The three highest-paid public-college leaders in the nation have something in common: They earned hundreds of thousands of dollars on their way out the door.

The size of the parting packages given to these men—two who resigned amid long-churning controversies and one who quit unexpectedly—demonstrates just how expensive it can be for a college to end the presidency of a well-paid chief.

E. Gordon Gee, the popular and gaffe-prone former president of Ohio State University, earned more than $6-million in 2012-13, making him the nation’s top-paid college leader for that period, a Chronicle analysis has found. Mr. Gee has maintained that he resigned of his own accord last summer, but the decision came as trustees expressed impatience and disappointment with his often-ill-considered...
jokes.

Mr. Gee’s 2012-13 pay dwarfs the $478,896 median compensation for public-college presidents. The Chronicle’s analysis includes 256 college leaders from 227 institutions.

There is some history of presidents leaving under a cloud with millions to show for it. The top-paid public-college president in The Chronicle’s previous analysis was Graham B. Spanier, who was fired in the wake of the Jerry Sandusky sex-abuse scandal.

**Rounding out the top three earners for 2012-13 are R. Bowen Loftin, a former president of Texas A&M University at College Station; and Hamid A. Shirvani, a former chancellor of the North Dakota University system.**

Mr. Loftin, who was president of Texas A&M for just under four years, surprised many on his campus last July, when he announced that he was joining the faculty so that he could spend more time with students. Within five months he had taken another position, as chancellor of the University of Missouri at Columbia.

In the days leading up to his announcement, Mr. Loftin negotiated behind the scenes for money and perks. In a memo titled "deal points," which was obtained by Texas news media, the president called for a payment equal to twice his annual total compensation and the formation of an institute for him to direct. He got much, but not all, of what he asked for, earning $1.6-million in his final year.

Mr. Loftin said in a recent interview that he employed standard negotiation tactics, pressing for items he knew he would not get in hopes of reaching an equitable arrangement.

"It was reasonably fair," he said of the deal. "But I didn’t think there was anything wrong with it at all."

The timing of his departure has roused suspicion that he was forced out, and Mr. Loftin declined to elaborate beyond his previous public statements that emphasized his love of teaching. When pressed about whether he had failed in the eyes of system leaders, Mr. Loftin said, "Nothing I
heard from my immediate supervisor, the chancellor of the A&M system, or from the Board of Regents of the system, ever implied to me that I was not performing appropriately."

Like Mr. Loftin, Mr. Shirvani appears to have been an able negotiator. Last spring the chancellor was under tremendous pressure to resign amid a barrage of complaints about his treatment of staff and questions about his adherence to open-meetings laws. Mr. Shirvani said he had agreed to step down on the condition that the board buy out the remaining two years of his contract, which it did. Under the deal, Mr. Shirvani earned $1.3-million.

Along with Mr. Gee, who is now president of West Virginia University, both Mr. Shirvani and Mr. Loftin signed agreements that forbade them to bring any future legal claims against the universities they once led. The boards likewise agreed not to sue their departing presidents.

At Ohio State, the board provided Mr. Gee with a $1.5-million "release payment" in exchange for his pledge not to sue the university.

When an institution is paying millions of dollars to a sitting president, a messy divorce brings with it the risk of a high-cost lawsuit. So, in the view of many trustees, paying now makes more sense than being sued later, according to Marcus S. Owens, a former director of the IRS’s exempt-organizations division.

"If the institution loses or if they have to settle, which is more likely, the dollar amounts can be much bigger than if it’s a low-level, part-time lecturer who’s suing," said Mr. Owens, a partner with Caplin & Drysdale, a Washington law firm.

Another big driver of pay for college presidents comes in the form of deferred compensation, which is money set aside over a period of years to be paid out at a later date. College boards often use deferred pay to retain presidents, who may forfeit it if they step down before a designated vesting date.

At Ohio State, nearly 40 percent of Mr. Gee’s total earnings for 2012-13 came in the form of a deferred-compensation payout. As with other presidents who received payouts, his total pay included money that was counted in previous Chronicle compensation surveys. (The Chronicle’s analysis is modeled on the IRS’s Form 990, a tax document filed annually by nonprofit colleges. It counts both money set aside for an executive and actual disbursements of pay in calculating total compensation.)
Mr. Gee is a perennial front-runner in presidential pay. Asked in an email about his status at the top, he replied: "Someone has to be 1. Why not me?"

Mr. Gee’s contract at West Virginia is still being completed, but he is expected to earn a base salary of $775,000.

A typical college presidency lasts for eight to 10 years, but a board’s commitment to an ex-leader hardly ends there. To attract and retain top talent, college trustees say, they are pressured to approve retirement packages that provide departing presidents with the sort of financial security to which they have grown accustomed.

Generous retirement plans persist even though college presidents could theoretically squirrel away a fair amount of money while in office, a time when most of their basic needs are met. Standard contracts include a residence with cleaning services, a car and driver, club dues, health care, and expense accounts to cover business-related meals.

Michael A. McRobbie, president of the Indiana University system and the flagship campus at Bloomington, earned $1.1-million in 2012-13, making him the nation’s sixth-highest-paid leader of a public college. And Indiana’s board has taken care to ensure that the president remains comfortable well past his final day in office.

If Mr. McRobbie, 63, works at the university through 2022, when he is expected to retire, he will be contractually entitled to two-thirds of his final presidential salary every year for the rest of his life. Today that would amount to $370,497 each year, or $7,100 per week. Those totals would include money from Social Security and the university’s standard retirement plan.

No other employee at the university has a similarly structured retirement package, which offers a defined future benefit in perpetuity. For a professor or administrator hired today, the university invests 10 percent of the employee’s base salary each year, with a future payout that is contingent on uncertain investment returns.
Mr. McRobbie has the option of extending his pension benefit to his wife, 59, who would receive payments for life if he died before her. In that case, the payments would be reduced through an actuarial analysis designed to measure the life expectancies of both parties.

Indiana’s board approved Mr. McRobbie’s retirement package in 2010 at the request of Thomas E. Reilly Jr., who was then chairman of the finance, audit, and strategic-planning committee. Mr. Reilly, now chairman of the board, said he had feared that another institution might try to lure the president away.

He commissioned an analysis of presidential pay across the Big 10 athletic conference and the Association of American Universities, a prestigious group of research institutions of which Indiana is a member. What he found troubled him.

"By my counting, over half of those institutions were going to be looking for a president over the next four or five years," said Mr. Reilly, a retired chief executive of a chemical-manufacturing company. "I came to the conclusion that he would be a suitable candidate for every one of those institutions."

Mr. Reilly frequently describes Indiana’s president, who is an expert in the booming field of information technology, as a "LeBron James" of higher education. Holding on to that kind of star power, the chairman argued, costs money.

"The people who gripe are the people who see some guy getting something for nothing, and I don’t think you have that here," Mr. Reilly said.

It is unclear how much Mr. McRobbie’s retirement package will eventually cost the university. Since the president will receive only partial payments unless he stays on through 2022, Indiana officials said they were not obligated to disclose how much had been set aside thus far.

In addition to his retirement package, Mr. McRobbie’s contract provides for a $1-million life-insurance policy to be paid out to his beneficiaries after his death. Raymond D. Cotton, a Washington lawyer who represented Indiana’s board during contract negotiations with Mr. McRobbie, described insurance policies of this kind as "very, very routine."

"I see million-dollar life-insurance policies even for small liberal-arts colleges," Mr. Cotton said.
The million-dollar college presidency, which was unheard of at public institutions less than a decade ago, is increasingly common at top-tier universities. Nine college leaders earned more than $1-million in 2012-13, up from four in 2011-12, and three in 2010-11.

The growth in presidential pay is not confined to the top. The median $478,896 pay for 2012-13 constitutes an increase of 5 percent from the previous year. (The Chronicle’s analysis included more institutions this year. To allow for year-to-year comparisons, the median was derived from colleges in both surveys with presidents who had served for a full year.)

College trustees say they have to pay well because so few people have the skill set to run a complex academic institution. But money may not be the only factor a college president considers when looking for a job.

Ann Weaver Hart, president of the University of Arizona, earned $560,500 in 2012-13, 23 percent less than she had earned the year before as president of Temple University.

Ms. Hart said the Arizona position appealed to her because it allowed her to be closer to her mother, who lives in Utah. Even though Ms. Hart took a pay cut, she is not complaining about making more than a half a million dollars a year.

"Nobody is starving at my house," she said.

With membership in the Association of American Universities, Arizona is an institution of greater national prominence than Temple, which is in Philadelphia. But geography and tradition, too, sometimes play a role in compensation. Public universities in Pennsylvania tend to pay presidents more than colleges in some other states do, Ms. Hart said, perhaps because the high pay at Penn State and the University of Pennsylvania influences compensation across the area. In Arizona, Ms. Hart said, there is less cultural acceptance of paying presidents in the high six figures and beyond.

"In the populist world of the West," she said, "that wouldn’t fly."

Jonah Newman contributed to this article.
Number Of Public College Presidents Making More Than $1 Million A Year Doubles

BALTIMORE (AP) -- The number of public college presidents earning over $1 million more than doubled in the 2012-2013 fiscal year from the year before, according to a new survey.

The Chronicle of Higher Education study found that nine college presidents earned more than $1 million in total compensation in 2013, compared to just four in 2012.

Public college presidents first exceeded the $1 million total compensation mark in 2006-2007, according to the survey.

Gordon Gee topped the list, earning $6.1 million as the head of Ohio State University. Gee resigned that post last year after making comments about Roman Catholics, the University of Notre Dame and Southeastern Conference schools. He is now president of West Virginia University.
The study took into account base salary, bonuses, retirement, severance and deferred pay - an incentive offered to presidents who stay in their positions for an agreed-upon period of time.

Four of the college presidents on the top 10 list have retired. Two others have accepted positions at other universities.

The top 10 earners in the fiscal year 2012-2013 were:

- Gordon Gee, president of the West Virginia University

Gee's compensation total is based on payments he received at the Ohio State University, from which he resigned in June of 2013 after six years as president. Gee earned $6.1 million in 2013, which includes $3.3 million in deferred pay and $1.55 in retirement and severance pay.

- Bowen Loftin, president of Texas A&M University at College Station

Loftin earned $1.6 million, and resigned from his position in January after three years. He now serves as chancellor of the University of Missouri. Loftin's $425,000 base salary did not change from 2012 to 2013, however in 2013 Loftin was paid $950,000 in severance and retirement pay.

- Hamid Shirvani, president of North Dakota University system

Shirvani earned roughly $1.3 million in 2013. He retired in June 2013, after less than a year in his position overseeing the 11-campus system. He was paid $962,095 in severance and retirement pay - more than double his $349,000 base salary.

- Renu Khator, University of Houston main campus

Khator earned roughly $1.26 million in 2013. She has served in the position since 2008. Nearly 45 percent of Khator's total compensation comes from bonus pay and deferred pay on top of her $700,000 base salary.

- Sally Mason, University of Iowa

Mason earned roughly $1.14 million in 2013, and has served in her position since 2007. More than half of her total compensation is made up of deferred pay on top of her $493,272 base salary.

- Michael McRobbie, Indiana University at Bloomington

McRobbie earned approximately $1.1 million in 2013, and has served as the university's president since 2007. McRobbie earned $567,076 in deferred pay, bonuses and other benefits, and $544,848 in base pay.

- Michael Adams, University of Georgia
Adams earned about $1.1 million in 2013, and retired from his position in July. His base pay for the year was $258,760; the vast majority of his total compensation is made up of deferred pay.

- Gordon Moulton, University of South Alabama

Moulton earned about $1.1 million in 2013. Moulton retired in January 2013, and died in September. Moulton earned $666,046 in severance and retirement pay, on top of his $406,075 base salary.

- Mary Sue Coleman, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor

Coleman earned about $1 million in 2013 and has served as president since 2002. On top of her $603,357, Coleman earned $200,000 in bonus pay and $234,000 in deferred pay and retirement pay.

- Mark Yudof, University of California system

Mark Yudof, the only top-earning president whose compensation is shy of $1 million, served as president from 2008 until September of 2013, when he retired. Yudof's total compensation accounts for Yudof's base pay of $591,084 and $266,000 in retirement pay.

State Farm gives MU $118,000 in grants

Saturday, May 17, 2014 at 2:00 am Comments (1)

The University of Missouri will receive just more than $118,000 in safety-related grants from State Farm Insurance Cos.

The four "Good Neighbor Citizenship" grants will be awarded during a recognition breakfast at 7:30 a.m. Tuesday at Gwynn Hall, 520 Hitt St.

The grants include $50,000 for MU Extension for training for first responders on extricating victims from car accidents. The grant will fund about 18 training sessions across the state, according to a news release.
The second grant is for $30,000 for the trauma center at University Hospital to work on a Mobile Age program that partners health care, law enforcement and Department of Motor Vehicle staff across the state "on identifying and supporting medical-impairment issues with older drivers."

State Farm is also giving $22,000 to the MU Office for Financial Success for financial counseling services for students, training for student financial counselors and participation in community programs such as tax preparation assistance.

The fourth grant is $16,200 for the College of Education to benefit the Achieve mentoring program, connecting education students with local at-risk elementary students.

University of Missouri System to get 5.2 percent more funding

System has met all of its goals.

By Rudi Keller

Friday, May 16, 2014 at 2:00 pm

JEFFERSON CITY — For the coming fiscal year, lawmakers allocated $428.8 million for the University of Missouri System, a 5.2 percent boost over this year's budget and just a bit more than the average for all state colleges and universities.

The UM system received 0.2 percent more than the 5 percent average because it met all five performance goals set by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education. The extra money came at the expense of schools that did not meet all five goals.

It's the second year new funding has been divided based on performance. Under a bill approved 30-0 yesterday in the Senate and 135-6 in the House, 90 percent of future funding increases would depend on continued achievement.

The bill does not establish an overall funding formula for higher education as envisioned in a bill passed in 2012, but it does mean that decisions about new funding will no longer be completely
dependent on institutional political muscle, Senate Education Committee Chairman David Pearce, R-Warrensburg, said.

"There is nothing in state statute that requires that, and so this codifies that, and long after this governor and this legislature's gone, it is still going to be on the books," Pearce said.

Under the performance funding plan, adopted by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education in 2012, each school is measured for performance on four statewide measures and one school-specific measure. Each statewide measure has two options, with the schools choosing which it intends to achieve.

The measures are:

- **Student success and progress.** The UM System choose to measure whether it increases the number of freshmen who become sophomores. The other option is to measure the number of freshmen who complete 24 credit hours.
- **Degree production.** UM choose to measure whether it is increasing the number of students who graduate within six years. The other option is whether it is increasing the number of degrees granted.
- **Quality of learning.** UM documents whether it increases the number of graduates who pass professional licensing exams. The other option is to measure student achievement in their major.
- **Financial responsibility.** UM seeks to increase the portion of its budget spent on its core mission. The other choice is to keep cost increases below the rate of inflation.

For its school-specific measure, UM must increase the money it receives from federal research and development grants.

The bill added a sixth goal, measuring job placement in a student's field of study, with an exemption for years with rising unemployment.

"This body and the House felt that training students for the job market that is in Missouri is very important," Pearce said.

The 2012 law required a formula for funding higher education to be in place before fiscal year 2015, which begins July 1. A formula written last year drew heavy opposition because it would have made 10 percent of each year's funding subject to performance measures.

"The four-year" universities "just mainly opposed it so vehemently that it wasn't going to happen," he said. "To me, I think it was very important we took this step this year, that we are going to have performance funding."
JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — Missouri lawmakers have given final approval to a $600 million bonding plan for improvements and repairs at state facilities and college campuses.

The bonding proposal would authorize $400 million of bonds for repairs and renovations to existing buildings and for new construction at the state mental health hospital in Fulton. An additional $200 million is authorized for repairs and renovations to buildings on college campuses.

House Budget Committee Chairman Rick Streams says the bill provides funding for renovations to the main building that houses the engineering school at the University of Missouri-Columbia. The state budget that lawmakers approved last week authorized $38.5 million for that project.

House members approved the bonding measure 115-18 on Friday. It passed the Senate 25-6 last month.

Bonding bill is SB723.

Online:

Senate: http://www.senate.mo.gov
JEFFERSON CITY — A bill necessary to finance expansion of a College of Engineering building on the University of Missouri campus won overwhelming approval Friday in the Missouri House as lawmakers worked around the Senate sponsor of the measure.

By a vote of 115-18, the House passed a bill authorizing $600 million in bonds to finance repairs and renovation of existing state buildings. As the chamber moved to a vote, state Rep. Chris Kelly called the bill his top achievement of his legislative career.

"This is a good day for workers in the state of Missouri, it is a good day for research and it is a good day for the University of Missouri," Kelly said.

The $38.5 million project for Lafferre Hall was included in a package of $141.5 million in construction approved in a spending bill last week. That bill also included $25 million for a new research center and museum for the State Historical Society of Missouri.

Those appropriations were meaningless without a bill authorizing the state Board of Public Buildings to issue the bonds. But the Senate bill authorizing the debt, rewritten to allow just enough borrowing to pay for the projects, was rejected by its sponsor, Sen. Mike Parson, R-Bolivar.

That left the House only one option, which was to pass the bill as it arrived from the Senate, with a prohibition on the use of the bonds for new construction. Because Lafferre Hall is the only building on the list of projects that currently exists, it is likely the only project that will be legal under the bill if Gov. Jay Nixon signs it.

The restrictions could be lifted before the appropriations expire June 30, 2015, if lawmakers act quickly next year. Otherwise, supporters of the State Historical Society and the $73 million in other construction will have to try again.
Kelly, who will leave the House after this term, made the engineering building his top priority. For five years he tried to put a large bond issue on a statewide ballot but could not find success. He narrowed his focus this year to the single Columbia project.

"I have seen days that nobody in the state of Missouri, myself included, thought this could be done, including the senior gentleman from Boone," state Rep. Stephen Webber, D-Columbia, said during debate. "We were amazed at the energy he had, amazed at the persistence he had and still weren't sure he could do it."

As MU graduation comes to close, emphasis is on bonds formed

Sunday, May 18, 2014 | 2:21 p.m. CDT; updated 9:18 p.m. CDT, Sunday, May 18, 2014
BY CASEY NEIGHBOR

COLUMBIA — Kimberly David has spent countless hours with her doctoral supervisor, Wendy Reinke, an associate professor in the College of Education.

But that didn't prevent Reinke from having a few jitters before the culmination of their five years of work together Sunday. As David prepared for her commencement ceremony, Reinke was a little worried that she'd trip while trying to give David her doctoral hood.

"We put a lot of time and effort into our doctoral candidates so I can trip over her on stage," Reinke said.

David received her doctorate in school psychology, and she was one of 268 new MU graduates who received their doctorates. Many of these freshly minted PhDs were recognized in Jesse Auditorium on Sunday afternoon during the hooding ceremony for doctoral candidates.

During the ceremony, the doctoral candidates are hooded by their mentors, an act that symbolizes their becoming PhDs in their respective fields. The intimate nature of the ceremony helps reiterate the close bond that is formed between doctoral candidates and their mentors.
"This is just the culmination of many years of hard work and the celebration of reaching a certain level of quality and creativity," said Dave Pintel, a professor in the School of Medicine.

This bond was the focus of MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin's address to the doctoral candidates, and he encouraged graduates to consider mentoring themselves.

"You will receive more back as a mentor," he said. "Taking that person from one place to another enhances your intellect, and every single one has taught me something."

Sunday was the final day of commencement ceremonies at MU. Here is a look into the other ceremonies that took place:

**ROTC Commissioning of Officers**
Families and friends of former Air Force cadets gathered in MU’s Memorial Student Union to witness the commissioning of officers. The ceremony honored ten cadets who took the Oath of Commissioned Officers and became Second Lieutenants in the Air Force.

After taking the oath, the officers' families pinned their new rank on their uniforms, and they received their first salute. Many of the officers chose family members or close friends who serve in the Air Force to perform their first salute, making the moment even more special.

Matthew Beckum just graduated from MU with a degree in atmospheric science and is starting a career in cyberspace operations.

"This is just really the start of the beginning of my career," he said.

He joined the Air Force to serve his country and explore the world. He will be stationed at the Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Miss.

Nine other Second Lieutenants joined Beckum in taking their oaths Sunday, and they will begin their Air Force careers in areas such as nuclear and missile operations and special investigations across the country.

**College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources**
The graduates of the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources walked across the stage in front of a full Hearnes Center on Sunday morning.

Among the 403 graduates was Lizzie Anderson, 22, who graduated with a degree in animal science. She is hoping to apply to veterinary school next spring.

"Today is surreal for me," she said. "There have been a lot of challenges for me to get here, and now I finally get to walk across that stage."

Anderson is also getting married in June and shared the special moment with her fiance, Bryan Stark. He stood in the stands and cheered loudly as she received her diploma.

"She has worked really hard to get here," he said. "I'm just so proud of what she has done even with the craziness of planning a wedding."

U.S. Rep. Vicky Hartzler encouraged graduates to continue to innovate and discover in the world of agriculture.

"You are the new pioneers who will change the world — today and tomorrow," she said. On Sunday, new graduates and families continued to celebrate MU commencement with ceremonies for graduates from the School of Law, Trulaske College of Business and master's and educational specialist candidates from the Graduate School.

Sunday marked the third and final day of MU gradation ceremonies. More than 5,300 students were honored over the course of the weekend.

UPDATE: MU students, families celebrate commencement ceremonies Saturday

Saturday, May 17, 2014 | 8:27 p.m. CDT; updated 12:57 p.m. CDT, Sunday, May 18, 2014

Students in the Honors Convocation* celebrated their graduation from MU at Mizzou Arena on Saturday.  

*CORRECTION: MU students graduating with honors
attended the Honors Convocation on Saturday morning. A previous version of this story incorrectly stated the title of this ceremony.

COLUMBIA — More than a hundred medical students took the Declaration of Geneva on Saturday, marking the end of their medical education at MU.

The oath, which is said by all medical graduates, requires physicians to not use "medical knowledge contrary to the laws of humanity."

This group and thousands of other MU students celebrated their graduation this weekend, with more than 5,300 students receiving degrees. Saturday's festivities began with the Honors Convocation*, and the College of Engineering, School of Health Professions, School of Medicine, School of Natural Resources and the College of Arts and Science held ceremonies later in the day.

On Friday, the College of Veterinary Medicine, College of Education, College of Human Environmental Sciences, Sinclair School of Nursing and the School of Journalism had their commencement ceremonies.

Here is a glimpse into some of Saturday's ceremonies:

Honors Convocation*
Hundreds of students and families gathered in the Mizzou Arena for the Honors Convocation early Saturday morning.

Jim McKelvey, a St. Louis native and co-founder of Square, a mobile payment company, offered a dose of reality but also posed an important challenge.

McKelvey joked that the days of praise for graduates are over: No longer would points be tallied or grades received. Despite this, he challenged the honors graduates to find a problem in the world to drive them to fill the void that a lack of praise leaves.

"What was impossible yesterday or last week might be solvable; it just needs a champion," McKelvey said.

The ceremony also honored this year's honorary degree recipient, Jim Held. Held restored the Stone Hill Winery in Hermann and turned it into the oldest and most
prominent winery in Missouri. His efforts have brought life back into the Missouri winery industry. He was presented with the degree by Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin.

"I've experienced many wonderful days in my 80 years, and this is one of the best," Held said.

All honors graduates received a bronze medallion cast of the columns to recognize their accomplishments.

**School of Medicine**
MU medical students took photos in front of the MU Columns and on the steps of Jesse Hall before they received their degrees and became physicians.

The family-focused ceremony took place at Jesse Auditorium on Saturday afternoon, with speakers encouraging graduates to thank their family and friends for their support. Class speaker John Cummins spoke about the importance of asking for help and realizing your own humanity once becoming a doctor.

"I know every single person is going to be a phenomenal doctor," he said. "But we aren't inherently well, and we are often as broken as the patients in front of us. Sometimes we need help, too."

MU alumnus and commencement speaker Alexander Garza focused on the evolution of medicine, the importance of human interaction and preparation. He is also the associate dean of public health practice and a professor of epidemiology at the Saint Louis University College of Public Health and Social Justice.

"Chance favors the prepared mind," Garza said. "Always be prepared to accept the opportunities that are put in front of you, even if by mistake."

**College of Arts and Science**
Graduates of the College of Arts and Science walked across the stage in front of a full crowd at Hearnes Center on Saturday night.

Among the graduates was Annie Martin, 22, who graduated with a degree in political science. She is the first in her family to graduate from college.
"I can't believe that, after four years, this moment is about to happen," she said. "You work your whole educational career to get here, and then suddenly you're graduating. It is scary and exciting at the same time."

Her mother, Donna Martin, was just as excited to share in her daughter's moment.

"It's just amazing that she is going to walk across that stage after years of hard work," she said. "I'm just so proud of everything that today means."

Annie Martin wasn't sure if she will apply to law school or pursue another career in her field, but she was hopeful for the future.

"I'm not sure what I'm going to do exactly but I'm eager to begin the journey," she said.

Commencement speaker Tim Wolfe, UM System President and MU alumnus, encouraged graduates to not settle, to learn something new each day and to take risks. Above all, he hoped that they would enjoy what today means.

"I just want you to savor this moment," he said. "Be proud of this moment at least for a little bit."

MU professor leads students on trip to help with Mandela archive

By Ashley Jost

Saturday, May 17, 2014 at 2:00 am Comments (1)
When Randy Smith heard about the effort of the University of Missouri and the University of Western Cape in Cape Town, South Africa, to digitize documents, photos and other archives related to Nelson Mandela, he barely paused before deciding to lend a hand.

Smith, the Donald W. Reynolds endowed chair in business journalism at MU, leaves tomorrow with 11 students for a month in South Africa.

The group's goal is to collect stories about Mandela from people who lived through apartheid. All of the information will be turned into print stories, videos and other projects that will be used in the archive.

Smith said the students' projects aren't the only focus of the trip. They will also be collaborating on ideas for the archive, which is still in the very early stages of development, and how to make it more interactive and user friendly. He said the hope is for the archive to resemble the efforts MU faculty and students put in the archives chronicling former President Harry Truman's life.

"What really got me thinking about this was back before I was a student at the journalism school, there was a history class involving Truman," Smith said. "The students actually went to Independence every year to visit with them. I don't think there was ever any journalism about that in the archives. There has to be journalism around Mandela and the archives."

The 11 student attendees are primarily graduate students, with all but two coming from the journalism school. The other two students are graduate students in business administration, which Smith said will come in handy for discussions about creating a plan for the archive to stay financially stable over time. The trip will last through June 12.

"He is revered worldwide by everybody," Smith said about Mandela. "It doesn't matter what side of the political spectrum you're on. Everyone holds him in high esteem. I imagine the website will have a great audience once we get it up and going."

Smith got the idea for the trip in January, and by March he had a list of interested students. Since then, he said the participants have gone through some training on oral storytelling, camera use and a few other matters.

The support that Smith said he has received from other faculty and the campus has been "tremendous." The cost per person to attend the trip has dropped from $4,500 to $3,000 because of some internal fundraising from programs such as Mizzou Advantage, Smith said. He still has just more than $20,000 for others costs incurred along the way. Whatever isn't spent in South Africa will be given to students to lower their costs even more.

Andrada Zabava, a graduate student from the journalism school who is attending the trip, said she was attracted by the opportunity of "doing something so meaningful."

Zabava and her teammate will be researching and interviewing people about the role of the press during apartheid. Growing up in Romania, Zabava said she is familiar with government restrictions placed on the press, and that led to her interest in the issue she will study.
"I've grown up in a place that I felt injustice all around me, so I've always admired people who fought against that," she said. "I admire people who stood up to do what they knew was right, you know?"

Smith said he's glad the trip is happening this summer, just more than five months after Mandela's death, so the students can capture the memories of people who were closest to Mandela's age before they — and their memories — are gone.

Medical schools, associations look for ways to recruit new doctors

By Jodie Jackson Jr.

Saturday, May 17, 2014 at 2:00 am

The aging population combined with new patients who are signing up for health insurance plans through the Affordable Care Act is expected to strain the thin ranks of family care doctors, or primary care physicians, as medical schools try to recruit and train new doctors to keep up with that demand.

Although patient care and public health are at the forefront of efforts to increase the number of doctors going into family practice rather than a more lucrative specialty, the Missouri State Medical Association and American Medical Association recently reframed the picture of shrinking numbers of primary care physicians by pointing out substantial dollars-and-cents reasons to address the problem.

The associations reported that Missouri's 13,735 primary care physicians fulfill a vital role in the state's economy by supporting 143,424 jobs and generating $20.3 billion in economic activity.

Each physician in Missouri supports an average of 10.4 jobs and more than $1.5 million in economic output, according to figures the associations released last month. The economic impact also includes an average of $839,000 in annual wages and benefits supported by each physician.
"Economically, there's no question that medicine is a big driver," said Scott Schultz, who started Providence Urgent Care in 2009 with fellow University of Missouri School of Medicine graduate Jason Zerrer.

Schultz and Zerrer opened a second facility in January and already have "taken more than the first step" toward adding a third location, Zerrer said. The business has 20-some employees, including seven physicians, and supports a number of ancillary services, from cleaning crews to billing staff.

"The economic impact is millions of dollars in Columbia," Schultz said.

The medical associations' economic impact report came a month after Thomas Holloway, executive vice president of the Missouri State Medical Association, and Herb Kuhn, president and CEO of the Missouri Hospital Association, co-authored an op-ed piece in the Tribune that warned Missouri was sending signals to health care professionals that the state is not entirely friendly to physicians when it comes to failing to cap noneconomic damages in medical liability cases and other factors.

Public health factors such as low immunization rates, a higher prevalence of smoking, obesity and some chronic conditions also are signals the state isn't committed to health care to the extent that the General Assembly would take stronger steps to help make Missouri "more attractive to physicians," Holloway said.

Tort reform, Medicaid reform and expansion, and better support for medical education are steps the legislature could take, he said.

Even more urgent, Holloway and Kuhn said, is the need to attract physicians to rural communities. A 2012 report from the National Center for Rural Health Works said each primary care physician serving a rural area generates $1 million in annual revenue and creates 23 jobs, and a rural general surgeon — who needs a rural hospital to work in — creates 26 jobs and adds $1.4 million to the economy.

When Michael LeFevre graduated from the University of Missouri School of Medicine in 1979, roughly 40 percent of his 114-member graduating class became primary care physicians — family doctors — with the balance opting for residencies and careers in a specialty such as cardiology, pediatrics, dermatology and others.

The School of Medicine will confer the title of "doctor" on 97 graduates today with LeFevre, one of their instructors, looking on as vice chairman of the Department of Family and Community Medicine. The percent of the new doctors going into family medicine or primary care will be around 8.5 percent, a better rate than just four years ago but still far from the level needed to replenish the ranks of family care docs leaving the profession and to meet the growing needs of a rapidly aging population.
LeFevre said medical schools across the country need to return to the 40 percent mark for new docs going into primary care.

"We're doing a reasonable job of meeting the needs of people" in Columbia and Boone County, LeFevre said, but outside the city and county — especially in more rural areas — "the picture starts to grow a little bleaker."

MU was in the national top 10 of medical school graduates for each of the past three years, "but we're still not meeting the needs of the" overall "population."

LeFevre said that most of the family physicians whom he graduated with remained in primary care "because they love their job."

"I love seeing the patients. I love taking care of them," he said. "But the feeling is different for all the paperwork that is now required.

"We're in a very tightly controlled regulatory environment," he said. "A lot of I's to dot and T's to cross. Very clearly things are harder about practice today than 25 years ago."

The expenses of the business of medicine also continue to grow. That $20 or $30 co-pay at the doctor's office doesn't automatically go into the doctor's pocket. LeFevre said that up to 70 cents of every dollar spent at a primary care office is for overhead and other expenses of the practice.

Despite the burgeoning regulatory requirements and continuing gap in salary — primary care doctors earn less than half of what the highest-paid specialties offer — LeFevre said there aren't many signs that the allure of medicine has faded for students. The MU School of Medicine continues to receive "many more qualified applicants than positions" that are available.

The reality is that most doctors leave medical school with debt of $100,000 to $200,000, LeFevre said, and must decide which income level will be best for meeting that debt and having the quality of life they desire.

The 2014 Physicians Compensation Report produced for WebMD listed orthopedic surgeons as the top earners in the medical field with an average annual income of $413,000. Cardiologists earn on average $351,000, and dermatologists make $308,000. Family care physicians are at the bottom at $174,000.

Reducing the income gap between higher-paid specialists and family or primary care doctors would be one step, but not the only step, toward attracting and retaining more family care docs, LeFevre said.

"I don't make nearly as much money as my subspecialty colleagues," he said, but then pointed out that primary care physicians are still in the upper 3.5 percent of American incomes and the upper 10 percent of world incomes.
"Count our blessings," LeFevre said.

Ashley Jenkins, 26, and Alex Zweig, 28, are among today's MU medical school graduates. They're taking their "doctor" titles to different career paths and residencies. Zweig wants to go into family medicine and primary care. Jenkins is headed for residency at the University of Chicago Hospital on her way to becoming a dermatologist.

"I saw how physicians can affect patients very directly," said Zweig, whose father is the chairman of the Department of Family and Community Medicine at MU School of Medicine. "I thought it would be a lot more fun."

Even though both of his parents are primary care docs — his mother practices at the MU Student Health Center — Zweig was a college senior majoring in political science and leaning toward law school, but his experience working in health care policy and as a unit clerk in the intensive care unit at University Hospital changed his career course.

"I kind of avoided anything my parents were doing," he said. "They never pushed me into medicine."

Zweig was attracted to family medicine because of a focus on prevention as well as the opportunity to tackle complex medical problems. Knowing he would have a chance to build relationships over a long period of time, "continuity from knowing patients for many years," was going to be more satisfying, he said.

He begins an at-least four-year residency in June in Portland, Ore., but anticipates returning to Columbia to practice.

Jenkins initially leaned more toward a surgical field but also liked the continuity of care more likely in a clinical setting. Her mother was diagnosed with melanoma when Jenkins was growing up, so "dermatology holds a special place for me."

Both Zweig and Jenkins graduated from Rock Bridge High School.

"We've had to sacrifice all of our 20s — and into our 30s" knowing that the day would come when they could enjoy a lifestyle afforded by being physicians, Jenkins said. She and her husband have been apart for a year now and she is eager to reconnect. He also is in residency near Chicago at Northwestern University in pursuit of a career in orthopedics.

Zweig said the dollar signs of physician pay had little to do with his decision to pursue a career in family medicine.

"All doctors make plenty of money to have a comfortable lifestyle and pay off their debts," he said.
"I feel blessed to be here," Jenkins said, pointing out that others were "not as lucky" to be accepted and admitted into medical school, although she and her husband have half a million dollars in student loan debt, "which is a scary number," she said.

The challenges of the Affordable Care Act, changes in reimbursement models for Medicare, electronic medical records, the aging population and numerous other factors continue to not only change the landscape of health care professions but also create new opportunities.

Three Columbia physicians have signed on with MDVIP, a Florida-based company that offers direct care, or "conierge," medicine, where patients pay a membership fee — starting at $1,500 a year — that guarantees them access and longer visits with their physicians. That model also caused participating physicians to downsize their patient rosters, leaving hundreds of local residents looking for new doctors who accept their health insurance plans.

The list of companies specializing in in-home and home health care also is growing, in part because of the aging population and because an increasing number of family members are becoming caregivers for their loved ones.

Schultz and Zerrer, founders of Providence Urgent Care, graduated from MU's medical school in 2001 and spent nearly a decade as emergency room physicians before deciding to become entrepreneurs, unaffiliated with a hospital or larger health care system.

"It lets us be free agents," Zerrer said, with Schultz adding that their urgent care physicians can send patients "where we feel it's going to be best" if they need specialized care or hospitalization.

"Take care of the patients first, and everything else will take care of itself," Zerrer said.

Schultz did his residency with a founder of MedExpress, now a franchise of urgent care clinics spread across 11 states.

"I saw the business model work," Schultz said, "and we saw the need in Columbia."

Not only does Providence Urgent Care focus on getting walk-in patients in and out the door in less than an hour, Schultz and Zerrer also offer employee profit-sharing, retirement savings, health insurance and other perks.

"We didn't reinvent the wheel," Schultz said. "We just brought it to Columbia."