Senator McCaskill Plans Legislation to Improve Response to Campus Sexual Violence

NO MU MENTION

By Monica Vendituoli

Sen. Claire McCaskill used a roundtable discussion of sexual violence on campuses Monday to announce that she planned to propose legislation to improve colleges’ response to the issue, which has drawn attention in recent months from the White House, the Education and Justice Departments, and student victims and their advocates across the country.

The roundtable, the second of three held by Ms. McCaskill, a Missouri Democrat, was attended by advocates for survivors, college administrators, two other U.S. senators, and the official in charge of the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division.

The focus was Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which protects students from discrimination based on sex in education programs that receive federal aid. Ms. McCaskill’s legislative proposal, she said, would be informed by information gleaned from the three roundtables.

"I need to be able to show our colleagues this is the body of work that needs to be done, and this is what is getting done," she said, citing the demand for grants in a Justice Department program as evidence that the work was unfinished.

The Justice Department official, Jocelyn Samuels, acting assistant attorney general for civil rights, reported that the department program on Grants to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking on Campus made 28 awards out of 127 applications in the 2013 fiscal year.

Two key debates that arose during the roundtable were what aspects of Title IX enforcement should be centralized in the federal government, and whether the penalty for Title IX violations should be changed.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal, a Connecticut Democrat, asked, "Shouldn’t there be some sort of set of standards … for what kinds of services should be offered, what advice should be given?"
Ms. Samuels said that, while models can be good, colleges should create sexual-assault policies that are customized to their communities. "We don’t want universities to cut and paste from some boilerplate," she said.

Newsweek recently reported that the University of Akron, one of the 60 colleges and universities under investigation by the Education Department for possible Title IX violations involving sexual violence, copied Miami University of Ohio’s sexual-misconduct policies. Ms. Samuels pointed to the Checklist for Campus Sexual Misconduct Policies found on NotAlone.gov, a resource for sexual-assault victims created recently by the White House, as a place where colleges could find the basics for their own policies.

**Penalties and Training**

The roundtable also included discussion of how aspects of Title IX administration may need centralizing. Cat Riley, Title IX coordinator at the University of Texas Medical Branch, in Galveston, called for the creation of a website for all Title IX coordinators at colleges similar to what student-aid officials can find at the website of the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. Such a resource could also offer training for all Title IX coordinators.

Senator McCaskill also suggested that the Government Accountability Office, a research arm of Congress, look into the differing policies of the Education Department’s 12 regional Offices for Civil Rights after Lindy Aldrich, deputy director at the Victim Rights Law Center, pointed out that lawyers often come to her asking for advice on how to deal with the different offices.

Another topic of discussion concerned the penalty for colleges found to violate Title IX. The sole penalty is that a college loses all of its federal funding. While colleges have paid large damages and legal fees in Title IX court cases, no college has lost its federal funding due to a Title IX violation.

Ms. McCaskill noted that while the Departments of Justice and Education "carry a big stick" with that penalty, if a college were to be found in violation, it would punish "way too many innocent young people."

The idea of a system of fines was brought up as a potential remedy for the current Title IX penalty system. But Ms. Aldrich noted that, if not designed properly, a fine-based penalty structure could severely hurt impoverished colleges, while being akin to "swatting flies" at affluent institutions. John Kelly, special-projects organizer for the survivor-advocacy group Know Your IX, suggested fining colleges based on their endowment size.

Sen. Jon Tester, a Montana Democrat, observed that bad publicity alone may inspire colleges to act. "There are worse things than monetary punishment," he said.

The final roundtable, on June 16, will focus on the administrative process and the criminal-justice system as they relate to the punishment of perpetrators of campus sexual assaults.
If Webster Groves native Sadie Weiss knew seven years ago what she knows now, she might not be jobless and roughly $50,000 in debt just a few years removed from college.

Her situation isn't catastrophic, but it isn't exactly comfortable either. Hers is a reality that a number of young adults find themselves in: holding a diploma, weighed down by debt and navigating shaky job prospects.

While the research says that a college degree will pay for itself many times over in the long run, in the short-term, the debt associated with college is being blamed for keeping graduates from buying homes and reaching other lifetime milestones.

Nationwide, student loan debt recently passed the $1 trillion mark, surpassing credit card debt for the first time.

It’s partly for that reason that President Barack Obama talks about value when it comes to the nation’s colleges and universities. Getting the most bang for the buck out of the college experience is a problem that has stumped generations of policymakers.

Obama’s plan is to come up with a new ranking system where schools would be rated by how well they serve their students, while maintaining affordability. If the proposal is approved by Congress, the higher-scoring schools would get a larger share of federal dollars.

College leaders locally and around the country are quietly questioning whether the president’s overall plan is a little too tidy to fit the often cluttered world of higher education. Leaders at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, for example, say the plan doesn’t take into account the nature of their student body.

“This is a complicated topic. I’m not sure that you can reduce the value of an institution down to a few measures,” said Rusty Monhollon, an assistant commissioner with the Missouri Department of Higher Education. “I guess what’s missing for me, is that there is no emphasis on quality.”

Some of Obama’s criteria for determining value take into account the cost of tuition, the number of low-income students enrolled on campus, the amount of debt students typically graduate with and the amount of money they make when they leave college.
SCORECARDS

To get his plan started, Obama’s administration rolled out what are being called White House College Scorecards — online score sheets designed to make it easy for students and parents to compare schools.

Weiss said the scorecards would have been a nice resource for her had they been around when she started school. Like many other young adults, Weiss said she dove into the college experience at the University of Arizona without realizing what it was going to cost on the back end.

“At that age, I was not really thinking about the consequences,” said Weiss, 25. “It was a great experience, and I don’t regret going there, but if I could go back, I would’ve looked more thoroughly at the amount of money I’d have to pay back, because it’s pretty outrageous.”

But while the scorecards might have helped Weiss, critics say the one-size-fits-all approach of the rankings isn’t right for higher education.

For example, some argue that using the starting salaries of recent graduates as a measure of value would help colleges that offer job-specific training programs such as engineering schools, while hurting smaller, liberal arts schools.

According to the salary-tracking website payscale.com, the average University of Missouri-Columbia graduate can expect to make $44,300 straight out of college, while a Truman State University graduate is looking at pay closer to $37,600.

Under Obama’s plan, Truman State could expect to see its share of federal dollars decrease.

The Truman State example is worrisome to people such as Monhollon, who said colleges provide a variety of rich experiences, and are more than providers of warm bodies to enter the workforce.

Monhollon said an alternative plan might be to test students according to their area of study in order to measure how well schools are training them.

Another controversial measure in the president’s plan is the graduation rate. It’s already a common way for schools to be compared, but critics say it’s too easily manipulated, and under Obama’s plan, contradictory to some of the other goals the president is trying to achieve.

Schools can easily boost graduation rates by restricting their admissions to higher-income students, who are generally better prepared to succeed compared with low-income students. Under Obama’s plan, however, schools would be measured on both their graduation rates and the number of low-income students they serve.

Obama’s plan would bring a lot of useful information to the forefront, “but it doesn’t account for the different missions of different institutions,” Monhollon said.
THE RIGHT FIT

One area school that will be paying particularly close attention to the president’s plan is the University of Missouri-St. Louis, a school that has traditionally served students who previously attended community colleges.

The concern, says Dean of Enrollment Services Alan Byrd, is that most of the president’s performance measures focus on first-time freshmen who start and finish at the same school. Roughly 75 percent of UMSL’s enrollees are transfer students.

“The college scorecard made our campus more conscious of how it compared to other universities,” Byrd said. But the emphasis on first-time freshmen “will put UMSL at a significant disadvantage.”

A tweak in the president’s plan to take into account so-called nontraditional students would not only benefit the school, but also students such as Sarah Caudill, a junior biology student at UMSL interested in pursuing nursing.

UMSL is Caudill’s third collegiate stop. She left her first choice, Lindenwood University, a private, liberal arts school in St. Charles, because of the cost.

She later studied for two years at St. Louis Community College’s Meramec campus before enrolling at UMSL.

Caudill eventually chose UMSL because it fit her needs and it was affordable.

But Byrd fears that under the president’s plan, UMSL would be penalized for focusing on transfer students such as Caudill.

“Ultimately, it will force us to adjust our campus programming and support services to be more accommodating to traditional freshmen,” Byrd said.
The New America Foundation gave voice on Tuesday to a simmering resentment toward the Association of American Universities, saying its system for ranking research universities is a net negative for higher education.

The foundation, in a report by Kevin Carey, its director of education policy, suggested the AAU undergo an overhaul in which its heavy emphasis on research spending as a membership criterion became more balanced by attention to institutional success in teaching students.

Through the AAU, Mr. Carey said, a "tiny cabal of venerable institutions has done more to shape and, increasingly, harm the cause of higher learning in America than any other group one could name."

That harm, he said, comes from institutions’ fruitlessly wasting time and money chasing AAU membership, and from universities’ worrying more about superficial measures of research activity than about more-substantive matters such as the degree to which they are actually helping students.

The AAU pushed back, saying it has wider membership criteria and pays more attention to student education than Mr. Carey acknowledges. The foundation’s report "is deeply flawed by its misunderstanding of AAU’s current membership," the association said in a written response attributed to its president, Hunter R. Rawlings III.
The exchange revived an issue that last gained widespread prominence in early 2011, when the 62-member AAU, an advocacy group founded in 1900, kicked out the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. Syracuse University, which was also facing eviction due to relatively low numbers of research dollars, left on its own around the same time.

Before that, AAU membership had been fairly stable, with the overwhelming majority of its universities having been part of the association for decades. But the two departures followed an AAU effort to put greater numerical precision on its eligibility standards. That was driven by changes over the years that had left some existing member institutions with considerably smaller levels of research activity than some notable nonmember institutions.

AAU membership has become a widely recognized reputational yardstick for institutional quality. As such, the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, a 102-year member, fought hard to prevent its dismissal. Its sympathizers outside Nebraska faulted the AAU on a variety of grounds, including the association’s use of broad statistical measures more than subjective criteria in choosing its members, and its emphasis on hard sciences over liberal arts.

New Approach Suggested

The New America Foundation, a nonpartisan policy institute, echoed such complaints. The AAU is using "mechanistic formulas" for rankings that its members reject in other contexts, while applying them to a very limited slice of what a research university should aspire to accomplish, Mr. Carey said. (Mr. Carey also serves as a columnist for The Chronicle.)

The AAU’s approach is especially problematic for public universities, which are vastly underrepresented among AAU members, relative to how many students they educate, Mr. Carey said.

The association’s membership list currently has 34 public and 26 private institutions in the United States, and two Canadian members. Mr. Carey suggested a more-balanced 82-member organization with 69 public universities.

In the central analytic portion of his 15-page report, he proposed achieving that ratio through an 11-point system for AAU membership that would include measures of research spending but
also Pell Grant recipients, degrees awarded to ethnic-minority students, and net price for low-income undergraduates.

The AAU’s response did not directly address those suggestions, though Mr. Rawlings said the association rejected the suggestion that the AAU discriminated against universities on the basis of student-body size and admission rates.

"This is absurd," he said, "since anybody who actually examines AAU’s membership criteria—or looks at our current membership list—will see that AAU does not include any of these factors in making membership decisions." Mr. Rawlings also cited the AAU’s continuing five-year initiative to improve undergraduate teaching in the sciences as evidence of its commitment to education beyond lab research.

The AAU has said previously it would lose effectiveness if it grew significantly beyond its current size, and Mr. Rawlings said the organization intended to maintain "a balance of public and private" universities.

Although his report was titled "Building a New AAU," Mr. Carey said it was unrealistic to expect the AAU would actually adopt his ideas. Instead, he said he hoped that institutions now spending so much time and money trying to gain AAU membership would create their own organization that emphasized quality in both research and teaching.

Yet he also acknowledged that in placing such a high value on research, universities were affected by outside factors beyond the AAU’s membership criteria—such as the much higher amounts of federal grant money devoted to research rather than teaching—as well as their own internal tenure and promotion policies.

"The AAU," he conceded, "represents the values that the academy itself has voluntarily established." At best, universities reflect a competition for multiple missions. "The trick," he said, "is to manage them in a way that is in the best interest of society at large."
Missouri is a chronic economic underachiever

By David Nicklaus dnicklaus@post-dispatch.com 314-340-8213

NO MU MENTION

The 21st century has not been kind to Missouri’s economy. Manufacturing jobs have disappeared and, for whatever reason, the state hasn’t done very well at attracting knowledge-based industries that are fueling growth elsewhere.

The numbers are discouraging, economist Rik Hafer points out in a new essay for the Show-Me Institute, a free-market think tank.

Missouri ranked 28th in per capita gross domestic product in 2000, but had fallen to 36th place by 2012. Over those dozen years, the state’s production of goods and services grew at an annual rate of just 0.06 percent, or about $23 per person per year.

If he were handing out a grade for that performance, Hafer says, it would have to be a D.

Hafer, a professor of economics at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, says he wrote the piece in hopes of shaking Missourians out of their complacency about our lack of economic vitality.

“People need to be reminded that the economic track record just isn’t very good,” he said.

In terms of job growth, Missouri trailed most of its neighbors in the years leading up to the Great Recession, and it has continued to lag behind since.

Hafer calculates that if Missouri had just done as well as its neighboring states since the recession, it would have created 40,000 more jobs.

Such sluggish performance “will not put Missouri on anybody’s list of preferred places to live or start a business,” Hafer and his co-author, Show-Me Institute staffer Michael Rathbone, write.

“The record thus far portends sliding standards of living for future Missouri residents.”

Of course, history need not be destiny, and the Show-Me Institute has pushed the notion that Missouri can improve its economy by pursuing the right set of policies.

The institute’s founder, prolific political spender Rex Sinquefield, has taken credit for pushing a controversial income tax cut through the Legislature this year.
Hafer agrees that lower income-tax rates are good for economic growth, although he said he doesn’t have an opinion on the specifics of the Missouri tax cut. (It reduces the top tax rate by half a percentage point over several years, and offers a partial exemption for certain types of business income. Even some conservative critics have panned the business tax break.)

Taxes aren’t the only way in which a state government affects the economy. Hafer believes education policy is at least as important.

“I think education is an important component of the story about why we’re not growing as fast as other states,” he said.

For an upcoming paper, Hafer has studied how education affects state economies. In general, better-performing states have more college graduates, higher high-school graduation rates and higher scores on standardized tests.

Missouri, he says, is “in the lower tier” on those measures.

Unfortunately, there’s no silver-bullet solution for education. The state probably needs to spend more money and spend it wisely, but even if we figure out how to improve student achievement, it will take years for those smarter graduates to move the needle on the state’s economic performance.

“If you start the process now of improving education and perhaps altering the tax system, those are the sorts of things that will have an effect five to 10 years out,” Hafer says. “You have to look at periods longer than the election cycle.”

For now, we’re still at the stage of admitting that we have a problem. The discouraging numbers in Hafer’s essay should leave no doubt about that.

Mizzou Alumni Association announces amphitheater project

By Ashley Jost

The Mizzou Alumni Association announced a gift to the University of Missouri on Monday morning in honor of the institution's 175th birthday.

The association is funding construction of "Traditions Plaza," a $1 million outdoor amphitheater at the north end of the Mel Carnahan Quadrangle just east of the MU Alumni Center. The space will be available for programming for the campus community and alumni by this fall.

Todd McCubbin, executive director of the Mizzou Alumni Association, said to fund the project the association is selling bricks. Average-size bricks are going for $375, and larger bricks selling for $500. Each one will be engraved with the purchaser's name. Recent graduates can purchase a brick for $175 within one year after their graduation.

At the top of the amphitheater will be the "Mizzou Legacy Circle," a space where bricks from MU graduates who are legacy alumni will be placed.

With about 8,000 bricks making up the new space, McCubbin said he anticipates having additional money to create an endowment that would support other traditions.

Some of the space will be used to honor traditions at MU. Bricks and tiles will be engraved to acknowledge traditions such as Tap Day, Tiger Walk and Homecoming, among a dozen other events.

"It's important to be able to do things like this," McCubbin said. "Our business is to engage alumni with the life of the university while we enhance student experience, which we think this will do. This is such a great space at the front door of the Alumni Center. Something like this up front only increases the opportunity to engage future alumni into the life of the university."

The plan is to dedicate the new outdoor space, which would hold as many as 1,500 people, by October, McCubbin said. Bricks purchased during or after construction will be added to the plaza before Homecoming and graduation each year.

Tracey Mershon, Mizzou Alumni Association's volunteer president, said the campus and community have embraced the project.

That "buy-in" shows many people are excited about it, she said.
Missourian to replace time-meter pay model with Google surveys

Nonsubscribers to see surveys.

By Jack Witthaus

Monday, June 2, 2014 at 2:00 pm Comments (1)

The Columbia Missourian is changing the pay model for its website, leaving behind the time-meter model for Google Consumer Surveys.

For more than a year and a half, the Missourian has used a system where all of its content was free for 24 hours but content older than 24 hours could only be accessed by subscribers. The Missourian offered online-only subscriptions for $5.95 a month and bundled print and online subscriptions for $7.95 a month.

Missourian General Manager Dan Potter said the system was mildly successful and was close to breaking even, but it posed some problems. One of the biggest was that it limited students' access to their past work, he said.

Executive Editor Tom Warhover announced the move to Google surveys in a column in the Sunday-Monday print edition.

Potter said the change likely will go into effect in two to three days. "We wanted to warn people before we did it," he said.

Unlike the old system, the surveys will be less intrusive, Potter said, and can be completed in three to five seconds. He said one newspaper told the Missourian that the surveys generated nearly five times as much money as paid memberships. The Missourian will make 5 cents for every survey completed.

"The nickels add up," Potter said.
In his column, Warhover wrote that the new system will look like the system in place at the Albuquerque Journal, where visitors are asked to fill out a short survey when trying to access an article. Missourian subscribers will not have to complete the surveys.

"I find it an interesting business model," said Donn Friedman, assistant managing editor for technology at the Albuquerque Journal. "It takes advantage of what newspapers already have, which is an engaged and intelligent audience."

Friedman said since implementing the system in May 2012, the Journal has more than doubled its online traffic.

Like the Journal, the Tribune has also found Google surveys useful. For the past few years, the Tribune has required nonsubscribers to answer surveys to access the obituary page, the most popular page on the website.

Andy Waters, president and general manager of the Tribune, said because some of obituary page readers aren't regular site visitors, asking them to subscribe wouldn't work. In 2010, the Tribune launched a pay system that gives website visitors access to as many as 10 articles, photos or columns a month before asking them to subscribe.

"I think" Google surveys "are a very good idea," Waters said. "It's just another way to monetize the website. But I still believe in the meter model."

Potter said he doesn't know if Google surveys are the future for the Missourian website. He said the Missourian's pay model likely will change as technology does.

"We are always watching to see how newspapers monetize their website beyond traditional digital advertising," he said.
UPDATE: Racial disparity in Boone County traffic stops higher than state average

Monday, June 2, 2014 | 11:12 p.m. CDT

Search and arrest rates during traffic stops involving black drivers were higher than those involving white drivers for Columbia-area police departments in 2013.

AUSTIN HUGUELET
BY AUSTIN HUGUELET

*This report has been updated to include charts.

COLUMBIA — Across the state, African-American drivers are more likely than white drivers to be pulled over, according to an attorney general's report.

The report on ethnic and racial profiling during traffic stops, released Friday by Attorney General Chris Koster's office, said that African-Americans are more than two times overrepresented in traffic stops by the Columbia Police Department and Boone County Sheriff's Department and nine times overrepresented in stops by Ashland police.
Each year, the report calculates a racial disparity index, which shows the likelihood that a certain racial or ethnic group will be stopped by the police compared to the group’s proportion of the local population. Values of more than one indicate overrepresentation, and values of less than one show underrepresentation.

In the case of Columbia police, approximately 22.8 percent of 18,414 traffic stops in 2013 involved African-American drivers, who make up 9.96 percent of the population. The percentage of African-Americans stopped in Columbia divided by their representation in the local population results in a disparity index number of 2.29, slightly up from 2.26 in 2012.

The Boone County Sheriff’s Department had a disparity index of 3.03 for 2013, up from 2.51 in 2012, which marks the third consecutive year its index has risen.

The Ashland Police Department had a disparity index for African-Americans of 9.54 in 2013, down from 14.94 last year and 31.52 in 2009. African-Americans make up 0.66 percent of the local population in its jurisdiction.

The MU Police Department’s report did not include disparity index statistics because its jurisdiction does not have applicable population numbers, but the department’s search and arrest rates for African-Americans were higher than those of whites in the 2013 report.

The statewide picture was just as suggestive of racial bias in traffic stops, as the report found that black drivers were 66 percent more likely than white drivers to be stopped based on their proportionate share of the driving-age population last year.

In 2013, the statewide African-American disparity index was 1.59, a slight increase from the 2012 rate of 1.57, Koster said in a written statement Friday.

The 2013 report marked the 11th time in 14 years that the disparity index for African-American drivers has increased.

The disparity is up significantly since 2000 when the state began reporting racial demographics about traffic stops. In 2000, black drivers were 30 percent more likely than white drivers to be pulled over.

"This suggests a disturbing trend, and I hope communities with similar findings will make a serious effort to identify the causes," Koster said.
He cautioned that the statistics don't prove that law officers are making vehicle stops based on the race of the driver.

The report is based on a review of nearly 1.7 million traffic stops made by officers for 613 law enforcement agencies in 2013. It compares the traffic-stop data to the racial composition of the population in each jurisdiction and to the state as a whole.

Law enforcement officers have said racial disparities in traffic stops might appear higher in some cities that are made up of predominantly white residents and that have interstate highways or retail and tourist destinations. That's because the cities might attract minority drivers at a higher proportion than the local population.

The report shows that Hispanic drivers were stopped at a lower proportional rate than white or black drivers. Law officers searched Hispanic and black drivers at a higher rate than white drivers. But of those who were searched, whites were found with contraband at a higher rate than black and Hispanic drivers.

Missouri law requires law enforcement agencies to report their annual traffic-stop data to the attorney general's office, which must produce a report by June 1. For its analysis, the attorney general's office relied on criminal justice professors at Arizona State University, the University of Missouri-St. Louis and the University of South Carolina.

*This article includes reporting by David A. Lieb of The Associated Press.*

**Transportation officials consider 'sound cannons'**

Monday, June 2, 2014 | 7:56 a.m. CDT; updated 1:56 p.m. CDT, Monday, June 2, 2014

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KANSAS CITY—Missouri transportation officials have shelved a project using "sound cannons" to warn distracted motorists to slow down in work zones, but remain interested in how that technology could protect highway workers.

Researchers tested the long-range acoustic devices — or LRADs — in November on Missouri Department of Transportation vehicles on Interstate 435 in northern Kansas City and on Interstate 70 near Columbia.
They mounted the device on the back of MoDOT trucks pitched at a 90 degree angle to face drivers approaching from behind. When a vehicle came too close, drivers heard a high-pitched sound and the message "slow vehicles ahead."

The devices were developed for the U.S. military by LRAD Corp. to warn strangers getting too close to ships, and have been used to protect convoys in Iraq, warn pirates on the high seas and disperse demonstrators in New York and Pittsburg, The Kansas City Star reported.

E. Brian Harvey, an LRAD Corp. spokesman, said the Missouri transportation department was the first to suggest using the device on highways. The San Diego-based company now markets it to other highway departments nationwide.

Motorists have hit slow-moving MoDOT crews 44 times in the past two years, said department spokeswoman Holly Dentner. Since 2000, 16 transportation department employees have died on the job, including Clifton Scott, a Kansas City-area motorist assist employee killed by a drunken driver on I-70 in 2012.

**Results are expected soon of a $49,000 MU study funded by federal planning and research money to explore how the devices could protect highway workers.**

But some people oppose the plan, warning that the loud warnings could startle drivers and cause accidents, and lawmakers in Jefferson City have questioned why the transportation department spent money on the devices without getting legislative approval.

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**State to award college savings money**

By Jim Gallagher jgallagher@post-dispatch.com 314-340-8390

**NO MU MENTION**

Investors in Missouri's college saving program are eligible for grants of up to $500, but they had better hurry to apply.
State Treasurer Clint Zweifel started taking applications this week, and he'll take them until June 30. Grants are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. About $125,000 is to be awarded. The grants match the savers' contributions to the plan dollar-for-dollar. The maximum grant is $500.

To be eligible, a parent must own an account with MOST, or Missouri Saving for Tuition, the state's tax-sheltered college saving program. A person can apply for a MOST account at the same time they apply for a grant. A grant applicant must be a parent or guardian of a beneficiary aged 13 or under and have family income under $75,000. Parents of students over 13 may apply if they were approved for grants in 2012 or 2013.

Applications are available at most529grant.org