Higher education leaders gather at forum to talk challenges

Governing Board Forum is held for the third year.

By Ashley Jost

Friday, June 6, 2014 at 2:00 pm

Higher education leaders from across the state met in Columbia on Thursday for a daylong forum on issues facing the higher education community in Missouri and nationwide.

This year's Governing Board Forum, hosted by the Missouri Department of Higher Education, focused on workforce needs, budget-related issues and college completion, among other areas.

Attendees ranged from administrators at Missouri's two- and four-year schools to curators, governors and trustees from different institutions. Commissioner David Russell said the annual event is important because there is not much opportunity for administrators and board members to meet with one another and discuss the issues almost all of them are facing, particularly related to finances.

This is the third year the department has hosted the forum. At every forum, Russell said, Missouri Budget Director Linda Luebbering has come to discuss finances. Each year, administrators rank Luebbering's session as one of their favorites and request for her to come back, he said.

Luebbering's outlook on finances wasn't positive. She told the crowd that Gov. Jay Nixon will be taking action, likely restricting dollars, to make up for a $250 million shortfall the administration argues was created by tax breaks passed by the legislature during the final days of the session.

Republican lawmakers have disputed the administration's claim.
There is no timeline on when the announcement will be made about how much money will be restricted and where it will come from. Any restrictions made to university budgets will come from the coming fiscal year, which starts next month, Luebbering said.

**Several top administrators from the University of Missouri System attended the event, along with one vice chancellor from MU.** Moberly Area Community College and Columbia College also were represented.

Russell said it was crucial to invite private colleges to the forum because though they don't receive significant state funding like public institutions do, these schools currently produce 45 percent of the college graduates in Missouri.

As of 2011, 36.4 percent of adults in the state had a post-secondary degree. Including professional certificates boosts that number to 46 percent.

The overall goal is for 60 percent of Missouri adults to have a degree or certificate by 2025. To reach that goal, Russell said, private colleges have to be part of the discussion on many of the issues, particularly college completion.

Among this year's speakers was Teresa Lubbers, commissioner of higher education in Indiana. Lubbers provided perspective about how many of the challenges Missouri schools face are national trends.

For example, she discussed the idea that "access is not the prize; completion is the goal." Colleges haven't operated like that in decades, she said, as the focus has been to make higher education affordable more so than focusing on safety nets ensuring students get degrees.

"Encouraging people to borrow money to go to college but not continuing to encourage them to finish college is a disservice," Lubbers said.

Sally Clausen, executive director of the Center for Public Trusteeship and Governance within the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, also spoke about the importance of developing relationships with administrators from other institutions to successfully solve problems.
A bill that's passed the California Senate with the backing of a powerful lawmaker would require many of California's 2.3 million college students to make sure they have a "yes" -- not just not a "no" -- before they have sex. The proposal would shift the burden of proof in campus sexual assault cases in which the accused cites consent as the defense to those accused, rather than those making the allegations.

California's public colleges and most of the private colleges would be required to adopt a sexual assault policy that mandates students receive "affirmative consent" from those with whom they seek to have sex or any sexual activity.

Specifically, the bill would require "an affirmative, unambiguous, and conscious decision by each participant to engage in mutually agreed-upon sexual activity." Getting consent is "the responsibility of the person who wants to engage in initiating the sexual activity to ensure that he or she has the consent of the other person to engage in the sexual activity." The consent has to be "ongoing" throughout any encounter.

That is a good thing, say victims' rights advocates. Female college students who make allegations are too often asked by college officials to account for their own actions, including what they were wearing and whether they tried hard enough to
stop a sexual encounter.

Others question whether the policy is an unworkable attempt at government overreach.

How does a person prove they receive consent "shy of having it videotaped," said Joe Cohn, the legislative policy director at the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education.

A similar policy at Antioch College in the 1990s was widely mocked and seen at the time as political correctness run amok.

Two decades later, with campus sexual assault a major national issue, affirmative consent is clearly back. The California bill is sponsored by Senator Kevin de Leόn, who is expected to be the future head of the state Senate. Other colleges also already have similar policies, at least on paper. The bill would not affect how sexual assault cases are handled by the courts, only by college officials; many sexual assault allegations are only made to colleges and not to court systems.

"Obviously, there is a problem," De Leόn said in a recent statement. "[Senate Bill] 967 will change the equation so the system is not stacked against survivors by establishing an affirmative consent policy to make it clear that only 'yes' means 'yes.'"

California's private colleges have some reservations about the bill. The Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities, which says its supports the intent of the bill is lobbying to amend it.

The association wants each of its members to be able to have their own affirmative consent standards because a non-uniform standard "permits for the evolution and improvement of the definition of consent over time."
The California State University System updated its policies last week to include language that mirrors the language of the bill, which a spokesman said the system supports.
According to the new Cal State policy, "Consent must be voluntary, and given without coercion, force, threats, or intimidation. Consent requires positive cooperation in a particular sexual act, or expression of intent to engage in that sexual act through the exercise of free will."
The University of California's existing policies also define consent as an "affirmative, unambiguous, and conscious decision by each participant to engage in mutually agreed-upon sexual activity."

But it's not clear where the UC system and the community college system in California stand on the bill. Spokesmen for both did not respond to multiple requests for comment Friday.

The private college association also wants to make sure that the college's disciplinary hearings are "fair and equitable to both the complaining student and the accused student."

How the law would actually work is the subject of a good deal of controversy, though some of it is merely confusion. The law does not, for instance, require play-by-play verbal consent to each act. Nor does it require written consent, as had been suggested by some critical commentary.

But Cohn, of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, said the bill is inherently “reversing” the traditional presumption of innocence for those accused because the accused now have to prove they did get permission to be found not guilty -- at least in college disciplinary hearings.

“That’s a pretty dramatic and important shift,” he said.

Denice Labertew, the director of advocacy services at the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault, said that shift was a good one. She said the bill would remove the "victim blame" to which those alleging sexual assault are often subjected. The bill also creates a "clearer standard" because instead of the alleged victim being required to prove they didn't want to engage in sexual activity, the alleged perpetrator would be required to prove his partner did want to.
“The survivors [of sexual assault] are going to be positively affected because they are going to be going into a system that no longer asks them why they didn’t do something,” Labertew said.

The bill, as currently written, puts the onus on getting consent from the "initiating" partner. That could also cause confusion.

“That’s going to be a question – who initiated the sexual activity – it’s not always clear who initiated the sexual activity,” said Dan Subotnik, professor of law at Touro University Law School who has written critically about affirmative consent laws.

MU, community need to focus on MU status in AAU

By Chip Cooper

Saturday, June 7, 2014 at 2:00 am

In 1966, Tulane University withdrew from the Southeastern Conference because it lost its will to compete at the highest level of athletics. Today, many view the school’s failure to maintain SEC membership as a horrible, defining decision.

Imagine that Mizzou dropped out of the SEC. To make matters worse, what if we were kicked out because we didn't measure up? "Humiliation" comes to mind.

In academia, MU holds a coveted membership in the premier "conference" of North America's research universities. The Association of American Universities (AAU) was founded in 1900 with MU joining in 1908.
Today, there are 62 members including research powerhouses from Johns Hopkins to Stanford to the University of Michigan to MIT. Total research conducted by this elite group exceeded $23 billion in 2011 and represented nearly 60 percent of all U.S. federal research expenditure. The association's universities are at the epicenter of U.S. economic might and higher education policy. It's good to be in the AAU. Lots of universities want an invitation to join. Few are chosen.

In 2010, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln became the first AAU member in history to be expelled to make way for higher performers. Nebraska fought to stay but lost. Very embarrassing.

Unfortunately, MU could be placed in the AAU barrel before long. Nebraska's research base was approximately $253 million in 2013, while MU's was approximately $240 million. Nebraska was replaced by Georgia Tech University, which reported approximately $690 million for the same period. There are others like Georgia Tech out there who want MU's spot. If MU doesn't improve its AAU standing, it'll be voted out. It would be viewed as a good regional university but not a top national school.

MU was on a research roll till we peaked in 2009 with $254 million, still relatively low. Since then we have regressed while most of our AAU peers have progressed. Alarms have already sounded. UM System leaders are determined to enhance our position. Primarily, funds are being reallocated to allow recruitment of up to 20 nationally-regarded faculty researchers and their teams. Such teams typically generate millions of dollars in grant dollars.

The elevation of MU's research base in recent years has brought more than $150 million additional research dollars per year to Columbia. That's like recruiting 10 new high-tech companies that each do more than $15 million in annual revenue. It has likely created more than 1,000 jobs, many filled by people who are feedstock for our booming entrepreneurial community. Together with increases in MU's enrollment, the growth in research has driven the Columbia economy in recent years. It can continue to play that role.

To reach safer AAU territory we must methodically grow our annual research budget to more than $400 million, an increase of about $200 million, annually. Such growth would spill into the community in many beneficial ways, such as another 1,000 jobs, scores of startups, etc. Creative ways must be found in the community to help MU climb this mountain. Such effort should be at the core of formal area economic development plans.

One idea: Help build the long-sought Health Sciences Research Center. MU's greatest opportunities exist in medical research, and we need additional high-quality research space to properly house our current team and new recruits.

We must rise to the competition and stay in the AAU. Go Tigers!
June 9, 2014

As Congress Bickers, Obama Takes Executive Action on Student Loans

By Kelly Field

Washington

NO MU MENTION

On the eve of a Senate fight over student-loan refinancing, President Obama is taking executive action to ease students' debt burdens.

At a White House event on Monday, Mr. Obama will announce that he will expand a law that caps borrowers' loan payments at 10 percent of their income to individuals with older loans—those who borrowed before October 2007 or stopped borrowing by October 2011.

The president will also announce plans to renegotiate contracts with federal student-loan servicers to provide them with financial incentives to keep students out of default. The percentage of students defaulting on their loans within two years of graduating reached 10 percent last year, the highest rate in nearly two decades. Matt Lehrich, a White House spokesman, estimated that an additional five million borrowers would qualify for lower payments under the president’s plan.

It’s unlikely that many borrowers will enroll, however. While students' debt levels are at an all-time high, enrollment in income-based repayment plans has remained stubbornly low, at roughly 11 percent of borrowers. And the new relief won’t be immediate, either—struggling borrowers will have to wait until the end of 2015, to give the Education Department time to issue new regulations.
In an effort to increase participation in income-based plans, the administration has been conducting an aggressive outreach campaign. Last fall the Education Department emailed more than three million borrowers to notify them that they might be eligible for income-based repayment. In January the administration announced an agreement with Intuit Inc. to include a banner on its TurboTax tax-preparation website inviting users to learn more about their repayment options.

Meanwhile, the department’s student-loan servicers have come under fire from regulators and consumer advocates for failing to notify borrowers of all their repayment options and benefits.

**Slim Chances for Senate Plan**

Monday’s announcement comes as Senate Democrats are gearing up for a vote on legislation introduced by Sen. Elizabeth A. Warren, Democrat of Massachusetts, that would allow struggling borrowers to refinance their debt at lower interest rates. The idea has populist appeal, but it won't get much support from Senate Republicans, who have blocked similar bills by Democrats.

In an email, David Clery, chief of staff to Sen. Lamar Alexander, Republican of Tennessee, hinted that a filibuster was possible, saying there was "deep discussion" within the party on a strategy for how to proceed.

"We’d be happy to engage in an honest debate," Mr. Clery wrote. But since the Senate majority leader, Harry Reid, "won’t let us offer amendments, it’s hard to have a debate on a bill when we can’t mount an effort to change this deeply flawed bill."

"This is obviously just a political stunt," he added.

Even if Senator Warren’s measure does pass the Senate, it is unlikely to win approval in the Republican-controlled House of Representatives, which opposes plans to pay for the measure through a tax increase on millionaires. That means President Obama’s executive action—however incremental—could be the best news struggling borrowers get this election year.
Borrowers with questions about the plan can ask the president himself. He'll answer them live on Tuesday, in his first Tumblr Q&A.

Trial that could reshape college athletics begins

19 hours ago  •  By TIM DAHLBERG

Some believe it could upend the way college sports operate. Others say Ed O’Bannon's legal crusade against the NCAA already has.

Five years after the former UCLA star filed his antitrust lawsuit against the NCAA, it goes to trial Monday in a California courtroom. The stakes are high in the biggest challenge yet to the NCAA’s authority to operate college sports at a time when big money makes so-called "amateur” sports look an awful like the pros.

Here's a look at the issues surrounding the case:

Q. What is this trial about?

A. The NCAA is being sued by O'Bannon and others over the use of their images in broadcasts and video games without compensation. They will argue at trial that the NCAA has acted as a cartel in violation of federal antitrust laws by conspiring to keep players from making money while at the same time pocketing billions of dollars in big television contracts. The NCAA contends that rules on "amateurism" are necessary to retain competitive balance and that a successful lawsuit could create a free-for-all that will seriously damage college athletics.

Q. What are the plaintiffs asking for?

A. In the short term, not much. The 20 named plaintiffs dropped their demands for money in damages a few weeks before the trial in a strategic move to narrow the scope of the case. But they are asking for the judge to rule in their favor and issue an injunction that would prohibit the NCAA from enforcing rules against paying players for the use of their images in broadcasts. Lawyers for the plaintiffs will also argue they deserve reimbursement for legal fees that they said exceeded $30 million even before the trial. "Just to get to trial alone is huge," said Jon King, an attorney handling several related cases. "To obtain an injunction will be revolutionary."

Q. Why would a win be so important?
A. This is the first time a challenge to the way the NCAA operates has gotten this far. It is part of a broader effort to change the way major college sports are operated that includes several other lawsuits challenging various NCAA regulations and a unionization effort that won a vote for football players at Northwestern earlier this year. Plaintiffs and others claim that there is no real amateurism in a college sports industry where coaches make millions, administrators are well paid and everyone profits except the athletes providing the labor. "O'Bannon represents a watershed moment for the NCAA," said Northeastern University School of Law professor Roger Abrams, an expert in sports and antitrust law. "When combined with the Northwestern football team unionization effort, the case raises the question whether the NCAA must totally re-conceptualize its approach to regulating college athletics."

Q. What will we find out during trial?

A. There will be a lot of testimony about the huge amounts of money coming into college sports, literally billions of dollars for the conferences and the NCAA from television rights deals. At least two conferences — The Big 12 and Conference USA — made last-minute challenges in court to keep their television deals secret, arguing they would be at a competitive disadvantage if other conferences and schools knew exactly what the terms of those deals are. There will also be testimony on the NCAA side about the many benefits athletes get while in college, including tuition, room and board and tutors to help them get degrees.

Q. Will other athletes, say swimmers or golfers, get something from this?

A. No, the class-action suit is limited to football players and Division I basketball players. Those two sports are the biggest revenue generators for colleges.

Q. Why haven't they settled?

A. The NCAA says it can't budge on the fundamental question of paying players, because doing so would upend the model of college sports. The organization also believes many of the lawsuits are lawyer-driven and says athletes are treated better than ever and happier than ever. The plaintiffs did reach a separate settlement with videogame maker EA Sports and the Collegiate for $40 million that will allow some payments to former players. The NCAA dismissed that by saying "the real benefactors of this settlement are the lawyers, who could pocket more than $15 million."

Q. Will this lead to pay-for-play in college sports?

A. Not right away, though the pressure brought by unionization attempts and lawsuits has already led to proposals for the five biggest college conferences to increase scholarship money and change other rules to benefit athletes. Attorneys for the plaintiffs say the whole college sports system doesn't need to be blown up, but there are remedies that will help athletes prosper while at the same time keeping a structure to control college athletics. They're suggesting the establishment of a trust funded by the NCAA and its schools that would take money for the use of player images and dole it out to individual players — but only after they're
done with school. "Notwithstanding the NCAA’s conjecture that the sky will fall, an unfettered market will not bring college athletics to a halt," attorneys for the plaintiffs wrote in a trial brief.

MU studies three options for future of Pickard Hall

Faculty Council hears an update.

By Ashley Jost

Friday, June 6, 2014 at 2:00 pm Comments (1)

There are three options for the future of Pickard Hall, a historic building on the University of Missouri campus that is contaminated with radiation, and the university is seeking more time to determine how to proceed, MU Chief Operating Officer Gary Ward told the MU Faculty Council on Thursday afternoon.

The first option would be to save Pickard, if possible, regardless of how much time it takes or how much it costs. The second option would be to demolish the building and take the contaminated material to a radioactive landfill and the uncontaminated material to a regular landfill. The third option would be to demolish the building and take all the materials to a radioactive landfill.

The price and timeline for each option are unknown, but the second option likely would be the least expensive and the third option the one that would take the least amount of time.

Ward said the three scenarios will be analyzed by Chase Environmental Group, which has been hired to determine how to proceed. The university is paying the consultant $65,000.

Ward said he hopes to have an idea of the cost and timeline for each scenario in the next month or two.

Ward will take that information back to the Faculty Council for its input by September.
For the second time in three years, the university is planning to file an extension with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, asking for more time to provide a report on how it will deal with the radiation. The current agreement gives the university until March to decide how it wants to proceed.

MU spokesman Christian Basi said the university needs the second extension because the past several years have been used to move Ellis Fischel Cancer Center to its new location and then convert the old building into what is now Mizzou North. Many of the former Pickard offices, and the Museum of Art and Archaeology, were moved to Mizzou North after it was finished.

The source of the radiation is thought to be from chemistry Professor Herman Schlundt, who extracted radioactive materials from natural ores for research in the early 1900s. The university has been aware of the radiation since the 1970s. MU's Environmental Health and Safety office has worked to decontaminate parts of the building throughout the years.

One Faculty Council member asked what would happen to the property where Pickard stands if the building is demolished.

Ward said the remediation process likely won't end with demolition, if that's what occurs. There might be issues with radiation in the groundwater or other areas below the building. Figuring that out would happen after determining the fate of the building.

**MU to open bids for demolition**

By THE TRIBUNE'S STAFF

Friday, June 6, 2014 at 2:00 pm

Correction appended

The University of Missouri next week will open bids from companies to demolish the University Village student apartment complex.

The decision to demolish University Village, a complex that housed graduate and professional students, students who are married, have children or that are older than 21, was made by
Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin in March, several weeks after a walkway collapse at the complex killed a Columbia firefighter.

MU spokesman Christian Basi said the plan is to open bids Thursday. He said the hope is to start demolition of the complex in mid-July or early August. The estimated cost for demolition is $1.7 million, he said.

The apartment complex and the Student Parent Center within the complex are closing June 30.

After the walkway collapse that killed Lt. Bruce Britt in February, MU hired structural engineers to inspect all campus-owned buildings, including University Village. All buildings at the complex were declared safe for occupancy. That determination came after wooden support beams were put up on all the building walkways at the complex.

Loftin announced last month that the university is requesting proposals from developers interested in building and operating a new child care facility on MU property to replace care lost with the closure of the Student Parent Center.

There is no set timeline on the child care center project.

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**Pigs help MU researchers defy stem cell rejection**

By Ashley Jost

Saturday, June 7, 2014 at 2:00 am Comments (1)

Work by a team of University of Missouri researchers has shown that it is possible to defy a common problem in stem cell research.

Typically, the host rejects the transplants or grafts of cells, which complicates studying the effectiveness of stem cell therapy. A few MU researchers were able to overcome those issues on genetically modified pigs, a research project that came together unexpectedly during the past few years.
Rand Prather, curators' professor of reproductive physiology, said he was working on genetically modified pigs for research, for which he received grant money from Konkuk University in South Korea. Prather said he was charged with creating a pig that was modified with mutated genes. The mutated genes alter the pig's immune system, which ultimately allows a stem cell transplant or graft without rejection.

After Prather successfully completed his task for the group in Korea, which took just more than a year, he and Michael Roberts, curators' professor of animal science and biochemistry, started researching together. They have since published their findings.

The team, with help from funding Roberts had from the National Institutes of Health, started to study the animals and worked with implanting human pluripotent stem cells to see whether the pigs would reject the cells. Roberts said they also tested some of the pigs using other pig cells, which were accepted like the human cells. Shortly after the cell implant, Roberts said it was visible that the cells were generating new muscle, bone, nerve and blood cells.

Roberts said this research has previously only been conducted with genetically modified mice. Pigs, however, are much more anatomically similar to humans.

Although the research might be a stepping stone for future use of stem cells with humans, Roberts said "there is still a long way to go."

The study was published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences in May.

Missouri Scholars Academy celebrates 30 years

Friday, June 6, 2014 | 8:33 p.m. CDT; updated 3:14 p.m. CDT, Saturday, June 7, 2014
BY DANIELA SIRTORI

COLUMBIA — On a summer afternoon in 1985, Gov. John Ashcroft addressed 310 of Missouri's most-accomplished high school sophomores, the inaugural class of the Missouri Scholars Academy.

"Give it your best shot," Ashcroft said, according to a June 1985 Columbia Daily Tribune article. "That's your challenge for the next three weeks. No pain, no gain."

The Missouri Scholars Academy is an intensive, three-week program for the top 1 percent of Missouri students to gain an in-depth understanding of their favorite subjects.
beyond the scope of traditional education. This year's academy, which starts Sunday, marks the program's 30th anniversary.

Among the scholars Ashcroft addressed that day was Robin Wenneker, then a rising 15-year-old junior at Rock Bridge High School. Wenneker had become familiar with the academy through newspaper articles and an information session, but she still wasn’t sure what to expect, she said.

"There was just starting to be that talk about parents as teachers and gifted education, and this was kind of revolutionary," Wenneker said.

The idea of tailoring education specifically for gifted students caught on. Over the past 30 years, more than 9,500 students have spent three weeks attending summer classes and sleeping in MU's residence halls, according to an MU News Bureau release.

When the academy was founded, it provided students with the opportunity to learn about alternative "avenues of learning" compared to traditional schooling, Mark Blount, who taught chemistry classes for the academy in 1985 and 1986, said. Blount has taught AP chemistry at Hickman High School since 1983. The academy's faculty also have to apply and are chosen by a selection committee, according to the program's website.

"We had more open-ended ability to ask questions, investigate and go wherever the lab was going to take us, while kids at the time would sit in the classroom and take notes and not have much opportunity to investigate," Blount said of the differences between the academy and conventional classrooms.

For three decades, the academy has hosted rising high school juniors who are in the top 1 percent of the state's students in terms of academics, according to the news release. Students are first nominated by their schools and then chosen by an MU committee based on intelligence tests, grade-point average, essays and leadership skills, according to the academy's website.

For 25 years starting in 1985, state funding covered room, board and tuition for scholars. Their out-of-pocket expenses were only transportation to and from Columbia, school supplies and spending money, according to a June 1985 Missourian article.

But that changed in 2009. That year, the legislature cut joint funding for the academy and the Missouri Fine Arts Academy from roughly $700,000 to about $250,000 in
2010, according to previous Missourian reporting. Since 2010, scholars have had to pay a $500 fee for the three-week experience, according to the program's website. Students who qualify for reduced price lunches pay $350. "I'm sad about that, but I would rather have the opportunity for people to attend than not have the program at all," Wenneker said.

The academy offers students different "majors" in the fields of mathematics, science, social studies and humanities, according to the program's website. Scholars also choose "minors" from those fields. In addition, scholars attend a personal development class, tailored specifically to needs and interests of gifted students.

Wenneker's majored in history and minored in philosophy at the academy. She enjoyed exploring her academic interests through visits to places like Ellis Library and by being surrounded by other talented students, she said. "(The academy) just puts you with a bunch of people that are just going to be as motivated as you, and it takes out all the noise you're going to experience day-to-day in high school," Wenneker said. "It just lets you go and soak up knowledge."

But the academy also impacts students outside of the classroom. For Kelsey Harper, a 2012 scholar and recent Rock Bridge High School graduate, the most memorable moment happened the last night when her roommate gave her a drawing of a globe with the word "change" written on it. "She said thank you for helping her see the world in a different way and expanding her thought process and imagination," Harper said. "It wasn't my personal realization but the fact that I was there and I was a part of it was really powerful for me."

Scholars have the opportunity to remain involved with the academy by working as office staff. KelLeigh Bryant, a 2012 scholar and recent Columbia Independent School graduate, is doing just that this summer. This year, scholars are staying in MU's Mark Twain Hall. "We arrive a few days before the scholars and turn Mark Twain into MSA," Bryant said in an email. "We make sure everything is ready, including ourselves, for a fast-paced three weeks of amazing kids and amazing things."
Some of the academy's alumni have gone on to win local and national recognition, according to the program's website. Andrew McCall who attended the academy in 2004, became a Rhodes Scholar in 2010, and Eric Young, who attended the academy in 2009, was named a 2011 Presidential Scholar.

Wenneker graduated with a bachelor's degree in business administration from MU in 1991, and a master's degree in business administration from Washington University in St. Louis in 2002. She now serves as Mizzou Alumni Association Rules Committee chairwoman and on the campaign committees for MU’s College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources and Mizzou Libraries, among other positions.

The academy impacted Wenneker through her college years and in her professional life, she said.

"I love to learn," Wenneker said. "(The academy) gave me the permission to never stop learning. It reinforced to me how important learning is for my entire lifetime."

*Supervising editor is Samuel Hardiman.*

MU to build amphitheater for 175th anniversary

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — The University of Missouri has announced plans to build an outdoor amphitheater near Jesse Hall in honor of the school's 175th anniversary.

The Mizzou Alumni Association project known as Traditions Plaza will be located on the north side of the Carnahan Quadrangle, across from Jesse Hall.

Alumni association executive director Todd McCubbin says the theater will be used for concerts, spirit rallies, outdoor classes and other activities.
School donors will be able to buy commemorative bricks and tiles with their names that will be installed on the theater grounds. The university hopes to have the project complete this fall.

MU Health Care staff to assist Syrian refugees

June 06, 2014  BY Sarah Walsh

A team of University of Missouri Health Care emergency medical professionals will spend ten days this summer providing medical relief and education to refugees of the Syrian Civil War. The group, which consists of Adam Beckett, Stacey Lake and flight paramedic Rick Baker, will begin working on June 12 with other volunteers in the Zaatari refugee camp near Amman, Jordan.

More than 144,000 Syrian refugees called the Zaatari camp home in 2013, according to a report issued by the UN High Commission for Refugees. This figure makes Zaatari Jordan’s fourth-largest city — and despite the establishment of other camps in the surrounding area, its population continues to grow. The Syrian civil war, which began in 2011, has displaced an estimated 4 million Syrians and devastated the area’s infrastructure, leaving refugees and citizens alike without access to quality medical care.

“This is the largest humanitarian crisis of our generation,” said Baker in a statement. “The civil war in Syria is displacing millions of people. The countries that are taking in these people don’t have the necessary infrastructure to properly handle the influx of refugees.”

The team plans to work in conjunction with the United Nations and Doctors Without Borders, according to Beckett. They will travel 50 miles from Amman to Zaatari each morning in order to provide emergency care and teach the camp’s residents about preventative sanitation practices to reduce the spread of disease.

Beckett, who also participated in emergency medical trips to Haiti in the wake of its 2010 earthquake, said he recognized parallels between the Haitian and Syrian situations — chiefly a population in crisis and an underprepared medical infrastructure — but acknowledged that the Zaatari trip will provide a new set of challenges for himself and his colleagues.

“This will be a completely different experience,” he said.
Meeting set to cover fracking, chemicals

Friday, June 6, 2014 at 2:00 pm

Science Café, a forum to discuss popular science topics, is hosting an upcoming meeting to discuss endocrine-disrupting chemicals and hydraulic fracturing, or fracking.

Susan Nagel, University of Missouri associate professor of obstetrics, gynecology and women's health in the MU School of Medicine and adjunct professor of biological sciences in the MU College of Arts and Sciences, will lead the discussion about endocrine disruptors, which are chemicals that can affect hormone systems.

Nagel was part of a research team that reported that more than 100 of the chemicals used in fracking are known or suspected endocrine disrupting chemicals.

The discussion is set for 6 p.m. Monday at Broadway Brewery, 816 E. Broadway. The event is free and open to the public.