of the last year and a half -- and now this most recent incident -- we felt it was appropriate to not have him be part of our football program anymore. Those people that say, 'I don't think you should be doing that,' I understand. Just like I'm sure there might be other people who think, 'Why didn't you do that earlier?' I don't think you can answer every one of those critics who are out there, but I think we felt like it was something important for us to do today."

(Are you concerned there are incidents you never hear about?)

"You're always concerned about things like that. You would hope that that wouldn't be the case, but you're always concerned. That, again, was the message we were delivering to our kids and our staff this week. That mantra we have that 'if you see it, you hear it, you own it,' that's the message we're delivering to our staff and our kids. Just because maybe you weren't involved and you weren't party to this, if you heard about it and saw it, let somebody know about those types of things. You would hope that you would get all the information you possibly could. I think we'd be naive if we thought we were getting everything. But we work hard on it every day."

(If this was an isolated incident, would Green-Beckham still be around?)

"I think that's speculation. You don't know. We're just trying to deal with what we're dealing with here right now. I wouldn't want to speculate on that."

(Do you think you have a culture problem in your athletic department?)

"No. We don't. I think I've addressed that a couple of times. I appreciate you asking that question. If you look at our athletic program, I think we have an amazing group of students, an amazing group of staff members. I don't think there's any question. Do I believe we have a few kids in particular over the course of the last couple of months that have done things that are inconsistent with our values? Absolutely. That is unacceptable. Do I think that is a cultural problem we have in our program? No, I don't. But it's certainly something that raises your awareness, and you want to make sure you address it head on. That's what we're doing right now."

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Posted in Behind The Stripes on Friday, April 11, 2014 5:08 pm.
A week of shame finally ends for MU’s athletic program

Supporters of college athletics often talk about its almost magical abilities to enhance a university’s image.

But it turns out that the seamy side of college athletics also can really sully a school’s reputation.

Just ask the University of Missouri.

Very bad news for MU and its athletic department rolled in all week long, culminating with two more embarrassments Friday — a star football receiver was kicked off the team and an independent report was issued finding fault with MU’s investigation of a sexual assault case involving a female student swimmer who committed suicide.

The incidents should put pressure on MU officials such as system president Tim Wolfe, athletic director Mike Alden, football coach Gary Pinkel and basketball coach Frank Haith to clean up these messes.

The University of Missouri is too fine of a school to become a sad, national joke because of what’s happening in the athletic department.

• On Friday, an independent counsel’s report concluded that MU mishandled the alleged sexual assault of swimmer Sasha Menu Courey.

The report makes the university look bad, because it did not follow federal Title IX rules for the reporting and investigation of sexual assault.

This was a sad case that, as The Star reported, had plenty of twists and turns in it, ultimately ending with Menu Courey’s suicide.

She had alleged she was raped by at least one football player in 2010.
Wolfe, to his credit, seems prepared to make sure MU does a better job in the future protecting the women entrusted to its care by parents around Missouri and the nation.

- Football star Dorial Green-Beckham was kicked off the team Friday after being in the news more for what he did to not get arrested this time around.

Columbia police released a report that included simply head-shaking statements by people involved in the case, especially his girlfriend.

She had exchanged messages with women who had thought about pressing charges after Green-Beckham allegedly broke into their apartment.

Eventually, no one would decide to cooperate in any prosecution, including the girlfriend, who reportedly had been dragged by her neck by the wide receiver.

Pinkel appropriately removed Green-Beckham from the team Friday.

- Basketball player Zach Price was kicked off the team by Haith this week, for good reasons.

Price had been arrested twice in recent days, on domestic assault and assault charges.

In one of the case, a former teammate — Earnest Ross — even got a protection order against Price.

At many other schools, this would be a wake-up call, a sign that something was wrong within a team or an athletic department.

**SAM MELLINGER**

**Missouri athletic department starts to walk its talk**

April 11

**BY SAM MELLINGER**

The Kansas City Star

There are no winners today.
A bright young football star is without a team. A promising team is without its most talented player. And a university that talks constantly of character and integrity is answering questions about kicking out two athletes following allegedly violent incidents and what more it might have done as an institution in a tragic situation that ended with a young woman’s suicide.

No, there are no winners today, just a string of bad decisions and unfulfilled potential and lots of police reports taking away from the pride and excitement so many of us get from college sports.

But as Missouri athletic director Mike Alden, football coach Gary Pinkel and basketball coach Frank Haith — and everyone around them — try to move on, they can be strengthened in the knowledge that they walked their talk this week.

On Thursday, they kicked basketball player Zach Price off the team after alleged incidents involving former teammate Earnest Ross and a woman. On Friday, they pledged changes in school policy following the release of an independent report criticizing their handling of the alleged rape of MU swimmer Sasha Menu Courey, who committed suicide.

Later Friday, they dismissed the biggest star on campus, sophomore wide receiver Dorial Green-Beckham, from the football team.

“We have a high standard of conduct for our student-athletes,” Alden said in a statement. “Though we provide the resources and mentoring to all of our student-athletes, we are also responsible to the community at large and to the ideals and values of the University of Missouri.”

Coaches like to say that adversity is opportunity, and going forward that could be said of the entire MU athletic department. Eight arrests of seven athletes, plus the Green-Beckham and Menu Courey situations — this is exactly the opposite of what Alden and MU’s other leaders profess to be about.

This is not walking the talk.

MU’s boldest move toward accountability came Friday afternoon when Pinkel announced Green-Beckham’s ouster on the heels of an investigation that included a Columbia police report alleging the player broke into an apartment last weekend and pushed a woman down at least four stairs.

Included in the police report are text messages from another woman, the receiver’s girlfriend, claiming that Green-Beckham dragged her by her neck. Two women declined
to press charges, according to the report, in deference to Green-Beckham’s stardom and future in football.

Both player and football team are diminished by the breakup. Green-Beckham will either transfer to a smaller college, where he would be able to play this fall, or sit idle until 2015, when he’ll be eligible to enter the NFL Draft. Either way, he is damaged goods, and Missouri will follow its SEC divisional championship season without its top playmaker.

Many will look at Friday’s events and connect the dots between an embarrassing run of legal problems for MU athletes, the handling of Menu Courey’s sexual assault allegations and suicide, and Green-Beckham’s dismissal. It will be easy for some to think of Green-Beckham as the sacrifice, the one paying for the sins of others. But that’s not fair.

Green-Beckham was arrested twice before, and if Price was kicked off the basketball team for his alleged transgressions, Missouri had set the standard already. Alden couldn’t let the punishment for a relatively low-profile basketball player be greater than the punishment for the football team’s biggest star.

What Green-Beckham is alleged to have done — and MU coaches and administrators have a lot more information about this than the public does — is every bit as troubling as what Price allegedly did.

This is an athletic department that prides itself on character and integrity. Alden has repeated that over and over. He referenced it in suspending Pinkel after a drunk-driving arrest two years ago, in defending the controversial hire of basketball coach Frank Haith and in explaining the decision to kick a rowdy student group out of two basketball games last season.

**In response to the university’s more recent problems, Alden spoke with every Mizzou athlete this week. He sought to reinforce the ideals that he wants them to represent.**

“The logo never comes off,” he told them.

In dealing with incidents as serious as a football star allegedly hurting women, those words have to be more than a catchy slogan.

Administrators and coaches cannot be expected to baby-sit every athlete or monitor every move. Trouble happens. This is inevitable. The important part is minimizing it and keeping the image of the athletic department relatively clean.
Until this week, MU had failed in that task.

On Friday, strong threats drew strong responses from Alden and the athletic department. That’s a good start.

Hopefully.

Read more here: http://www.kansascity.com/2014/04/11/4954220/missouri-athletic-department-starts.html#storylink=cpy

Bernie: Gary Pinkel does the right thing

April 11, 2014 5:20 pm • Bernie Miklasz bjmiklasz@post-dispatch.com

Missouri coach Gary Pinkel did the right thing in expelling out-of-control sophomore wide receiver Dorial Green-Beckham from the football team.

I respect Pinkel for taking a principled stand here, even if it means cutting ties with his most talented offensive player. DGB was an emerging force as a playmaker in the SEC, and it couldn't have been easy for a coach to remove such an abundantly skilled wideout from his offense.

It's good to be a dangerous receiver.

It's unacceptable to be a dangerous person.

To his credit, Pinkel understood the difference.

To some, this was the obvious decision to make. This was the only decision to make. DGB's latest display of irresponsible conduct was abominable and couldn't be ignored.

Except that isn't entirely true; Pinkel could have finessed this. After all, DGB wasn't charged with a crime. Yes, the police report was damning and embarrassing and filled with disturbing details that included DGB forcing his way into an apartment and getting violent with a girlfriend and another woman. This was straight from the Lawrence Phillips playbook, and that's scary.
But police didn't arrest Green-Beckham, didn't file charges, didn't pursue the matter after the alleged victims essentially backed off and refused to go forward with their cooperation in the investigation.

That gave the coach an opening if he wanted to run a power play through it. Pinkel could have taken the heat, let the controversy calm. Pinkel could have announced that DGB would remain suspended, be given time to get therapy for anger management, and would have the opportunity to prove that he was worthy of a chance to rejoin the Tigers.

All major-college coaches are under pressure to win, to field an entertaining product, to compete for conference titles and invitations to prestigious bowl games, and to keep the money flowing from happy donors who demand a successful football program.

There's little doubt that Pinkel could have kept Green-Beckham around. The coach would have been criticized by some, and ridiculed by others. But he’s built equity at Mizzou, has established a formidable power base, and is coming off a great 2013 season.

Because of that, Pinkel he could have ridden out the storm, and sheltered DGB. Instead, Pinkel did the ethical thing here. In terms of willingly sacrificing what DGB could do for him on the field and on the scoreboard, Pinkel is a lesser coach. But he's a better leader for this.

Pinkel reaffirmed that he does have standards, and that his players must abide by a reasonable and simple code of conduct. And the coach made it perfectly clear that he would not make a special exception for the sake of retaining a remarkably gifted athlete.

This troubled young athlete has made a series of terrible decisions, two of which led to his arrests in marijuana-related incidents. Green-Beckham clearly wasn't associating with the right kind of people. It’s obvious that he learned nothing from his first mistake, or his second mistake, or other mistakes that we don't know about.

I'm wrong to try and read what's in this kid’s mind and heart, but it seems that DGB must have believed that his talent was more than sufficient for the continued use of a free pass that enabled him to do whatever he pleased, with no real fear of repercussions.

I can see how this happens. It's an offshoot of the inherently corrupt system he played in. With revenue reaching astronomical levels, and athletic departments addicted to money, and fans and boosters lusting for 10-win seasons and national prestige, great players are an essential part of a highly profitable business enterprise.

From a young age they learn that adults will overlook their character flaws, or pull them out of jams. The grownups will make excuses for their failures, and quickly blame others for their misdeeds.

DGB apparently underestimated Coach Pinkel.
If Green-Beckham and those who supposedly care about him are smart, he'll find the right path and grow into a mature, responsible adult and teammate. This could be good for him in the long run. But somehow I doubt it. Because you know there are coaches out there right now, salivating over the possibility of adding him – and using him – for a year until he flies off to the NFL. A line of enablers are probably cueing up as I write this, and as you read this.

Mizzou football will be benefit from this, long-term. Because there are a lot of good kids out there, high school stars who come from good families, and have responsible friends. Kids who want to play in a positive setting, led by strong coaches who enforce rules and create an environment that cultivates teamwork and accountability. Kids who don't want to get involved with outlaw programs that cater to pampered stars.

By dismissing Green-Beckham, Pinkel sent a message to every recruit out there: Mizzou is that place. You can enter this program, and you can compete in the biggest games in the best conference in the sport. You can succeed in the classroom and on the field. You can put yourself in position to earn a degree, or play in the NFL, and the coaches will do everything they can to help develop you as a person and a player. But to do that, you'll have to be a responsible citizen and a respectful teammate.

That's a positive, sturdy platform to stand on.

And that's where you'll find Gary Pinkel.

Mizzou still has a lot to clean up in its athletic program, and in the sports culture in Columbia. But this is a start. If we're going to call out the MU leaders for their failures, it's only fair to commend them when they take appropriate action.

Thanks for reading ...

— Bernie

Mike Alden vows for change after Dorial Green-Beckham dismissal

Friday, April 11, 2014 | 9:17 p.m. CDT
BY MATTHEW FAIRBURN

COLUMBIA — Dorial Green-Beckham is no longer a part of the Missouri football program and won't be a part of the program in the future.
Green-Beckham, who was suspended indefinitely by the team Monday, was the suspect in an alleged burglary early Sunday morning, but Columbia police announced Thursday that he would not be arrested because the victims declined to press charges. On Friday, Missouri head football coach Gary Pinkel decided to dismiss Green-Beckham from the team, a decision athletics director Mike Alden supported.

"Respect, responsibility and excellence are the values we have as a university, and we compare everything we do against that," Alden said in a press conference Friday. "When we see actions take place that are inconsistent with what we expect to represent this institution, then we have to address that."

Green-Beckham's latest run-in with police comes after two marijuana-related arrests in his first two seasons with Missouri. He's the latest Missouri athlete to have a run-in with police, but he's not the first.

Earlier this week, Zach Price was dismissed from the Missouri basketball program after being arrested on assault charges. In March, four Missouri student athletes — two football players and two basketball players — were arrested and suspended for marijuana possession. In 2010, Derrick Washington was dismissed from the football team, and in 2011, Michael Dixon was dismissed from the basketball team. Both were accused of sexual assault.

The leaders of these programs have not been exempt. In 2011, Pinkel was arrested for driving while intoxicated. Basketball coach Frank Haith spent the first five games of the 2013-14 season suspended for NCAA violations.

Add the findings of the independent review of Missouri's handling of the Sasha Menu Courey allegations, and a troubling pattern seems to have developed around Missouri athletics.

"I think I want to say it's coincidence," Alden said. "I think it is, because over the course of the time that I've been here, I've never seen this concentration of a number of athletes like this off the field. I'm thinking it's a coincidence, but we're not going to sit back and just think it is. We're going to take a hard look at it, and we're going to make sure we're addressing it head on consistently as we go forward."
In Green-Beckham’s case, the victims told police that they declined to press charges against him because of his standing as a Missouri football player — he was ranked the No. 1 recruit in the country in 2012 by Rivals.com and led Missouri with 59 catches and 12 receiving touchdowns in 2013. Alden insisted that Missouri’s coaches had no contact with the victims to pressure them not to press charges.

"I don't know if that directly says anything about the athletic department," Alden said. "It may. I would hope it wouldn't, but it may. I think in itself, it may be saying something about these types of issues nationally.

"It raises your awareness. It makes you continue to be cognizant and continue to be sure you're being completely transparent and always completely talking with your people about doing the right things."

After initially suspending Green-Beckham indefinitely Monday, Alden met with every coach and athlete involved with the athletics department — beginning with Green-Beckham on Monday — to reinforce the core values of the university.

"The logo never comes off," Alden said. "It never, ever comes off."

Alden also said the athletics department will have an outside group review Missouri's student conduct policies, compare them against other schools and make suggestions about where Missouri can improve.

"We've hit it pretty aggressively this week," Alden said. "We're taking it head-on."

Alden could not say whether Green-Beckham would have the opportunity to continue as a student at Missouri, just that he would no longer be a part of the football program going forward.

Having only been in college for two seasons, Green-Beckham is not eligible to enter the NFL Draft until 2015.

If Green-Beckham were to transfer to another Football Bowl Subdivision school, he would need to sit out a season before being able to take the field because of NCAA rules. However, Green-Beckham could transfer to a Football Championship Subdivision school and play immediately.
For now, Green-Beckham is the face of an athletics department that has been mired in off-the-field incidents. He's the latest example of a Missouri athlete going against Alden's standards. Alden repeatedly said Friday that the majority of athletes at Missouri are doing the right things, but negative incidents such as Green-Beckham's have become more prominent for Missouri's athletics department lately.

"Do I believe we have a few kids in particular over the course of the last couple of months that have done things inconsistent with our values? Absolutely, and that is unacceptable," Alden said. "But do I think that's a cultural problem that we have in our program? No, I don't."

Pinkel says DGB's dismissal was about more than football

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

COLUMBIA, Mo. • Gary Pinkel won’t remember Friday as one of his favorite days in a head-coaching career that’s reached its third decade. Faced with one of his biggest decisions as he approaches season No. 14 at Missouri — what to do with troubled wide receiver Dorial Green-Beckham — Pinkel ultimately asked himself two questions.

What’s best for Green-Beckham?

What’s best for the Mizzou program?

Pinkel considered both factors of equal importance, he said Saturday.

Both factors led to the same solution.

“I made the decision that, No. 1, we want to help Dorial get better,” Pinkel said in his first interview since dismissing Green-Beckham from the team Friday. “I think that’s really, really important, that he gets some help. And also I have to protect the other No. 1: I’ve got to protect the integrity of the program.”

Pinkel revisited that phrase several times with reporters after the teams scrimmage Saturday, and made it clear this wasn’t a football-related choice. Green-Beckham’s
pattern of behavior since his freshman year — two drug-related arrests, a burglary investigation and perhaps other unreported problems, as Pinkel cryptically suggested — led to the decision of Friday.

“I love that kid. I want him to get some help,” Pinkel said. “He can go to another place and get a fresh start and he can still achieve his goals.”

Pinkel declined to elaborate on the process that led to the decision, but he took into account “a lot of things,” he said.

“Things you don’t even know about,” he added. “That’s my job. ... It’s not a real fun day to be a head football coach.”

After meeting with athletics director Mike Alden on Friday, Pinkel met in his office with Green-Beckham and told him he was done playing at Mizzou. Pinkel had suspended Green-Beckham indefinitely on Monday.

On Thursday, Columbia Police announced they had closed an investigation into an incident last Sunday that led officers to pursue a warrant for Green-Beckham’s arrest on suspicion of first-degree burglary, a Class B felony. The alleged victim in the case, an 18-year-old female student, declined to press charges. Police never questioned Green-Beckham during their investigation.

Pinkel told the rest of the team about Green-Beckham’s dismissal Friday afternoon. By then, Alden had met with the football players — as he did Mizzou athletes on every team during the week — to discuss the recent wave of crimes involving MU athletes. Seven have been arrested since January.

“It’s a huge message to all of us,” redshirt freshman receiver J’Mon Moore said. “It doesn’t matter who you are. No one’s bigger than the team. You’ve got to follow the rules that Coach Pinkel and Mike Alden set.”

Senior tailback Marcus Murphy said he talked with Green-Beckham briefly on Friday.

“It hit him kind of hard,” Murphy said. “I don’t think he was expecting all of this to go the way it did.”

It’s unclear what’s next for Green-Beckham, who was widely rated the nation’s No. 1 recruit when he signed with MU in 2012. He’s not eligible to enter the upcoming NFL draft or this summer’s supplemental draft.

If he transfers to another Football Bowl Subdivision school, he would have to sit out the 2014 season per NCAA rules. He could relocate to a lower-division program — Football Championship Subdivision, Division II, III or NAIA — and play immediately then enter the 2015 NFL draft.
Missouri State, an FCS program in Green-Beckham’s hometown of Springfield, Mo., apparently isn’t an option. MSU president Cliff Smart met with his school’s athletics director and football coach last week and decided Green-Beckham wasn’t welcome there.

“That’s not the kind of player we recruit to our program,” Smart told the Springfield News-Leader.

There were other questions for Pinkel to answer. The police report from the burglary investigation last week included a series of text messages between Green-Beckham’s girlfriend and the alleged victim, including a text from the girlfriend saying MU coaches had talked to her about the incident. In a follow-up interview with police, the girlfriend changed her story, saying the coaches talked to Green-Beckham, not her.

But had Pinkel’s staff gotten involved to try to dissuade the victim from pressing charges?

He insisted they hadn’t.

“We don’t do that,” he said. “There’s no coach that texted, that called, that talked to anybody. OK? I guarantee that. We don’t operate like that.”

And what will happen to Darnell Green, the player’s younger brother who signed with MU in February? Will he honor his letter of intent and play for the Tigers?

UM curators get preliminary budget estimates

UM spending plans still in flux.

By Ashley Jost

Friday, April 11, 2014 at 2:00 pm
ROLLA — Administrators presented preliminary budget numbers for fiscal year 2015 to the University of Missouri Board of Curators Thursday, showing about a $5 million decline in the net operating revenue from the previous year.

It is still early in the budget process — which administrators say is a year-round project — that hinges in part on what the Missouri General Assembly does with state appropriations to higher education.

The FY 2015 preliminary budget numbers presented yesterday by Tom Richards, interim vice president for finance and the UM System's treasurer, show a projected $13.7 million net operating revenue — what's left over after the university pays basic operating expenses — which is down from an $18.6 million budget base in FY 2014.

Richards stressed today that this April presentation is to update the curators, "but it certainly doesn't stop here," and it doesn't stop after June when the budget is finalized and approved at the curators' annual meeting in Columbia.

"We're in good shape," Richards said. "We have always balanced our budget, and we will continue to balance our budget."

Richards stressed that much of the possible increases the university could receive from the General Assembly — the governor recommended a 5 percent increase, the House approved a 3 percent increase and the budget bills are now in the Senate — would be for strategic initiatives outlined in the university's strategic plan. If less money comes from the legislature, fewer of those strategic initiatives are funded, he said.

MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said the problem he has as a manager with the waiting period until state appropriations are finalized is that he "can't wait until then to do any planning."

"The only certainty right now is we have no tuition increase," Loftin said. "It's not a huge fraction of our budget anymore, but it's an important one. We tend to dedicate that money to salaries, and so that means it's a people equation. So, if we make plans for a certain size of faculty and staff and the money isn't there to take care of that, that's a problem. I really worry about making commitments to people that could change later on."

Rhonda Gibler, MU’s chief financial officer, said yesterday she isn't "too worried" about how the $5 million change in the net operating revenue could affect MU because "it's still too early to really say what will happen."

This article was published in the Friday, April 11, 2014 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "Curators get preliminary budget; UM spending plans still in flux."

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Posted in Education on Friday, April 11, 2014 2:00 pm.
UM curators vote to sign letter with tax-cut concerns to legislature

By Ashley Jost

Friday, April 11, 2014 at 1:55 pm Updated: 1:55 pm, Fri Apr 11, 2014.

ROLLA — The University of Missouri Board of Curators voted to sign a letter from four-year institutions to the Missouri General Assembly that will express concerns about how tax-cut legislation could affect higher education in the state.

Board Chairman Don Downing brought up the letter yesterday afternoon during the curators' meeting at the Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla.

Downing said today that he was notified about the letter by Martin "Bunky" Wright, the president of the University of Central Missouri's Board of Governors.

Jeff Murphy, assistant director for media at UCM in Warrensburg, said Wright is working on sending the letter to presidents and governing board chairs of the 13 four-year public higher education institutions, asking for their feedback.

The letter is still in draft form, and the draft is not available, Murphy said.

"When he hears from all of them, he will send a letter on behalf of the 13 chairs and presidents to the legislature, urging them to support funding for higher education," Murphy said.

All but one curator voted in favor of the UM System signing onto the letter — Curator David Bradley abstained but didn't elaborate on his reason for doing so.

MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said he hopes the legislature is looking at the expense side in addition to addressing the revenue drawn from taxes and the effect tax-cut legislation ultimately could have on the student learning experience because of decreased appropriations to higher education.
"I'm not a policymaker," Loftin said. "I can't tell them what to do, but I can tell them the impacts. We begin to risk the quality of the educational experience that our students really deserve, and that's my problem."

*This article was published in the Friday, April 11, 2014 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "Board votes to sign letter with tax-cut concerns."

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Posted in [Education, Politics](#) on Friday, April 11, 2014 1:55 pm. Updated: 1:55 pm.

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**Learning Curve**

**Round up: Curators, shared governance and more curators**

By [Ashley Jost](#)  

**Saturday, April 12, 2014 at 9:35 pm**

Apologies for not having a round up last week. It was such a busy week that, once again, everything made it into a story.

**Inside the system:**

- The curators meeting was this week. Of course the biggest news was the report on Sasha Menu Courey and the independent counsel’s conclusions that [MU did not do everything it could have](#) or arguably should have when they were aware of Menu Courey’s alleged rape during 2012.

Also check out David Morrison’s transcription of a press conference with athletic director [Mike Alden](#), with a mention later during the transcript to the Menu Courey report.
- U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill, a democrat and MU alumna, sent out a statement Friday shortly after the Menu Courey report was released: “This report sets out in stark terms that the University must do better. Clearly the University wanted the unvarnished truth about their shortcomings, which is laudable. Now it's time to get to work and make the University a model for victim support and accountability for thorough investigations.”

- A few other things happened at the curators meeting, believe it or not. The board heard preliminary reports about the Fiscal Year 2015 budget, and also voted to sign onto a letter from four-year institutions that expresses concerns about tax cut legislation the Missouri legislature is prioritizing.

- During the Faculty Council meeting a week and a half ago (I know, I know), Gary Ward, interim vice chancellor for administrative services - and now the interim chief operating officer, in case you missed it - spoke about a new shared governance structure he’s implementing. Ward talked about creating two new committees that would address campus facilities planning and space requests, and both of those committees would report to a review committee. The new system includes multiple faculty members and representatives from staff, graduate and undergraduate students. During the meeting, faculty appeared to be pretty pleased with the structure. Ward said he hopes to implement the refurbished committees by the fall semester.

- This week’s legislative update from the UM System highlights the first round of appropriations discussions in the Senate and Gov. Jay Nixon’s announcement about Fiscal Year 2014 withholdings.

- The History Graduate Student Association at MU issued a statement on Wednesday about on-campus child care, stating that the group is “disappointed by the current ambiguity regarding the future status of the” Student Parent Center at the University Village apartment complex, which will be demolished in June. HGSA called the current uncertainty about future day care services “troubling,” and said that such services are “essential to the well-being of the University’s student parents.”

- Hank Foley did our “newsmakers” Q&A a few weeks ago, in case you missed it.

- Additionally, I wrote a Saturday business cover story last week on the Trulaske College of Business’ 100th birthday.

- Check out tomorrow’s Tribune for a Perspectives story on how multi-million dollar gifts are made at MU.

- And last but not least - in case you (somehow) missed it - DGB is gone.

**Outside the system:**

- Last week I did a short story on the Moberly Area Community College Board of Trustees voting to expand benefits to domestic partners. At the time, it never even occurred to me that a definition of domestic partners is imperative. Many thanks to Dan Viets for pointing that out.
I was able to amend the story with MACC’s definition, which includes eight different criteria, listed below, courtesy of Scott McGarvey.

1. Both partners are each other’s sole domestic partner;

2. Neither partner is presently married;

3. Both partners have shared the same regular and permanent residence for at least twelve (12) months immediately preceding the date of applying for domestic partnership status and plan to continue to do so indefinitely;

4. The partners have a shared, committed, socially, emotionally, and financially interdependent relationship in which they share financial responsibility for the common necessities of life such as food, shelter, and the expenses of maintaining a household and are responsible for each other’s welfare;

5. Both are at least eighteen (18) years of age and legally competent to consent to enter into a contract;

6. The partners are not related by adoption or blood to a degree of closeness which would prohibit legal marriage in Missouri;

7. The partners consider themselves to be members of each other’s immediate family; and

8. The partners are not in this relationship for the purpose of obtaining benefits.

I wanted to be sure and include this because it was certainly a lesson I learned about how some phrases are not as specific as the context they are usually used in.

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Posted in Learning Curve on Saturday, April 12, 2014 9:35 pm.

MU increasingly relies on private funding
Bringing in multimillion-dollar gifts to the University of Missouri is a marathon, not a sprint.

When Tom Hiles, the vice chancellor for development and alumni relations, is working with a potential donor, the way he approaches the issue has to be methodical because messing it up could ruin the relationship that MU has with the individual or business.

“You have to earn the right to ask,” Hiles said about asking donors for money. “You have to build a relationship. Sometimes that takes 10 meetings, sometimes it’s just two to get to the promised land of being able to ask.”

The end game is asking the donor for money, but the process is actually figuring out what the donor’s philanthropic passion is and translating that into something that could benefit the university.

Hiles never asks a donor for money from the outset. Instead, the question is, “We’ve had a number of conversations. I would like to ask your permission to come back with a formal proposal in these two or three areas” that the donor is passionate about.

“It doesn’t mean they have to say yes to the proposal right then; it just means we’re going to have this next step in the dance,” he said.

The majority of the time, the next step will be “creating a menu” of options for where the donor can target his or her money based on what the donor is passionate about — such as reducing world hunger, promoting sustainability or helping a specific department. Sometimes there is a specific “ask,” like when a donor’s interests align with a need at MU.

Whether it’s a project menu or a specific request, Hiles said he gets MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin involved if the gift amount exceeds $500,000. At that point, “it’s important the donor knows the chancellor sees this as a priority.”

“Money becomes the aftermath of the vision, particularly of the large gifts,” Hiles said, adding that there is “almost always” a match to the university’s needs. “People like a tax deduction, people like their name on something, but at the end of the day, they want to see impact.”

Raising money from private donors has become more important as state appropriations have fallen in Missouri. This year, the goal is $150 million for MU — money the university counts on to address a variety of needs.

MU spends about 12 cents to raise each dollar it gets from private sources, Hiles said, adding that that’s “competitive” with other universities. The number is kept lower because of the million-dollar gifts, he said.
At any given point, the development team has between 15 and 25 pending proposals out, meaning the potential donor is reviewing either the menu of projects or the specific idea that the MU Office of Advancement has put forward.

Patrick Farrell, chief marketing and communications officer for Enterprise Holdings, said the unrestricted $2 million gift his company gave to MU last year was in part an investment in the company’s future.

Farrell came to MU for a ceremony last year, but the process started two years earlier when the development staff approached him.

“It wasn’t really a tough decision for me,” he said. Farrell is an MU journalism school alumnus who has fond memories of his time on campus, as do many of his colleagues in Enterprise’s administration.

The gift from the Clayton-based company was used to establish an endowment supporting the Mizzou Advantage Sustainable Energy Initiative.

“Sustainability conversations came after the fact,” Farrell said, reflecting on the process. “First we talked about the connection between the two institutions. It took several years of development in getting to know each other. But, we always knew there would be many things we could invest into the university.”

Farrell said part of the consideration to give the multimillion-dollar gift involved addressing the declining state appropriations that higher education institutions are receiving. He points out that state appropriations have stayed below 20 percent of total operating funds and are considered “stagnant” by the UM System in 2013 budget proposal documents.

“For us, it’s about understanding as a corporate citizen of the state, tax dollars alone won’t get them where they need to be,” he said. “They are not public schools any longer. They’re schools funded partially with state and public dollars, but that gap has to be closed by private companies.”

For Cottrell and Kay Fox, the decision to give $5 million to the MU College of Veterinary Medicine was more personal.

The Foxes made the donation in honor of their longtime family veterinarians — both veterinary school alumni — who treated the couple’s dogs during the 1990s when they were sick with cancer. Samarium, the drug that was used to help the dogs before they passed away, was later used in cancer treatment for Kay Fox’s father.
“It had been ticking along in my mind for a long time,” Cottrell Fox said. “As our means built up, I thought we needed to do something about it.”

Cottrell Fox remembers being approached by Ron Cott, the director of development at the veterinary school, and after that, the choice was an easy one — Fox and his wife love animals and have emotional ties to oncology.

Now, Fox is helping MU by talking to a few of his “well-endowed friends” with ties to the university to see what they can do.

“Drawing more people into your Mizzou family really helps,” he said.

Keeping in touch with past donors such as the Foxes and Enterprise’s Farrell is a key part of the development team’s job, Hiles said.

“If they’ve given a million dollars, they can probably give more,” he said. “Your best donors are the ones who have already given.”

To help foster those relationships, Hiles said he is hoping to increase the number of annual follow-up contacts that MU makes with each donor.

“If you put $1 million into an investment house, they will send you a monthly report letting you know what’s in your account,” he said. “Universities haven’t traditionally been very good at explaining and keeping in touch with donors about how we’re using their money and how much is in their fund.”

MU has been doing an annual report with that information, but Hiles wants to expand it to two, maybe three, times a year.

“Historically, companies do better at stewarding their customers than universities do with their donors,” he said. “I think we can learn from the corporate sector.”

The development office is reaching toward a $150 million goal for the year, which ends this summer.

“It’s looking pretty good,” Hiles said about the progress. During the first six months of fiscal year 2014, the MU Office of Advancement raised $88.3 million, or nearly 60 percent of its $150 million goal for the year.

This year brought a few welcome opportunities for the development office to increase its goal with the new 50/50 capital matching grants the Missouri General Assembly signed into law in 2013. The statute creates a public- and private-sector partnership by telling universities to raise half of the money for a capital improvement project with the help of their private donors, and the state might match those grants.
“It’s an experimental year,” Hiles said. “It’s really raised a lot of expectations for our donors, and we just hope we can make this happen.”

Among the other changes in the works for the development team is working with the Athletics Department on the chancellor’s new suite in the football stadium.

Hiles said it’s important to him and Loftin that deans be “involved in entertaining.” The previous space in the stadium allowed room for only one or two deans, and the new space will expand that, as well as allow for more donors.

“It will make for a distinctive experience,” Hiles said. “There will be indoor and outdoor seating and a creative atmosphere with tailgating. For donors who can buy themselves a place in the south of France, we are trying to create experiences with them that they can’t replicate or buy.”

Hiles said another change in the works within the development office is encouraging the 55 or so major gift staff fundraisers — there are about 175 development employees total, with 65 responsible for fundraising of different kinds — to have between 75 and 100 people or companies in their portfolios. These people or companies would be prospective donors whom the major gift staff will work with on building relationships.

*This article was published in the Sunday, April 13, 2014 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "Private money, public education: In a time of declining state appropriations for higher education, MU increasingly relies on private funding."

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Posted in Perspectives on Sunday, April 13, 2014 2:00 am.

Weekend nurses at MU face change in incentive pay program

By Ashley Jost
The deadline is approaching for weekend nurses at University of Missouri Health Care to sign new contracts that would change their current incentive pay program.

Several nurses are concerned that the new program's restrictions on the number of weekends they can take off will prohibit them from receiving their incentive pay.

Mary Jenkins, spokeswoman for MU Health Care, said this new program is in response to the change in the health care industry over the past few decades. During the 1980s, there was a shortage of resident nurses, causing the hospital to implement an incentive pay program, the Personalized Scheduling Program, which provided nurses an additional 54 percent of hourly pay for working weekends.

As the nursing shortage eased in the 1990s, the program changed to a 30 percent incentive. Nurses who started the program the previous decade continued to receive the 54 percent incentive. Then, in 2008, new hires were paid a 24 percent incentive.

Starting May 11, the new incentive program, the Registered Nurse Weekend Program, would create a flat 24 percent incentive pay for all employees who sign the new contract. Jenkins said there are 292 weekend nurses in the health system, and 74 of those nurses are receiving 54 percent or 30 percent incentive pay.

All 292 will be affected by the change because the health system is requiring all participants to work a minimum of two 12-hour shifts 48 out of 52 weekends every year. Previously, weekend nurses were able to take off as much as nine weekends per year. The new program "levels the playing field," Jenkins said, because "the supply of RNs meets, and sometimes exceeds, the demand" today.

"This is about consistency and fairness," Jenkins said. "We want to assure that all RNs working weekends are receiving equitable compensation. Also, that we are remaining competitive in the market. Many hospitals in Missouri and across the nation have eliminated or lessened incentive pay. We can't continue paying higher-than-market pay."

Weekend nurses were notified of the change March 28, Jenkins said. To be part of the new program, they have to sign an agreement by Friday. Those who don't sign the agreement won't receive incentive pay.

The new program starts May 11, but the change in weekend structure doesn't take effect until July 1. Jenkins said the idea for the weekend structure came after MU Health Care consulted with other hospitals that still have incentive systems. "The majority require a commitment of 48 out of 52 weekends," she said.

Two nurses, who asked to remain anonymous for fear of retribution at work, expressed concerns about whether they can successfully participate in the program because they both have children,
and "there is no schedule for when my kids will be sick, and now I have no leeway," as one nurse said.

Another nurse said she felt the change — particularly in the weekend shift change — was "a slap in the face."

The new program is only for RNs and non-exempt nurse supervisors. Licensed practical nurses are not included in the new incentive program and no longer will be eligible for incentive pay, except for those who work at the Missouri Rehabilitation Center in Mount Vernon. Jenkins said those LPNs will receive an additional $3 per hour for working weekends.

"In the current job market, we can't justify accelerated pay for LPNs," Jenkins said, adding there no longer is a shortage of LPNs. Jenkins said the new incentive pay structure was created primarily for RNs because "we want to have more RNs working on weekend shifts."

It is unclear how many weekend nurses have signed the contract so far. Jenkins said those numbers would be available after Friday.

This article was published in the Sunday, April 13, 2014 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "Nurses face change in incentives: MU Health has new contracts."

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Report: Missouri failed to follow law

Updated: April 11, 2014, 9:06 PM ET

By Tom Farrey | ESPN.com

High-ranking University of Missouri officials were required to report to authorities their knowledge of rape allegations involving Tigers football players and failed to do so on multiple occasions long before ESPN disclosed evidence about the possible crime, independent investigators have concluded.

Their 23-page report, commissioned by the governing body for the University of Missouri system, was released Friday and came in response to an "Outside the Lines" story in January.
about Sasha Menu Courey, a former swimmer who committed suicide after alleging she had been assaulted by players.

St. Louis attorney Edward Dowd rejected arguments made by athletic department and other university officials at the time that they had properly investigated the matter. Instead, Dowd and his team of six attorneys concluded that they shirked their duties by not sharing the information they had with police, or with the campus Title IX compliance officer responsible for launching investigations.

"I think it was a fair, accurate and in-depth report, and the recommendations were spot on," Timothy Wolfe, president of the four-campus University of Missouri system, said at a news conference. "We're going to get working on them so this doesn't happen again."

After the report was released, Wolfe called the Toronto-based parents of Menu Courey, whose daughter committed suicide in June 2011 and had written about the incident in her journal and other materials.

"He finally found us," said Lynn Courey, who told ESPN she was pleased with the report. "I'm glad it's out. It's been an emotional three months. I hope we're the last family that has to go through this."

Athletic director Mike Alden later told The Associated Press that he hadn't read the report but listened to the news conference.

"From what I heard, there are probably going to be a number of things that all of us can be able to take from that, to be able to learn and be able to grow," Alden said.

The report drew three conclusions:

**University officials should have acted on information they had in November 2012.** That month, in response to a records request by Courey and her husband Mike Menu, a university custodian of records discovered a chat transcript that had been saved as a draft in the email system of the swimmer in which she alleged a sexual assault by multiple football players. Also unearthed was a medical questionnaire in which Menu Courey wrote that she had been "raped by an acquaintance in February 2010."

Under federal law, campus officials are required to pass along any allegations of sexual assault to the campus Title IX administrator. Instead, once alerted to the records by the records custodian, university assistant general counsel Paul Maguffie contacted "several people within the MU athletic department" -- none are named -- and informed them of the documents indicating a sexual assault. He also discussed the records with a campus student conduct official to consider what actions, if any, they should take.

Their only action was to write a letter more than two months later to Courey and Menu asking if they had any information about the alleged rape. The parents did not respond, lacking faith in the university's sincerity to investigate.
"Nothing more was done," the independent report said. "The (Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights) calls for a 'reasonably diligent inquiry.' These limited steps do not qualify as a 'reasonably diligent inquiry' when there were other reasonable, and likely more fruitful, steps to consider.

"The Assistant General Counsel suggested that concern for Sasha Menu Courey's confidentiality was a reason for not going forward with an investigation in 2012. However, the then-known facts do not justify this disproportionate concern regarding confidentiality. First, no one asked the University to maintain confidentiality -- the Assistant General Counsel merely surmised Sasha Menu Courey's desire for confidentiality based on uncovering no report of the alleged assault from their limited inquiry. Second, the victim's confidentiality became less of an issue because she was deceased. She could not be embarrassed or humiliated or harassed because of the start of an investigation."

Under Title IX, the report said, Missouri "had the obligation to assess, even if Sasha didn't want an investigation," whether other students were at risk, in case the perpetrators were still on campus.

**A local newspaper article that mentioned the assault should have been provided to the Title IX coordinator.** A Feb. 21, 2012 article in the Columbia Daily Tribune on Menu Courey quoted her parents as saying she had written in her diary about a sexual assault "at the end of her freshman year." The article did not offer any other details or cite the name of the attacker. Under Title IX law, allegations revealed in a public forum such as a newspaper also needs to be treated as information to be shared with the Title IX administrator, which was never done.

Among those made aware of the article was Mike Alden, Missouri's athletic director, according to ESPN's investigation. The independent report does not mention Alden or other officials by name.

The article was again passed around among university officials in November 2012, after the chat transcript was making the rounds and causing consternation. An email from the Deputy Custodian of Records stated, "The article mentions her diary and a sexual incident from her freshman year."

Still, nothing was done. The independent report paints a picture of university officials who were incurious at best, and determined not to pursue evidence of a crime at worst.

"There were a number of steps which could have been taken without exposing any more information about the reported sexual assault than was already within the public domain," the report concluded. "First, as the Assistant General Counsel and the Student Conduct Senior Coordinator discussed back in 2012, the University could have interviewed members of the football team. Second, though not discussed in 2012, the University could have interviewed Sasha's friends and her teammates. Each of these interviews could have been done using the February 21, 2012 article from the Columbia Daily Tribune and thereby without exposure of possible confidential information."
"Third, the University could have put out requests to limited groups of students and student athletes seeking information through anonymous tip lines. Fourth, the University could have followed up with the parents to determine what information they had. Fifth, because at the same time they found the chat transcript they also found the (medical questionnaire), which indicated Sasha Menu Courey had told at least one healthcare professional that she was raped, the University could have sought medical releases from her parents to talk to other healthcare professionals. Sixth, as discussed between the Assistant General Counsel and the Custodian of Records in 2012, the University could have reached out to law enforcement and requested that law enforcement conduct an investigation.

"The University could have done what ESPN did to acquire information."

The university failed to have Title IX policies in place for its employees. Here's where Dowd's team cut athletic department and other university officials some slack. They said the university did not properly inform staffers of their reporting requirements under Title IX, or implement a campus plan created earlier in 2012 designed to introduce policies encouraged by the Department of Education.

"The University's lack of the necessary policies to ensure compliance with Title IX is significant and appears to have contributed in large part to the University's failure ... to conduct an appropriate inquiry," the report said. It added: "While we do not conclude that the University 'violated the law,' we do conclude with certainty that the University, as set out above, acted inconsistently with the Department of Education's guidance about the requirements of Title IX and did not act in accordance with what would be expected of a university with a robust Title IX compliance program."

Investigators interviewed 60 people, including Meghan Anderson, a former athletic department official who had a conversation with Menu Courey shortly before her death. In that call, according to Menu Courey's journal, she told Anderson that she had been raped at Missouri. As Anderson did with ESPN, she denied to Dowd's team that Menu Courey mentioned a rape.

That phone call is the only time a university official allegedly had knowledge of the assault, with the exception of medical personnel with whom Menu Courey had shared the information. Those health professionals, however, are bound by confidentiality rules and cannot disclose that information.

"There is no evidence suggesting Sasha fabricated the details of her diary entry," the report concluded. "However, considering all available information, it is not possible to reach a definitive conclusion as to how exactly (she) described the sexual assault, or conversely, to determine what Meghan Anderson heard. In fact, though this is not a conclusion, because Anderson was participating in the telephone call while at a restaurant, it is possible that either because of miscommunication or an inability to hear everything, there was an unintentional disconnect between what Menu Courey said and what Anderson heard during the call."

A Columbia, Mo., police investigation into criminal implications is continuing, which Dowd's team is supporting where they have relevant information, Missouri officials said.
Menu Courey's parents said they hope the Dowd report prompts other sexual assault victims around the country to come forward, and that universities respond to their needs. The alleged rape destabilized Menu Courey, who later was diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder.

"People are suffering right now," Menu said. "They need to be supported. It's not just about prevention, but supporting the current victims who are going through mental health issues. We need to take care of these people so that this doesn't happen again."

ESPN producer Nicole Noren contributed to this story.

Review: U of Missouri failed to follow Title IX in suicide of swimmer who alleged sex assault

Published April 11, 2014
Associated Press

ROLLA, Mo. – An independent report released Friday says the University of Missouri failed to follow parts of the federal law that governs sexual harassment on campus when handling the case of a former swimmer’s suicide.

The report concludes administrators on the Columbia campus should have investigated 20-year-old Sasha Menu Courey's 2011 death after her parents raised questions about the events leading to her suicide. Menu Courey alleged she was sexually assaulted during her freshman year by as many as three football players, 16 months before she died.

The school previously said it didn't act sooner under the 40-year-old Title IX law or more recent U.S. Department of Education instructions because neither Menu Courey nor her parents sought a police investigation and didn't respond to a later request for information. The case was referred to Columbia police in late January after ESPN's "Outside the Lines" raised numerous questions about the university's response.
The report makes no specific recommendations for possible changes but instead provides a detailed accounting of
the university's response. Among its primary findings: The university lacked a policy advising employees of their
obligations to report suspected sexual assault and harassment, which federal law suggested.

University President Tim Wolfe took action on that very issue Tuesday with an executive order that requires all
university employees other than those legally bound by confidentiality to report such claims to the university's Title IX
coordinator.

"It became clear to us that we needed a stronger, more transparent policy," he said at a news conference Friday.

The Title IX coordinator and local police should have been alerted to Menu Courey's claims in November 2012 after a
public records request by her parents produced documents alluding to a possible attack, the report determined. The
Title IX coordinator also should have been told about the possible assault nine months earlier when athletics
department employees learned about it in a local news story, the law firm concluded.

University curators received the report, by the Dowd Bennett law firm of suburban St. Louis, during a closed-door
session in Rolla on Friday. After the meeting, Wolfe apologized to Menu Courey's "family, friends and teammates."

"We're truly sorry for this heartbreaking tragedy and apologize for whatever shortcomings may have occurred on our
part, and our treatment of her while she was one of our students," he said. "You remain in our thoughts and prayers
as a university community."

Wolfe also said the report shows that "our university employees acted in good faith with the best interests of Sasha
Menu Courey and her family in this matter. There was no attempt to cover anything up."

Other sexual assault cases have been linked to Missouri's athletic department, including former running back Derrick
Washington's 2010 conviction for sexually assaulting a tutor in her sleep. Basketball player Michael Dixon transferred
in 2012 after two sex assault claims against him went public, though he was never charged.

The report's release also follows a turbulent week for Missouri athletics, in which transfer Zach Price was kicked off
the men's basketball team Thursday after two arrests and star receiver Dorial Green Beckham was dismissed from
the football team moments after the curators' meeting Friday following an investigation into a suspected burglary. No
charges were filed against either man.

Menu Courey, who grew up outside Toronto, killed herself at a Boston psychiatric hospital after withdrawing from
classes midsemester and being diagnosed with borderline personality disorder, a disease her family said she
struggled with before college but which went undiagnosed.

The Associated Press normally doesn't name alleged victims of sexual assault, but Menu Courey's parents have
publicly discussed the case at length, as has the university.

In a diary entry found by her family after her death, Menu Courey wrote she had told an academic counselor in
Missouri's athletic department about the rape while hospitalized in Boston. The report's five-lawyer investigative team
interviewed the counselor, who longer works for the school, and determined that "it cannot be definitively concluded
that a report of sexual assault ... was made to any employee or official of the university while Sasha was alive, other
than medical personnel."

The ex-counselor told investigators Menu Courey didn't mention a rape, and that the counselors spoke to her while in
a noisy restaurant.

"It is possible that either because of a miscommunication or an inability to hear everything, there was an unintentional
disconnect" between the two women, the report said.
The parents of former Missouri swimmer Sasha Menu Courey are satisfied with an independent counsel’s report released Friday that is critical of the university’s handling of their daughter’s alleged sexual assault.

“T’m finally relieved,” Sasha’s mother, Lynn Courey, said by phone from Toronto. “It’s been a very long three months. It really brought us back to three years ago when everything started with Sasha.”

Menu Courey sought on-campus treatment after an alleged sexual assault by members of the Missouri football team in February 2010, but the incident was not reported because of privacy laws. She committed suicide in June 2011 and the allegation became public in 2012 after her parents read about it posthumously in her journal.

Now, Lynn Courey and Mike Menu hope that Sasha’s legacy will strengthen resources available for sexual assault victims and help prevent similar tragedies.

“T’m really hoping that Sasha’s legacy is the catalyst in the transformation for how the University (of Missouri) will become a model for all other universities and their support system for victims,” Lynn Courey said. “Sasha was saying the system failed her (in her journal) and we believe, if you look at the report, it’s suggesting a lot of changes.

“There were maybe a lot of gaps in their policies and some people made mistakes, but now they are aware of it. We really hope that Sasha’s legacy now is to encourage the university — not just Mizzou, but all the universities — to transform the way they serve and protect their students and staff.”
The report, which was commissioned by the University of Missouri System’s Board of Curators in February and conducted by the Dowd Bennett Law Firm of Clayton, Mo., contained four major findings, most notably:

- MU did not violate the law, but found “with certainty” that the school “acted inconsistently with the Department of Education’s guidance about the requirements of Title IX” regarding the reporting and investigation of sexual assault.

- MU should have launched an investigation in November 2012 after university officials, during the course of fulfilling a public-records request to Menu Courey’s parents after her death, uncovered two emails from Menu Courey referencing her sexual assault allegation.

University of Missouri System president Tim Wolfe again vowed sweeping changes, including the recently completed inventory of resources and policies at each of the system’s four campuses, following the release of the report Friday during the curators’ meeting in Rolla, Mo.

“We didn’t have any employees that acted in bad faith or tried to cover something up,” Wolfe said during a news conference. “The misstep or mistake that was made was not having a clear policy of reporting and investigation as well as the training of all our employees. So, that is the issue and I will take complete responsibility for that personally.”

He continued, “Together with our sexual assault and mental health services task force and the findings of the independent counsel’s report, we are performing a major self-assessment of the training, resources and policies of the University of Missouri System in these areas.”

The report said MU officials had enough information on Nov. 20, 2012, to investigate Menu Courey’s alleged sexual assault, as required by Title IX, and that “the Title IX coordinator should have been notified of the facts, an investigation should have been conducted at that time, and the police department should have been notified.”

MU sent a letter to Menu Courey’s parents asking if they wished for an investigation, but the university didn’t follow up.

“The assistant general counsel (Paul Maguffee) did not notify the Title IX coordinator,” said Edward Dowd Jr., who led the independent investigation. “He said at that time — he knows now, but at that time — he didn’t even know there was a Title IX coordinator.”

Instead, MU did not open an investigation or turn over any information to Columbia police until 14 months later, when Menu Courey’s case became the subject of an
segment for ESPN’s “Outside the Lines.” Columbia police said Friday that their criminal investigation into the alleged sexual assault is ongoing.

“This report sets out in stark terms that the University must do better,” said U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill, a Missouri Democrat. “Clearly the University wanted the unvarnished truth about their shortcomings, which is laudable. Now it’s time to get to work and make the University a model for victim support and accountability for thorough investigations.”

The independent counsel report also concludes that MU lacked adequate policies to direct employees how to handle information about an alleged sexual assault and the procedures to ensure Title IX compliance.

According to the report, the lack of proper guidance and training of employees “appears to have contributed in large part to the University’s failure ... to conduct an appropriate inquiry when University officials had information indicating that Sasha Menu Courey had been sexually assaulted.”

Additionally, the report says a February 2012 story in the Columbia Daily Tribune, which circulated among MU athletic department staff and referenced an entry in Menu Courey’s journal about the alleged assault, should have been forwarded to the Title IX coordinator for review and triggered an inquiry.

Missouri chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said the Title IX coordinator at Missouri is not a full-time position, but “we’re reviewing that right now with the intention of being able to move them to a full-time position,” he said.

Loftin, who started his position Feb. 1, also said there will be an organizational restructuring to allow him more direct contact with the Title IX coordinator.

There was no finding in the report that non-medical personnel at MU knew about the alleged rape before Menu Courey committed suicide. The report acknowledges that Menu Courey told multiple medical personnel about the incident, but MU couldn’t have acted on that information because medical professionals “are bound by confidentiality rules.”

The independent investigation wasn’t able to reach a definitive conclusion about the substance of a phone call between Menu Courey and former MU academic adviser Meghan Anderson on May 12, 2011.

In a journal entry discovered posthumously by her parents, Menu Courey wrote that she told Anderson about the alleged assault during the phone call.
Anderson denied that she was told of the assault and the report concludes that, because she took the phone call while at a restaurant “it is possible that either because of miscommunication or an inability to hear everything, there was an unintentional disconnect between what Sasha Menu Courey said and what Meghan Anderson heard during the call.”

If Anderson was told of the alleged assault, she had a clear obligation to report it, the report said.

Missouri athletic director Mike Alden said he hasn’t had a chance to read the report, but that he did listen to the news conference.

“It would seem to me ... that Dowd Bennett did a very good job and thorough review,” Alden said. “From what I heard on the press conference, there are probably going to be a number of things that all of us can take from that to learn and to be able to grow.”

Wolfe, who called Menu Courey’s parents to discuss the report after the news conference, said he’s already taken steps to address gaps in the university system’s policies by issuing an executive order Wednesday.

“It became clear to us that we need a stronger, more transparent policy in terms of sexual harassment reporting by employees,” Wolfe said. “My order mandates that all university employees have obligations to report sexual harassment or sexual assault allegations in which the alleged victim is a student to the appropriate Title IX coordinator.”

Menu Courey’s parents will be watching to see how many more changes MU makes to avoid a similar tragedy.

“I read all the report and I’m satisfied with the fairness of the report,” Mike Menu said. “We accept the results of the report and think it’s a fair assessment of what happened and the areas in which the university could be improved. We’re looking forward to the next step, which is the university taking a look at that and seeing what changes they can make.”

Read more here: http://www.kansascity.com/2014/04/11/4952999/independent-report-criticizes.html#storylink=cpy
Report finds university failed in handling of Menu Courey case

By Ashley Jost

Saturday, April 12, 2014 at 2:00 am Comments (7)

University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe Friday apologized to the friends and family of former MU swimmer Sasha Menu Courey for the university's "shortcomings" in dealing with her allegations of rape.

In a news conference after the release of an independent counsel's report on MU's response to Menu Courey's allegations, Wolfe said the university failed in its duty to her. She committed suicide in 2011, more than a year after the alleged rape.

"Even one sexual assault is one too many," Wolfe said. He noted that university employees acted "in good faith," but the report pointed out the proper training mechanisms were not in place. The lack of clarity has been fixed by his most recent executive order, Wolfe said.

The UM Board of Curators yesterday received the report from the Dowd Bennett Law Firm, and it includes four conclusions: The university failed to have Title IX policies in place for its employees, contrary to the Department of Education's guidance on Title IX; the university should have acted on the information it had in November 2012 about Menu Courey's rape allegations; a Tribune article published in February 2012 indicating a diary mention from Menu Courey related to a sexual assault should have been provided to the Title IX coordinator; and finally, that there is no definitive conclusion that university employees, aside from medical personnel, were aware of Menu Courey's alleged assault while she was alive.

"In 2012, and even during this investigation, the university did not have policies in place for its employees addressing how University employees should handle information of a possible sexual assault upon a University student ..." the report states in reference to the first conclusion.

In 2012, a committee of representatives from the four campuses and the general counsel's office were charged with conducting reviews of the university's policies relating to Title IX, sexual
harassment and violence, the report said. The panel prepared a 43-page document that pointed out that proposed revisions to employee-related policies in Title IX were deferred to UM System administrators, including human resources and the general counsel, for review. A human resources employee told Dowd Bennett that the general counsel's office determined "no revisions or additions were necessary."

Wolfe announced last week that every university employee, unless they are a lawyer, health official or other person that requires confidentiality, is now required to bring any reports of sexual assault or violence to the Title IX coordinators.

Ed Dowd, principal at Dowd Bennett, said the university did not violate the Title IX statute. The misstep was the university did not adhere to the policies and guidance laid out by the Office of Civil Rights on interpreting Title IX. Dowd called it "a very unusual factual situation."

The report also states the university should have acted on the information that it had in November 2012 when it received documents from Menu Courey's family, including an email chat transcript with a National Sexual Assault Hotline employee.

The report shows that in November 2012, the deputy custodian of records forwarded those documents to the assistant general counsel, who then reached out to "several people" from the athletic department, senior coordinator and Office of Student Conduct, informing them of the alleged assault. The Title IX coordinator was not notified, and records show the MU Police Department had no incident report involving Menu Courey.

The next week, the deputy custodian of records forwarded a Feb. 21, 2012, article from the Tribune to a few people in the office of general counsel and to the custodian of records. The article made mention of Menu Courey's diary, where she wrote about the incident.

Several discussions between the assistant general counsel, Paul Maguffee, and the student conduct senior coordinator show that they ultimately decided to write a letter to Menu Courey's parents. The letter notified the parents of the chat transcript, asked if they had any information about the assailants and asked if they wanted the university to investigate. The letter was drafted in November 2012 and sent in late January 2013.

"Sasha Menu Courey's parents received the letter but did not respond to it," the Dowd Bennett report states. "Rather, they have indicated that they perceived the letter as an attempt by the University to 'check the boxes' rather than a sincere attempt to find out information."

No further action was taken after the letter was sent, but the report says an investigation should have been started and staff should have notified the Title IX coordinator and police.

The report's final conclusion says there is no definitive evidence that university employees, aside from medical personnel, were aware of the assault when Menu Courey was alive. An excerpt from Menu Courey's diary says she told Meghan Anderson, academics coordinator for multiple sports teams, of the incident. The report says the telephone call took place, but the "existing
evidence does not permit a conclusion" about whether Anderson heard Menu Courey say she was assaulted.

Wolfe said no one will be reprimanded because the university didn't have the proper training in place when Menu Courey's allegations came to light.

The Columbia Police Department is investigating Menu Courey's alleged rape because the incident took place off campus.

This article was published in the Saturday, April 12, 2014 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "Report finds MU failed in way it handled case: Wolfe apologizes to family, friends."

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Posted in Education, Local on Saturday, April 12, 2014 2:00 am.

Mizzou cuts Dorial Green-Beckham

Updated: April 11, 2014, 7:54 PM ET

By Edward Aschoff | ESPN.com

Missouri has dismissed star wide receiver Dorial Green-Beckham from the team, coach Gary Pinkel announced Friday.

"This decision was made with the best interests of all involved in mind," Pinkel said in a statement. "Dorial's priority going forward needs to be focusing on getting the help he needs. As we have all along, we will continue to do everything we can to assist Dorial and his family. We care deeply about Dorial and his well-being, but hopefully he can benefit from a fresh start."

Green-Beckham was the subject of an investigation by Columbia, Mo., police this week after an 18-year-old Missouri student said the receiver forced open her apartment door at 2:30 a.m. Sunday while trying to see his girlfriend, a friend of the alleged victim.
The woman said Green-Beckham pushed her down at least four stairs.

Another roommate told police the 6-foot-6, 225-pound athlete pushed the first woman with two hands to the chest. Later that night, the two told a detective they didn't want to press charges, and police closed the case Thursday without an arrest, citing reluctant witnesses fearing retaliation.

In a statement given to the St. Louis Post-Dispatch through his father, John Beckham, before his dismissal from the team Friday, Green-Beckham accepted "responsibility for my conduct and my mistakes."

"Don't blame my girlfriend or her friends for anything," the statement said. "I am not looking for sympathy. I thank those who have given me concern. I have been young and dumb. I want to be better. During my suspension I'm entering counseling. With help, I know I can be stronger emotionally and spiritually."

Missouri had suspended Green-Beckham from the team indefinitely Monday.

Beckham coached his son at Springfield Hillcrest High and adopted Green-Beckham and his younger brother Darnell, who signed a letter of intent in February to attend Missouri.

Athletic director Mike Alden also helped rule on the decision to dismiss Green-Beckham, although he said it ultimately was Pinkel's call.

"We have a high standard of conduct for our student-athletes," Alden said in a statement. "Though we provide the resources and mentoring to all of our student-athletes, we are also responsible to the community at large and to the ideals and values of the University of Missouri. We have determined that this was a necessary step for our football team, athletic department, the university and our community."

Green-Beckham isn't eligible for the NFL draft until after his junior season. He will have to sit out a year if he transfers.

Green-Beckham has two prior marijuana-related arrests. In January, Green-Beckham and two other men were arrested after Springfield, Mo., police found a pound of marijuana in their car. No charges were filed in that case. In October 2012, Green-Beckham, then a freshman, was charged with marijuana possession in Columbia and later pleaded guilty to second-degree trespassing after he and two teammates were reportedly smoking marijuana in a campus parking lot. Green-Beckham was suspended for one game after that arrest.

The loss of Green-Beckham, who was the No. 1-rated wide receiver in the 2012 class by ESPN's recruiting services, is major. After catching 26 passes for 402 yards and five touchdowns as a freshman, he led Missouri with 59 receptions and 12 touchdowns last season, including a school-record four receiving TDs against Kentucky. He also had 144 receiving yards and two touchdowns in the SEC championship game.
Green-Beckham was second on the team with 883 receiving yards and averaged 15 yards per catch.

With the losses of L'Damian Washington and Marcus Lucas, Green-Beckham was Missouri's only returning receiver who recorded at least 30 receptions in 2013 and had multiple touchdown catches. Players who produced 27 of the school's 31 receiving touchdowns last season are gone.

Senior Bud Sasser, who caught 26 passes for 361 yards and a touchdown in 2013, is now Missouri's leading returning wideout.

*Information from The Associated Press was used in this report.*

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**Mizzou kicks DGB off football team**

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

**COLUMBIA, Mo. • In the wake of Friday’s announcement that Missouri football coach Gary Pinkel kicked star receiver Dorial Green-Beckham off the team, MU athletics director Mike Alden met with reporters at Mizzou Arena to answer questions about what he described as a “challenging couple months” at MU.**

Seven different male MU athletes have been arrested since January, as well as an assistant coach/academic counselor with the wrestling team. Here are some notes from Alden’s visit with media:

- The decision to dismiss Green-Beckham from the team was Pinkel’s, Alden said. And Alden insisted that there’s no way the wide receiver will return to the program.

  “Gary and I work together all the time on lots of things,” Alden said. “He’s been here a long time and done a lot of great things for Mizzou and made some tough decisions. I know this was very tough for him to make this one, too. I support him in that.”

  “Dorial will no longer be a student-athlete at Mizzou,” he added.

Alden said he met with Pinkel and Green-Beckham on Monday to get his version of the incident that took place Sunday morning that led to the burglary investigation. Alden met with Pinkel again Friday when the coach told him his decision to dismiss the receiver.
The release of the Columbia Police incident report didn’t clinch Pinkel’s decision but, Alden said, “it provided us more information.”

“It was very troubling to see that police report and see those text messages go back and forth,” he said.

Alden said Green-Beckham’s prior two drug-related arrests — the second of which has yet and may not lead to a criminal charge — factored into Pinkel’s decision.

“When you have a series of incidents over the course of the last year and a half in regards to one individual those aren’t things you can disregard,” Alden said. “You’ve got to add all those things together.”

As for Green-Beckham’s girlfriend’s text message to the alleged victim that MU coaches “talked to me ... and explained how serious this is,” Alden said the administration talked to all of Mizzou’s coaches about that claim and “were assured by all of our coaches that did not take place,” he said.

• On Monday, Alden met with every head coach, assistant coach and graduate assistant from every Mizzou team to discuss the recent wave of athletes getting arrested and discussed steps the athletics department plans to take to address the issue. MU will bring in “a group” this summer to review the department’s policies for student conduct and measure them against the policies at other schools.

Asked if the recent string of arrests was just a coincidence, Alden said, “I don’t know. I want to say it’s a coincidence. I think it is, because over the time that I’ve been here I’ve never seen this concentration of the number of actions like this off the field. I’m thinking it’s a coincidence, but we’re not going to just sit back and think it is. That’s why we’re going to take a hard look at it and make sure we address it head-on.”

From Tuesday to Friday, Alden said he met with every Mizzou athlete in team meetings to discuss the recent crime wave.

“I reminded them that the vast majority of all of our kids are doing amazing things and that it’s unfortunate that the decisions of a few have impacted all of us,” he said.

Alden also emphasized that “the (Mizzou) logo never comes off,” he said.

“It never ever comes off, no matter where you are, no matter what you’re doing you’re always going to be representing Mizzou,” he said.

• Earlier on Friday, the independent counsel hired by the University System Board of Curators to investigate MU’s handling of the Sasha Menu Courey case released its findings. Alden hadn’t gotten a chance to read the report but listened the press conference after the curators’ meeting in Rolla. Asked if Columbia Police has given him any indication it could arrest former MU athletes in the Menu Courey sexual assault investigation, Alden said, “No, I have not gotten any indication either way.”
Lastly, Alden was asked if he believed his athletics department had a cultural problem. He adamantly said no.

“If you look at our athletic program, I think we have an amazing group of students,” he said. “I think we have an amazing group of staff members. Do I believe a few kids who over the course of the last few months have done things that are inconsistent with our values? Absolutely. That is unacceptable. But do I think that is a cultural problem we have in our program? No, I don’t. It’s certainly something that raises your awareness and it’s something you want to address head-on. That’s what we’re doing right now.”

Missouri has dismissed wide receiver Dorial Green-Beckham from the football team, the school announced in a news release Friday.

Green-Beckham, arrested twice during his Mizzou career for drug-related incidents, was the suspect in a first-degree burglary investigation this week but avoided an arrest when the alleged victim declined to press charges.

Missouri coach Gary Pinkel made the decision to dismiss Green-Beckham, in conjunction with athletics director Mike Alden.

“This decision was made with the best interests of all involved in mind,” Pinkel said in a prepared statement. “Dorial’s priority going forward needs to be focusing on getting the help he needs. As we have all along, we will continue to do everything we can to assist Dorial and his family. We care deeply about Dorial and his well-being, but hopefully he can benefit from a fresh start.”

“We have a high standard of conduct for our student-athletes,” Alden said. “Though we provide the resources and mentoring to all of our student-athletes, we are also responsible to the community at large and to the ideals and values of the University of Missouri. We have determined that this was a necessary step for our football team, athletic department, the University and our community.”

Earlier Friday, Green-Beckham issued a statement to the Post-Dispatch through his father, John Beckham, saying he was seeking counseling.

“First and most importantly, I take responsibly for my conduct and my mistakes. Don’t blame my girlfriend or her friends for anything. I am not looking for sympathy. I thank those who have given me concern. I have been young and dumb. I want to be better.

“During my suspension I’m entering counseling. With help, I know I can be stronger emotionally and spiritually. My relationship with God, my family, friends, teammates and coaches are most important in my life — not football. It may not be possible to fix everything, but it won’t be for not trying.”

John Beckham declined to comment further.
Star receiver Dorial Green-Beckham dismissed from Missouri football team

April 11

BY TOD PALMER
The Kansas City Star

Dorial Green-Beckham arrived at Missouri more than two years ago amid hype and fanfare, but Friday he was booted from the football team in disgrace.

The MU athletic department announced that Tigers coach Gary Pinkel, in conjunction with athletic director Mike Alden, had dismissed Green-Beckham after details of his role in an alleged burglary early Sunday morning were released Thursday by Columbia police.

“This decision was made with the best interests of all involved in mind,” Pinkel said in a news release. “Dorial’s priority going forward needs to be focusing on getting the help he needs. As we have all along, we will continue to do everything we can to assist Dorial and his family. We care deeply about Dorial and his well-being, but hopefully he can benefit from a fresh start.”

Alden said Friday at a news conference in Columbia that Green-Beckham remained a student but would not be able to return to the team. “We have a high standard of conduct for our student-athletes,” Alden said in announcing the dismissal.

Perhaps the most high-profile recruit of Pinkel’s 14-year tenure, Green-Beckham was the nation’s top high school wide receiver when he signed with Missouri. Last season he led the team with 12 touchdowns and was seen as a NFL Draft prospect following his junior year with the Tigers this fall.

Green-Beckham, who turns 21 this weekend, was not arrested in the alleged burglary because the victims in the incident declined to press charges. The case was not sent to the Boone County Prosecuting Attorney for review, assistant prosecuting attorney Jessica Meredith told The Star on Friday.
“Our office, we don’t go forward and don’t consider any criminal charges unless information is supplied to us by law enforcement,” said Jonathan Bertz, a Boone County assistant prosecuting attorney. “That’s how it is with every case.”

It is possible, though rare, that police could forward a case to prosecutors even when victims decline to press charges. Columbia police said Thursday their investigation was complete, however, and the case was not forwarded.

Still, the details brought to light by the investigation played a role in Green-Beckham’s dismissal. According to a police report, Green-Beckham allegedly forced his way into an apartment, shoving one woman down at least four stairs.

The report also contained a text message from Green-Beckham’s girlfriend that said he “drug me out by my neck and hurt me,” though she later told police that she was not injured and left the apartment with Green-Beckham.

“It was very troubling to be able to see that police report and to be able to see those text messages going back and forth,” Alden said Friday. “But it was just that much more information that was able to be provided to us as coach was able to make that decision.”

Alden met with Pinkel and Green-Beckham on Monday. He was indefinitely suspended that afternoon.

Addressing an aspect of the Columbia police report, Alden said no football coaches contacted or attempted to influence any victims in the burglary case. A text message from the girlfriend to one of the women at the apartment said coaches had talked to her, but she later told police that she was relaying information that coaches had told Green-Beckham.

“We also looked into that and we talked with all of our coaches ... and we were assured by all of our coaches that that did not take place,” Alden said.

Ultimately, Alden said it was Pinkel’s decision to dismiss Green-Beckham despite the absence of an arrest or charges. Mike Dixon Jr. was suspended and later left the MU basketball team in November 2012 after two sexual assault allegations were uncovered, though no charges were filed in either case.

“That still doesn’t mean they were appropriate actions,” Alden said of Green-Beckham. “For us, we want to be able to measure that against those values that we talk about whether there were charges in place or other types of flashpoints that may occur in the community.”
Green-Beckham cannot enter the NFL Draft until the spring of 2015 but could transfer to a Football Championship Subdivision or a Division II school this fall to play his junior season. Before he was dismissed Friday, a statement from Green-Beckham said he would seek counseling.

“First and most importantly, I take responsibly for my conduct and my mistakes,” he said in the statement, which was read to the St. Louis Post-Dispatch by his father, John Beckham. “Don’t blame my girlfriend or her friends for anything. I am not looking for sympathy. I thank those who have given me concern.

“I have been young and dumb. I want to be better. ... With help, I know I can be stronger emotionally and spiritually. My relationship with God, my family, friends, teammates and coaches are most important in my life, not football. It may not be possible to fix everything, but it won’t be for not trying.”

Beckham coached his son at Springfield Hillcrest and eventually adopted Green-Beckham and his younger brother, Darnell, who also plays wide receiver and signed with MU in February.

While he was not arrested in the alleged burglary, Dorial Green-Beckham was arrested twice for marijuana-related incidents during his two years at Missouri.

Green-Beckham and three teammates were arrested for misdemeanor possession of less than 35 grams of marijuana in a parking lot near Memorial Stadium in October 2012. All four later pleaded guilty to second-degree trespassing.

Three months ago, Green-Beckham was arrested on alleged possession of a controlled substance with intent to distribute, a felony. He was riding in a car that was stopped for an expired tag in Springfield, and a search of the vehicle turned up nearly one pound of suspected marijuana.

Another passenger in the car said the marijuana was his, but charges remain pending as Springfield police await state lab results.

“That played into the decision,” Alden said of the arrests. “When you have a series of incidents over the course of the last year and a half with regards to one individual, certainly those aren’t things you can disregard. I think you’ve got to add all of those together.”

Alden said a group would be brought in this summer to review how MU handles student conduct in the wake of numerous incidents involving athletes. He also said he had met with all of the school’s coaches and athletes over the preceding four days to reinforce the
values and expectations that come with being a Tiger, saying, “The logo never comes off.”

Seven Missouri football and men’s basketball players have been arrested eight times since January. MU chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said Friday that he had talked about the issues with Alden “quite a bit.”

“Over the course of the time that I’ve been here, I’ve never seen this concentration with a number of actions like this off the field,” Alden said. “I’m thinking it’s a coincidence, but we’re not going to step back and just think it is. That’s why we’re going to take a hard look and make sure we’re addressing it head on.”

Two weeks after Green-Beckham’s January arrest in Springfield, another wide receiver, Levi Copelin, was arrested for a misdemeanor peace disturbance after making threatening statements at the MU ID office. He has a May 9 court date.

Four Missouri athletes — football players Aarion Penton and Shaun Rupert and basketball players Wes Clark and Shane Rector — were arrested March 15 for alleged possession of less than 35 grams of marijuana.

Junior basketball player Zach Price was arrested twice on April 3 on suspicion of domestic assault and assault. The Boone County Prosecuting Attorney’s office is still determining whether to file charges, but Price was kicked off the team Thursday by coach Frank Haith.

“Certainly, it’s been a challenging week,” Alden said. “It’s been a challenging couple months. It’s unacceptable. That is not the way we’re going to represent the University of Missouri.”

Alden doesn’t believe the athletic department has a cultural problem, however.

“The significant majority of our kids are doing amazing things — amazing things throughout this campus and throughout this community,” Alden said. “To be able to have the actions of a few individuals detract away from all those great things, that’s unfortunate and that should not take place.”

Read more here: http://www.kansascity.com/2014/04/11/4952970/missouri-receiver-dorian-green.html#storylink=cpy
Green-Beckham dismissed from MU football team

By David Morrison

Saturday, April 12, 2014 at 2:00 am Comments (14)

The Missouri career of the most heralded prospect in the Gary Pinkel era ended in a press release.

Wide receiver Dorial Green-Beckham, who signed with the Tigers two years ago as one of the top recruits in the nation and a surefire first-round NFL draft pick of the future, is no longer a member of the Missouri football program.

The university announced the news yesterday, four days after it suspended the 6-foot-6, 225-pound wideout indefinitely for an unspecified violation of team policies.

The dismissal came from Pinkel, with the support of Athletic Director Mike Alden.

"This decision was made with the best interests of all involved in mind," Pinkel said in the release. "Dorial's priority going forward needs to be focusing on getting the help he needs. As we have all along, we will continue to do everything we can to assist Dorial and his family. We care deeply about Dorial and his well-being, but hopefully he can benefit from a fresh start."

The decision comes on the heels of Green-Beckham's third brush with the law in the past 18 months, this time stemming from an altercation that involved his girlfriend and two other women at the Brookside Townhomes apartment complex south of campus early Sunday morning.

The Columbia Police Department announced Thursday that it would not be making any arrests in the case — which was first called in as a burglary — in large part because the two other women involved signed "decline of prosecution" forms saying they feared backlash if they pressed charges.
But an incident report released by the police the same day detailed a situation in which Green-Beckham allegedly forced open the door to an apartment while one of the occupants was trying to shut it and pushed the other occupant, causing her to fall down some stairs, while he was attempting to find his girlfriend in the unit.

The woman Green-Beckham allegedly pushed had bruising and swelling in her wrist, according to the report. Green-Beckham's girlfriend, in a text message to the woman that she showed to the police, also indicated that he had dragged her by the neck and injured her as well. In a follow-up interview, Green-Beckham's girlfriend said she did not remember sending that text and that she was not certain the description in the text was accurate.

Green-Beckham's latest incident, combined with his two previous run-ins, was enough to bring about his exit from the team.

"When you have a series of incidents over the course of the last year and a half with regards to one individual, certainly those aren't things you can disregard," said Alden, who met with reporters after the announcement. "I think you've got to add all of those together."

Green-Beckham was a can't-miss prospect coming out of Springfield Hillcrest High School in 2012, a receiver who broke the national record for career receiving yards and chose his home-state school over suitors from around the country.

He struggled with consistency on the field playing as a true freshman — catching 28 passes for 395 yards and five scores — and found trouble off of it as well. University police arrested him and two teammates in October 2012 on suspicion of possession of 35 grams or fewer of marijuana. Green-Beckham was suspended a game and eventually pleaded the charge down to a trespassing violation.

He seemed to figure things out last year, pacing the 12-2 Tigers in receptions (59) and touchdown catches (12) and coming up 10 yards short of L'Damian Washington for the team lead in receiving yards (883).

He became the first player in Missouri history to catch four touchdown passes in a game, against Kentucky on Nov. 9.

But, just a week after Missouri's Cotton Bowl win Jan. 3, he was arrested during a traffic stop in Springfield, one in which police say they found about a pound of marijuana in a car in which Green-Beckham was a passenger. No charges have been filed in that case as police await the results of testing, but court documents released after the incident revealed the other two men in the car said the marijuana did not belong to Green-Beckham.

No charges have been filed in this week's incident either. Green-Beckham's girlfriend reportedly coaxed the alleged victim not to press charges in a series of text messages that were included in the incident report.
One text indicated that the girlfriend had been contacted by Missouri's coaching staff and warned of the severity of the situation if her friend pressed charges, though the girlfriend later said that sentiment was relayed to her by Green-Beckham and not the Tigers' coaches.

Alden said he met with Missouri's coaches and they assured him that they did not have any contact with the receiver's girlfriend.

The athletic director said he met with Pinkel and Green-Beckham on Monday then again with Pinkel yesterday before the coach made his call.

"I don't think that we need to ever — ever — sacrifice those characteristics we're looking for in our students for the sake of trying to win ballgames," Alden said. "I will say that, at times when we have found that those students we have recruited to come to Mizzou are not consistent with those, I think we've made pretty direct decisions."

Green-Beckham will not be eligible for the NFL Draft until June 2015. He could have the option of transferring to another FBS program and sitting out this season or going to a program at a lower level — FCS, Division II, Division III, NAIA — and playing right away.

Missouri State, an FCS program in his hometown, has already told the Springfield News-Leader that Green-Beckham is "not the kind of player we recruit to our program."

John Beckham, Green-Beckham's adoptive father and former coach at Hillcrest, said he did not know what his son's next step will be.

"He's devastated," Beckham said.

Darnell Green, who is Green-Beckham's brother and also Beckham's adopted son, signed to play receiver at Missouri in February.

Alden said he does not know whether Green-Beckham will remain at Missouri as a student, but "he's no longer a part of our football program, nor will he be."

Seven Missouri men's basketball and football players have been arrested over the past three months in four separate incidents.

Thursday, men's basketball Coach Frank Haith dismissed transfer forward Zach Price before he had even played a game for the Tigers. Price was arrested twice last week on suspicion of domestic assault and assault.

Alden said he addressed every coach and athlete in the athletic department this week to remind them of the university's core values, and he plans to convene a group over the summer to see whether Missouri can improve on its athlete conduct policies.

"Over the course of the time I've been here, I've never seen this concentration of the number of incidents off the field," Alden said. "I'm thinking it's a coincidence, but we're not going to sit
back and just think it is. That's why we're going to take a hard look at it. And we're going to make sure we're addressing it head on."

Green-Beckham's dismissal leaves Missouri without its top three receivers from last season. The players currently on the Tigers' roster caught only four of the team's 31 touchdown passes last year.

The Tribune placed a call to a cell number previously used by Green-Beckham yesterday.

A man answered, asked for identification then hung up.

This article was published in the Saturday, April 12, 2014 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "DGB dismissed: WR Green-Beckham kicked off Missouri football team after latest incident."

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Posted in Mu Football on Saturday, April 12, 2014 2:00 am.

Mizzou students fret over student-athlete misdeeds

By Alex Stuckey astuckey@post-dispatch.com > 573-556-6186

COLUMBIA, MO • News about University of Missouri wide receiver Dorial Green-Beckham’s alleged break-in last weekend left Jackie Olson nervous. The Mizzou freshman didn’t want to see her school lose another of its best athletes after allegations of bad or violent behavior.

It’s hard to be a full-time student and athlete, Olson said, adding that she counts several of them as friends. But she also believes those in the spotlight should set a better example for the school she’s so proud of.

“It would be nice if they could conduct themselves to better represent the student body,” Olson said.

Many students on the University of Missouri-Columbia campus shared Olson’s sentiments Friday, grimaces crossing their faces as they discussed how student-athletes were casting a harsh light on the school they love.
Green-Beckham, who was dismissed from the Mizzou football program Friday, is the latest in a string of student athletes who have found themselves on the wrong side of the law. On April 6, Green-Beckham allegedly forced his way into an apartment looking for his girlfriend and then pushed an 18-year-old female Mizzou student down four stairs.

Green-Beckham’s girlfriend later sent a series of text messages to the alleged victim, urging her not to press criminal charges against the star receiver, according to a Columbia Police report. In his first two years at MU, Green-Beckham was arrested twice on drug-related incidents.

On Thursday, Missouri basketball coach Frank Haith kicked forward Zach Price off the team after it was revealed that Price, a transfer from Louisville, had been arrested on four counts of suspicion of assault and was the subject of a restraining order filed by a former teammate. Price never played a game for the Tigers.

And in June 2011, school swimmer Sasha Menu Courey committed suicide, 15 months after she was allegedly raped in her freshman year by two football players. University officials learned of those allegations in November 2012, but the Title IX coordinator was never notified.

Though an independent study commissioned by the UM System Board of Curators found the university did not violate the law, the report said the university failed to act on information about a former student athlete’s sexual assault and suicide in full compliance with Title IX guidelines.

University of Missouri spokesman Christian Basi said the university would not speculate on whether those incidents had affected recruitment.

On campus, senior Scott Rogers said he found the growing list “troubling.” An avid football and basketball fan, Rogers said sports shouldn’t define a university but often did.

That’s why student athletes need to be more aware of what they do, graduate student Bryce Osman said. If any other students got into the same trouble, no one would hear about it, he added.

“They’re the face of the university,” Osman said. “They should represent the whole student body.”

They also should represent the rest of their teammates. Or at least, that’s what freshman Zach Baker thinks.

The student athletes making the negative headlines are a select few of many who traverse the Mizzou campus daily and wear black and gold with pride, Baker said.

“I’m sure there are many good characters on the team,” Baker said. Baker, a photojournalism student, isn’t a big sports fan, but he’s proud of his school.
So is alumna Andrea Penn, a respiratory therapist at both University Hospital and Women’s and Children’s Hospital in Columbia. Penn graduated in 2008 but still flaunted a well-worn Mizzou T-shirt as she wandered past shops Friday in downtown Columbia.

Like the rest, Penn is not proud of the negative attention these students are bringing to the university. But at least they’re getting disciplined, she said.

That way, she said, other students now and in the future will understand they can’t get away with that kind of behavior.

No school has a perfect program, but Penn said it would be worse if the university didn’t do anything when students got into trouble.

Student athletes “shouldn’t just be good athletes, they should be good citizens, as well,” she said.

Although athletes such as Green-Beckham serve as the face of the university to the outside world, Olson, the freshman, isn’t too concerned about the negative publicity. She can portray Mizzou better, and she does, she said.

**SPORTS SHORTS: 49ERS’ SMITH, A FORMER MU STAR, ARRESTED AT LA AIRPORT**

San Francisco 49ers linebacker Aldon Smith, a former Mizzou star, was arrested at Los Angeles International Airport after authorities said he became belligerent during a security screening and threatened that he had a bomb. LAPD Sgt. Michael Fox said Smith was booked Sunday afternoon.

Airport police Sgt. Karla Ortiz said the 24-year-old player was randomly selected for a secondary screening at Terminal 1. Ortiz said Smith became uncooperative with the process and told a TSA agent that he had a bomb before walking to the gate.

When airport police officers caught up with him, Ortiz said, Smith became uncooperative and was taken into custody. A video on TMZ.com shows Smith exchanging words with an officer as he was being handcuffed.

“We are disappointed to learn of the incident today involving Aldon Smith,” 49ers general manager Trent Baalke said in a statement. “As this is a pending legal matter and we are still gathering the pertinent facts, we will have no further comment.”
Smith’s arrest is the latest in a series of legal troubles he has had, which now number three pending cases.

He also was arrested last September on a charge of driving under the influence — the same charge he faced in early 2012 — and possessing marijuana.

Smith also is facing three felony counts of possessing illegal assault rifles, which deputies discovered after a June 2012 party at Smith’s San Jose, Calif., home. Smith suffered stab wounds at the party, and two partygoers were wounded by gunfire from alleged gang members. None of the five weapons was registered with the state and three are illegal assault weapons under state law, prosecutors said.

A fearsome pass-rushing specialist, Smith took a five-game leave of absence from the 49ers last season to undergo treatment for substance abuse. He rejoined the team Nov. 5 and apologized, saying, “This is a problem and it’s something that I will get fixed, and that I’ll do everything in my power to make sure that this never happens again.”

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**Education Rundown: College Bound, If You Can**

**BY SUSAN HEGGER**

Every other week, we like to share stories that look at trends in education here and across the country. This week, college seemed to be on the minds of a lot of reporters.

**What if?**

*The iconic columns at the University of Missouri-Columbia -- a fitting icon for a rundown on college education.*
Here's a provocative question from Politico: "Can free college save American cities?" People in Kalamazoo, Mich., are hoping that the answer is yes. Back in 2005, several anonymous philanthropists vowed to pay college tuition for all students who graduate from Kalamazoo schools. The Kalamazoo promise was -- and is -- a dramatic, visionary attempt not just to save kids but also a city in precarious decline. Now, almost a decade and $50 million later, the Kalamazoo Promise has certainly not solved all the city's problems, but it has changed lives and futures (especially for many African-American students), helped physically transform the city and, most of all, reignited a community's "love affair with itself." And isn't that half the battle?

Degrees of difficulty

The Atlantic asks a question that perplexes everyone from worried high-schoolers to their overanxious parents: Is college really harder to get into than it used to be? The answer is: yes -- and no.

"As it turns out, getting into college actually isn’t any harder than it was a decade ago. It’s just that the odds of admission to your particular college may have decreased."

Top-tier colleges and universities do have more applicants who are highly qualified. In the olden days, ambitious high-schoolers might apply to three, four, maybe even five different schools. Today, thanks to a little something called the Common App, students can easily apply to 10 to 15 different schools -- and they do. Of course, that makes the schools look more selective because they are accepting a smaller percentage of applicants than they once did.

In fact, the New York Times reported recently that Stanford admitted only 5 percent of applicants this year -- a new low -- and single-digit acceptance rates are increasingly common at elite universities. The University of Chicago has accepted only 8 percent of applicants; a few years ago, it took an average of 40 percent.

Complicating the issue even more, spots in elite (and even not so elite) American colleges and universities are increasingly sought by foreign students, making the applicant pool a global pool. But the good news in all this remains: Good students still get into good colleges.

What can we afford?

While we are on the subject of college, the New York Times lays out "what you don't know about financial aid (but should)." Parents, the story notes, frequently go into sticker shock when they discover what their financial responsibility is expected to be; it's not unusual for families with a $60,000 annual income to be expected to contribute 20 percent of their income (and a portion of their assets as well). Some schools advertise themselves as "need-blind": A family's economic status won't affect whether a student is admitted or not. It sounds good in practice -- until families realize that a "need-blind" acceptance doesn't necessarily come with a promise of financial aid:
"If a college calculates that a student’s need (price minus ability to pay equals need) is $30,000, it might offer only $15,000 in an aid package, leaving families with difficult choices — to make up the rest with private bank loans, go to a less expensive school, or even postpone education."

No wonder it's sometimes called a "hollow promise."

And the winner is ....

And if you're looking for the most underrated college in Missouri, according to Business Insider, here it is: Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla. It's acceptance rate is 89 percent; in-state tuition is $9,510.

The bi-literate brain

And now for something completely different, to steal from Monty Python. One of my greatest pleasures is reading, specifically novels. Recently, I was captivated by Donna Tartt's "The Goldfinch," all 784 absorbing pages of it. But that kind of deep reading may be threatened, warns the Washington Post in a scary story, "Serious reading takes a hit from online scanning and skimming." Though we spend an estimated five hours a day reading screens -- computers, tablets, phones -- we tend to skim, looking for keywords and points of information and hopping around with links. We become impatient with longer, denser, more involved sentences. And, more crucially and somewhat counterintuitively, researchers are discovering, our comprehension goes down when we read screens instead of paper pages. The thing is, there's no going back. Schools are going to have to teach kids to do both -- and to do both well. But somehow I have the sneaking suspicion that the readership for "The Corrections," or "Middlemarch" for that matter, is rapidly shrinking.

Gardening mogul P. Allen Smith to visit MU

Saturday, April 12, 2014 | 7:51 p.m. CDT

BY KENDYL KEARLY

COLUMBIA — P. Allen Smith, gardening mogul and star of three garden and lifestyle-centered TV shows, will visit MU to celebrate Thomas Jefferson’s birthday and spark conversations surrounding locally grown food and urban agriculture.

The PBS personality will arrive Sunday and facilitate several events before he leaves Monday. The Mizzou Botanic Garden brought Smith in to celebrate MU’s 175th anniversary and the garden’s 15th anniversary.
Smith is the star of “P. Allen Smith’s Garden Home,” “P. Allen Smith’s Garden to Table” and “P. Allen Smith Gardens.” He has also written cookbooks and has an active social media presence.

“He's sort of an institution for some people. He's been on TV in different circuits for a long time and is considered an expert,” said Madeline Beyer, senior communications assistant with the Mizzou Botanic Garden.

On Sunday, Jefferson’s birthday, Mizzou Botanic Garden will throw a party on the quad with food, drinks and speakers, including Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin.

“We’re pleased that he (Smith) has an interest in Thomas Jefferson. His knowledge on Jefferson allowed us to organize events centered on our nation’s third president, of whom the university is quite fond,” said Pete Millier, director of the Mizzou Botanic Garden.

Next, Smith will give a presentation in the Reynolds Alumni Center about Thomas Jefferson, followed by a book signing.

Smith will garden at the MU Children’s Learning Garden at 9 a.m. Monday then moderate a local harvest roundtable discussion. Eighteen panelists will convene to discuss local food production, local food distribution and local healthy food, as well as educating consumers on how different organizations can collaborate, such as gardens and farmers markets. Sustain Mizzou will attend to provide a student viewpoint.

"It's an opportunity that not many have to listen to a lot of knowledgeable people talk about a variety of subjects,” Beyer said. “We've got people coming from all over the state to discuss local food, urban agriculture and how people can integrate those things into their daily lives and how it affects the community.”
MU graduate students share science, research with elementary kids

By Alex Schiffer

Sunday, April 13, 2014 at 2:00 am

Elementary students flocked to the University of Missouri campus Saturday for the eighth annual Mizzou Adventures in Education event, sponsored by the MU Graduate School.

The event featured more than 30 different learning activities taught by graduate students to kids from kindergarten through the sixth grade. It has rotated between the Reynolds Alumni Center and Jesse Hall in recent years with each year featuring a whole new set of activities. This year's stations ranged from making cheese to physics and included a live cow, among other things.

"At first it started out as a way to increase visibility for the Graduate School and what a graduate degree can do for you," event coordinator Robin Walker said. "But over the years it has turned into a public outreach to the community to teach science and the benefits of research."

For the graduate students, creating an activity for the kids is not as easy as it looks.

"We have to try and combine an interactive activity with an educational one," said graduate student Ian George, an integrative anatomy major. "This year was the first time we tried to do a presentation on the heart and lungs, and it took a while before we were able to compare them to something like a model train so kids can understand what we're saying."

George has volunteered at Mizzou Adventures in Education for the past three years and has come up with a new idea for a presentation each year. Besides designing the activity, the graduate students also buy all the supplies with their own money.

"They're here for the love of the subject," Walker said. "It's good for their resumes, but they're here because they love the volunteer work."
Rick Crites said his three kids, ages 6 to 10, were looking forward to the event all week. Yesterday was the first time they attended.

"They got fliers sent home from school about it, and they're really into science so we came out here for them," he said. "It certainly exceeded what I thought it would be."

This article was published in the Sunday, April 13, 2014 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "Elementary kids learn at MU event: Grad students share science, research."

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COLUMBIA — **Truman the Tiger is a national champion.**

MU’s mascot placed first in the mascot division Saturday during the 2014 National Cheerleaders Association’s national championship in Daytona Beach, Fla., the school announced Saturday.
The anthropomorphic Bengal tiger traveled to Florida along with the school’s cheerleading squad and the Golden Girls to take part in the National Collegiate Cheer and Dance Championship.

"Everybody loves Truman, and now we know that everybody in the nation loves him, too," said Suzy Thompson, cheerleading coach and mascot coordinator.

Truman had a minute and a half to wow the judges, according to previous Missourian reporting. The tiger's routine was focused on the do's and don'ts of being a mascot.

"It feels awesome (to win a national championship)," Thompson said. "It's a huge accomplishment. We have six guys, and they've been working on this since the fall."