Missouri health systems form statewide network

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — Five regional health systems across Missouri have formed a new network its leaders hope will improve business practices and patient care.

The Health Network of Missouri is made up of University of Missouri Health Care in Columbia; Bothwell Regional Health Center in Sedalia; Capital Region Medical Center in Jefferson City; Hannibal Regional Healthcare System; and Lake Regional Health System in Osage Beach.

The network’s governing board held its first meeting Wednesday. Dr. Hal Williamson of the MU health system told the Columbia Daily Tribune (bit.ly/1pk3U6o ) that each organization will provide $40,000 to hire an executive director and pay for consultants under a new limited liability company.

MU Health Care spokeswoman Mary Jenkins said the network will allow collaboration on clinical services, recruiting physicians, contracted services and enhanced information technology infrastructure.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU Health Care, 4 other systems create Health Network of Missouri

By Tracy Cook

June 25, 2014 | 6:55 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — MU Health Care joined four health systems to create the Health Network of Missouri on Wednesday.

"We saw a need to become more efficient and have unified quality standards — to improve quality and make health care more efficient," said Mitch Wasden, chief executive officer and chief operating officer of MU Health Care.

Members of the network signed to form a limited liability company, which will formalize the collaborative relationships, said Mary Jenkins, spokeswoman for the MU Health System. She said the move reflects a national trend of health systems forming "clinically integrated networks," which allow systems to work together to provide better patient outcomes while retaining independence.

Glen Nelson, vice chairman of Bothwell Regional Hospital Center's Board of Trustees, said some major initiatives of the network will include:

- improving patients' health outcomes
- sharing best practices and other data
- improving access to health care
- seamlessly coordinating patient care among various providers through an integrated network
- lowering health care costs

The five systems included in the network are: MU Health Care, in Columbia; Hannibal Regional Healthcare System, in Hannibal; Capital Region Medical Center, in Jefferson City; Lake Regional Health System, in Osage Beach; and Bothwell Regional Health Center, in Sedalia.
These groups have worked together in the past, so forming a network made sense, said Harold Williamson Jr., executive vice chancellor of the MU Health System.

Talks about changing the health care systems in mid-Missouri began among the systems in 2011.

The systems within the network will share business, clinical and operational practices, Jenkins said.

"We'll be able to coordinate patient care among providers," she said. "We'll also be able to work together to manage large populations of patients with chronic diseases, such as diabetes. If we can coordinate care and better manage populations of patients with chronic diseases, that means fewer repeat trips to the ER for patients and better outcomes."

The network will allow for group purchases, which would lower the cost of supplies, and shared health care registries. The benefits to patients would be higher quality of care and lower costs, Wasden said.

Collectively, the five systems host more than 1,000 hospital beds, more than 9,300 employees and about 1,000 employed and affiliated physicians, Williamson said. This includes both inpatient hospital settings and outpatient clinics, Jenkins said.

Each of the systems is the largest employer in its community, Williamson said.

The network will be a collaboration — not a merger, said C. Todd Ahrens, president and chief executive officer of Hannibal Regional Healthcare System. The hospitals and health networks in the system will remain independent, and each will have equal representation within the network. There will no change in governance or leadership.

"We're trying to collaborate constructively while still giving markets their own autonomy," Wasden said. "We're not coming through and all trying to be one big company or trying to buy each other up."

*Supervising editor is Mary Ryan.*
UM System will feel the pinch of Nixon's budget cuts

By Rachel Brooks
June 25, 2014 | 7:27 p.m. CDT

CORRECTION: Information about Association of American Medical Colleges guidelines was incorrect in a previous version of this article.

COLUMBIA — The $1.1 billion in state budget cuts and withholdings announced by Gov. Jay Nixon on Tuesday could put a serious dent in MU’s building plans for the coming year.

The governor vetoed $620,000 for a new psychiatric residency program at MU as well as $2.8 million for a new fine and performing arts facilities and $1.5 million for a teaching and research winery addition on campus.

Two other building projects at MU were put on hold: construction of the Trulaske College of Business’s Applied Learning Center, which would cost $10 million, and renovations to Lafferre Hall, which are budgeted for $38.5 million. Money for three more projects on other UM System campuses was restricted, too.

UM System spokesman John Fougere said all those projects together, which he called "pressing," would have boosted the state economy by creating about 2,000 jobs and educating future professionals. UM has raised more than $35 million in private donations for the five projects combined, covering about half the cost, Fougere said.

Nixon held a news conference Tuesday to announce the line-item vetoes and spending restrictions, saying they were necessary because of lagging state revenue and because the General Assembly might override his vetoes of multiple tax breaks it passed during the last day of the legislative session in May.
The governor said there would be no additional state funding for public schools or higher education in the state unless his vetoes are sustained during a special session in September or unless state revenue begins to recover.

UM System has a $1.3 billion backlog of critical facility renovation projects, the Missourian has reported previously. MU has $115 million in critical facility renovations that need to be done within the next year, according to a preliminary appropriations request reviewed by the UM Board of Curators last week.

The curators last week also approved construction of a six-story, 97,000-square-foot patient care learning center at the School of Medicine, but Nixon restricted the $10 million included in the state budget for that project. The total estimated cost for the building is $45 million.

UM System President Tim Wolfe said in a written statement that the learning center is intended to address a need for more health-care professionals in rural Missouri and would allow MU to lead the way in teaching them.

The patient care learning center would allow the medical school to increase class size from 96 to 128 students, a 33 percent increase. The learning center is part of a partnership with two hospitals in Springfield, where some students will go on to complete their residencies.

The governor also restricted $43.4 million in performance funding for colleges and universities across the state. That would represent a 5 percent budget increase for the UM System.

Schools earn performance funding through achievements in graduation rates, enrollment and quality of learning, Fougere said.

Nixon also vetoed several projects in Columbia, including $25 million for a new research center and museum for the Missouri State Historical Society, and $483,250 in increased funding for the society.

Columbia Public Schools expected an increase of more than $2 million in state funding, but that money was restricted. These withholdings total about $200,000 a month for as long as they continue, district spokeswoman Michelle Baumstark said.
The district's "solid cash position" will allow it to continue to operate normally this year, Baumstark said, but the effects of the withholdings — if Nixon's vetoes are overridden or if state revenue fails to meet expectations — will influence the 2015-16 budget.

Supervising editor is Scott Swafford.
JEFFERSON CITY — The fiscal fight between Gov. Jay Nixon and lawmakers that began in December over how much money the state had to spend hasn’t moved very far except for one twist — both sides now know they were very wrong.

They disagreed on how fast state revenue would grow but didn’t anticipate there would be no growth.

That problem carries over into the budget year that begins July 1 and is magnified because there will be no surplus to start the year. Of the $786.2 million in general revenue vetoes and withholdings Nixon announced yesterday, about $400 million is because of the error.

“It is an awful lot of money to withhold and veto, but the revenues are not coming in like both he and the House and Senate projected,” House Budget Committee Chairman Rick Stream, R-Kirkwood, said. “We kind of knew that going through the process.”

Nixon withheld increases for colleges and universities, public schools and scholarships. He vetoed spending to begin 36 new programs and vetoed more than 50 instances of increased spending. Almost all other increases are withheld, to be released if money becomes available, Nixon said.

Nixon also vetoed or withheld $335.8 million from other funds, mainly construction projects financed by bonds.

In response to the cuts, the University of Missouri will put off announcing allocations of strategic funding, system spokesman John Fougere said.

“We recognize the state budgetary challenges, and are concerned that the uncertainty of this critical funding will make it difficult for us to plan for the future, prepare the state’s workforce
for Missouri’s future economy, and help move the state forward,” read an emailed statement attributed to President Tim Wolfe.

Nixon blamed the problem on four failures by lawmakers. They failed to protect the budget by granting special tax breaks, he said. They also spent revenue from legislation that failed, included money from a tobacco lawsuit that is being appealed and didn’t expand Medicaid eligibility.

Nixon did not mention the error in the revenue estimates until asked by reporters. The national economy contracted by 2.9 percent in the first three months of the year.

“I think you saw this trough that touched a lot of states, some worse than others, us not as bad as some, but you just have to account for it,” he said.

The counterattack was swift and aimed at one of Nixon’s biggest vulnerabilities — the weak state economy. House Speaker Tim Jones, R-Eureka, accused Nixon of using education “as leverage to stifle the legislature’s efforts to create jobs, reduce taxes and rein in his administration’s constant attempts to over-tax Missourians and Missouri businesses.”

Jones was joined in criticism by business groups. “We need to get beyond the governor’s intimidation tactics and fulfill our vision of economic growth for our state,” Dan Mehan of the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry said in a news release.

In an interview, Mehan said he is disappointed with Nixon’s governing style.

Instead of engaging in serious talks about tax issues, Nixon withholds money, threatens education programs and issues news releases, Mehan said.

And instead of working closely with the chamber on Medicaid expansion, Nixon has acted alone.

“Look at how Gov. Nixon announced a new Medicaid proposal a week out from the end of the session that involved small business and didn’t tell anyone, and did it in Cape Girardeau when we were in Jefferson City still trying to throw a Hail Mary on that thing,” Mehan said.

Criticism of Nixon’s budget decisions is easy, state Rep. Chris Kelly said. “I don’t have any particular criticism of the list he chose. He went where the money was.”

There is plenty of blame for everyone, Kelly said. “Nixon overestimated on the revenue estimates, but the Republicans bear at least as much or more responsibility because the revenue was there for the taking with Medicaid expansion but these tax bills don’t serve any purpose.”
Mo. Lawmakers ask department to restrict use of state-owned airplanes

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

JEFFERSON CITY • After Gov. Jay Nixon announced that doling out education funding hinged on the Legislature sustaining his vetoes of 10 bills, some lawmakers shot back, pointing to other areas of government that could be cut.


"Limiting the use of state-owned aircraft will help ensure that the resources it takes to maintain and operate such aircraft remain available for when they are most needed by Missouri citizens," Schaefer and Stream state in the letter.

The request follows Nixon's Tuesday announcement that he would withhold a $100 million general revenue increase for the Foundation Formula, which funds K-12 public schools, and a $43 million general revenue increase for public higher education institutions based on performance unless the Legislature sustains his vetoes of the 10 tax break bills. These withholds were part of $1.1 billion of budget cuts made by Nixon for the $26.4 billion fiscal year 2015 budget. The fiscal year begins July 1.

The tax break bills, many passed on the last day of the session, provide breaks to restaurants, dry cleaners and power companies, to name a few. Nixon estimated the bills would drop state revenue $425 million per year.

Schaefer noted that restricting the use of these airplanes would be another way to cut government waste without holding children "hostage" and cutting important services.

“The governor continues to blame the Legislature for our economic failures, yet he shares no economic development plans except expanding welfare by taking federal dollars which is no plan at all,” Schaefer in a statement. “While he continues to cut services for some of our most needy and education, he flies around in his state-of-art $6 million plane using state money to pay for the expense of pilots, maintenance, fuel, and other associated travel costs.”
Karin Loftin is at home on horseback
MU's First Lady makes herself comfortable in the saddle as she settles into her home on the quad

A bell sounds to announce the beginning of level one, test three of a dressage show in the Fox Run Farms arena. Karin Loftin is perched atop her 1,200-pound Hanoverian, Fritz. Karin is dressed in her best riding clothes. She is most confident in her fancy black coat, she also dons white gloves and a ruffled tie fastened at her neck with a silver horse brooch. After the bell rings, she salutes the judges and begins to ride.

Story written by Teddy Nykiel.
The Columbia Dressage and Combined Training Association Schooling Show in April was Karin’s first riding competition in Missouri. But Karin is used to firsts: She is the first and only child of her late German mother. At age 11, during the family’s transatlantic journey to America, she was the first and one of the only passengers to swim in the ship’s onboard saltwater pool. Karin was also the first female baseball coach in her son’s Little League in Texas. **As of January, she’s MU’s First Lady. But for Karin, 66, riding comes first.**

Loftin talks to Fritz as she prepares him for a morning workout. Photo by Shannon Elliott

Karin retired from her career in biomedical science research when she moved to Missouri in January. Now she trains with Fritz like it’s her job. She rides nearly every morning at Fox Run, which is at least a three-hour outing by the time she drives to the stables about 10 miles north of town, grooms and saddles Fritz, rides with her trainer and puts her horse back in his stall.

Three nights before the Columbia dressage show, Karin jogs up and down the Chancellor’s Residence stairwell wearing a housecoat, black and gold slippers and her Fitbit, which was a gift from her bowtie-clad husband, MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin. In the historic home on the MU quad, she’s determined to reach her daily threshold of 10,000 steps before bed.
Step-counting is just one part of the cross-training regimen that Karin follows to stay in shape for riding. She also does Pilates in the third-floor exercise room of the Residence and rides her bike on the Katy Trail. She is a self-described avid swimmer and is considering taking up Tai Chi. Still, she feels guilty for not working out at the MU recreation center and is considering hiring a personal trainer to motivate her to go.

Karin Loftin rides her eleven year old Hanoverian German warm-blooded horse, Fritz, at Fox Run Stable north of Columbia on June 21, 2014 with her friend Chris Koukola, and Chris’s horse, Kentucky Wind, or Tuck for short. She says the only thing horses love more than people is other horses, so she likes to ride with Chris and Tuck. Tuck and Fritz get along well and sometimes fuss if they don’t ride together. Photo by Shannon Elliott

One could argue Karin is making up for lost time. She has always loved horses but didn’t start riding seriously until her late 50s. She grew up in a suburb of Hamburg, Germany, and shared a room with her mother, Regine, in a single-bedroom apartment. Karin never had a relationship with her father. He and Regine divorced shortly after he returned from World War II when Karin was an infant. Growing up in Germany, Karin did gymnastics, ran track and marveled at the on-screen horses she saw in Westerns. “I'd seen movies, and I always thought everyone in America owned a horse,” she says. “The Wild West, that was the picture I had.”

Regine met her second husband, Joe, through an organization that paired American men with potential brides. Their relationship developed through letters until he came to Germany to marry her in 1959. That October, the three of them moved to the United States. The journey took about a week by ship, and Karin recalls seeing the Statue of Liberty as they docked in New York City.

Once in America, Karin quickly learned the image she had of all Americans on horseback wasn’t true. During junior high and high school in Chesaning, Mich., she played basketball, softball, badminton and percussion in the marching band, but there was never much of an opportunity for horseback
riding. She focused on her studies, was valedictorian of her class and dreamed of becoming a veterinarian for horses. But on a visit to the veterinary school at Michigan State University, a faculty member discouraged her. “He said, ‘You know, those are large animals, and you’re a woman, and women can’t handle it,’” she says. Swayed by his doubts, she went to Oakland University in Rochester, Mich., and studied biology instead.

Still, horses remained a treasured hobby. She bought her first horse, Slim, during her first year of graduate school for biomedical sciences at the University of Texas at Houston. She purchased the horse, saddle and bridle for just $100 at an old beachside stable in Galveston and began teaching herself dressage out of a book because she couldn’t afford a trainer. “I was horse-poor,” she says. “I never had any money because I spent whatever little money I had on my horse.”

Karin worked almost full time as a medical technician while in school to pay for Slim’s stable and a horse trailer. He developed a fever shortly after she got him, which cost her another $100 in veterinary care. Although he was skinny as his name suggests, he was always willing to ride. “He loved to gallop,” she says. “He galloped through the surf, and of course, I loved that, too.”

Slim died in the first year Karin had him. He was an old horse when she bought him, and after he developed a fissure on his back, the vet suggested he be euthanized. Saddened by the loss but still committed, Karin quickly purchased a new horse so she could continue riding. That horse, an Appaloosa named Rembrandt, was one of the three horses Karin has owned since Slim.
However, she had to sell Rembrandt after she fell off while riding and was knocked unconscious for three days. Over the years, she has had several accidents and has endured three broken ribs, a broken collarbone, a pin in her finger and a collection of abrasions and bruises.

Despite her numerous injuries, Karin thinks about riding almost constantly. When she and Bowen moved to Columbia in late January, it was too cold to transport her current horse, Fritz, in a trailer from his stable in College Station, Texas. “Karin was not a happy camper then,” Bowen says, remembering those frigid first few weeks. “She really is happy when she’s riding. She can get a little testy sometimes otherwise.”

In mid-February Karin was finally able to hire someone to transport Fritz to Columbia. Too excited to hide it, she posted a picture of him on Twitter with the message, “Fritz is on his way to Mizzou #can’twaittoseehim.”

Although Bowen understands Karin’s passion for horses, he doesn’t share it. Horses equate to work for the chancellor, who grew up on his family’s cattle farm in Texas. He first got on a horse at age 3 and was herding by 7. “I was out chasing cows, so horses don’t have quite the romanticism for me,” Bowen says. “I’d be out there riding at 9 o’clock at night when it’s almost pitch dark, getting knocked off by tree limbs.”

The couple met on a blind date in September 1972, a few months after Karin had sold Rembrandt.

Karin and Bowen went to a local lounge bar in Houston with mutual friends. They bonded over foosball, beer and the movie *Casablanca* and “fell madly in love,” Karin says. It was her second year pursuing her doctorate, and he was earning his master’s in physics at Rice University. Two and a half months after meeting, they got married on Thanksgiving because neither wanted to take a day off from their research. “There was really no reason to wait, I thought,” Karin says. “The sooner the better, before he changed his mind.”

When she met Bowen’s family for the first time, she also met their porter horse, Joe, and got right back to riding. However, training took a backseat to her career as a research scientist, NASA contractor and microbiology professor, as well as her role as a mother to her now-grown children, Elisabeth and Benjamin.

Karin and Bowen split parenting roles equally while they both pursued their careers in academia. Bowen took the morning shift of waking the kids and getting them ready for school. Karin took care of the after-school responsibilities. She coached soccer for both kids and Little League baseball for Ben. She learned how to coach basketball out of a library book after Ben came home from school disappointed that there was no one to lead the team. Beth shared her mother’s love of horses and dabbled in riding while working summers at the stable where the two rode horses.
After years of riding borrowed horses, Karin decided to buy a horse of her own again in 2006, after the kids moved out. With her new Irish sport horse named Mickey, Karin delved into dressage at the training level. However, she couldn’t get him to be supple, which is a key dressage element where the horse develops the ability to adjust its stride and fluidly bend its neck and back. Unable to advance without a supple horse, Karin donated Mickey to the equestrian team at Texas A&M, where Bowen was president. She bought Fritz in 2009.

Finally matched with a winning horse, Karin progressed through the training levels with Fritz, and they competed in the training-level freestyle event during the summer of 2013. Freestyle riding involves choreographing a routine that allows the horse’s steps to match the music’s rhythm. It’s why Karin started riding dressage in the first place; she’s intrigued by the idea of combining riding and music. “It’s a challenge, and if you succeed, it’s very satisfying and emotionally very thrilling,” she says. “The first time I did [freestyle] I was almost in tears because it was just such an emotional thing to be able to finish something like that and have it all come together.”

Karin retired as an associate biosafety officer in the Office of Research Compliance and Biosafety at Texas A&M in November, right before she and Bowen moved to Columbia. As soon as Fritz arrived in February, she got to work training in the first dressage level at Fox Run with her trainer, Karen Pautz. Karin and Fritz’s training regimen is focused; they need to pass the third and final first level test before they will be able to compete in the first level freestyle event.

The April CDCTA show is their attempt to pass test one of the first level test. Before the show, Karin warms up in the practice arena, her long silvery hair twisted into a braided bun and tucked under her black riding helmet. She sits atop Fritz as Pautz leans against the gleaming white picket fence that lines the ring and shouts instructions: “Karin, good! Now give me some smaller circles and some bending.”

Karin says nothing but responds with the reins, her bubbly personality subdued and focused. Her gaze is directed forward, just above Fritz’s mane. With each of his gaits, she thrusts her torso forward, syncing her body movements with his.

“Big trot now,” Pautz yells. “Yee-hah! Do not leave the arena, however. Try not to pull down, just pull back.” Minutes after their warm-up, Karin and Fritz are inside the competition arena, taking off when they hear the bell sound.

Lora Blair, the owner of Fox Run, stands on the sideline and calls out the elements of the test. “Leg yield right,” she bellows in an authoritative voice. “Circle left 10 meters. Circle right 10 meters. Leg yield left.” Karin and Fritz walk, trot and canter around the arena as the judges silently evaluate them. Dressage scores are based on how well the pair works together, the rider’s ability to control the horse’s movements and the horse’s responsiveness. After completing 15-meter circles and lengthened strides, the bell sounds again, and the test is over.
After the ride Karin hoses off the sweat from his back and cleans his mouth and the bridle of drool. She ends each ride with a treat or two. Photo by Shannon Elliott

Later, in the sunlit barn that is home to Fritz’s stall, Karin meticulously scans her score sheet and notes which numbers are especially low. Dressage riders need at least a 60 percent to move on to the next level — a score she doesn’t achieve. But she knows she is in unfamiliar territory with new judges and a new space. “This is the first one in Missouri, so the only way I can go is up,” she says matter-of-factly before she’s back to chuckling.

Karin wins a pink ribbon (“a pinkie” she calls it), which puts her in fifth place out of five. She is disappointed, though she hides it well by joking with the other riders about being in fifth place. “It’s funny; my husband’s learned never to ask how many people are in the class,” she tells her competitors, and then she laughs again. Still, Bowen describes Karin as inherently competitive, whether it’s winning a ribbon in riding or winning a game with friends. “We used to play cards a lot, bridge in particular,” he says. “I learned right away not to be her partner. If we didn’t win, it was always my fault.”

Karin slowly is working on starting an equestrian team on campus and has already discussed the idea with MU athletics director Mike Alden. The program would make MU the fifth school in the Southeastern Conference with an equestrian team. If that happens, it would be the first equestrian team at MU, adding another first to Karin’s already long list.

View the story online: http://www.voxmagazine.com/2014/06/karin-loftin-is-at-home-on-horseback/
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

U.S. Men's Wheelchair Basketball Team to host open scrimmage at MU

By Kendra Johnson
June 25, 2014 | 8:26 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — The U.S. Men's Wheelchair Basketball Team will hold a scrimmage that is free and open to the public at 6 p.m. July 1 at the Mizzou Student Rec Center.

The team is practicing for the World Championships in Incheon, South Korea, which will be held from July 5 to 14.

The team is made up of some of the best men's wheelchair basketball players in the country.

Two of the team members have connections to MU: John Gilbert is an alumnus and Carter Arey is a current student.

Ron Lykins, the team's head coach, is also the head coach of the Mizzou Wheelchair Basketball Team.

This is Lykins' first time coaching the U.S. Men's Wheelchair Basketball Team, but he has coached the U.S. women's team three times, according to the MU News Bureau.

Missouri is also represented by Scott Meyer, a current student and assistant coach of the Missouri team, who is in charge of the operational and managerial duties for the team.

The team will be on campus from June 27-July 1.
Things You'll Learn About Colleges From Watching The 'Ivory Tower' Documentary

The new documentary "Ivory Tower," by filmmaker Andrew Rossi, explores the growing student debt crisis, and how colleges got to a point where they're spending millions to put in country club-like facilities on campus.

The film is thought-provoking, to say the least, but we thought we'd pull out just a few takeaways from the movie:

Harvard's Influence And What It Does Right

Harvard University, the first American college, is the "source of DNA" for all colleges. It influences every single higher education institution in the country. But one thing that Harvard does that few other schools do is provide full need scholarships to anyone it deems to need financial assistance. As such, a middle class student can expect to pay more at a public university than at Harvard. Harvard is among only 1.25 percent of colleges in the nation to offer full need-based scholarships, according to the film.

Country Club Colleges

Why are there so many rock climbing walls on college campuses these days? Because when one school offers an amenity, the rest follow. So when the University of Missouri and the University of Alabama have swimming pools, others think about adding them to their campus, and to top that, some schools even have tanning beds available for students.

But can you blame students for demanding those things though when they're already spending so much money to attend school? "You give momentum to 'The student is the customer' when you charge them so much money," Wesleyan University President Michael Roth says in the film.

Who Are The Swimming Pools For?

So who are the students that public colleges want to attract with country club-like amenities? "Ivory Tower" suggests it's out of state students, who pay twice as much in tuition. Out of state students have doubled in the past 20 years at public universities nationwide, according to the documentary.
ASU As A Party School
What does Arizona State University think about its reputation as a party school? "We literally laugh about it," ASU President Michael Crow says. Crow suggests part of that image is based on the fact that they live in a warm climate with palm trees and sunshine covering the campus. "The whole party school thing is just bogus," he adds.

The End Of The Old Cooper Union

The film spends a fair amount of time on Cooper Union, which will charge students tuition for the first time in its 150 year history this fall.

The filmmakers confront Cooper Union President Jamshed Bharucha about his $750,000 salary and free home. They note it's above average for a college president and close to Harvard University President Drew Faust's salary of $899,734, who manages 12,000 faculty, 21,000 students and more than $30 billion endowment. Bharucha's quick and immediate response: "She doesn't have a fraction of the problem we have," referring to Faust. "Not a fraction of the problems we have."

Cooper Union professor Peter Buckley jokes in response to Bharucha's statement, "Apparently we are the Harvard of Astor Place."

By the way, cutting Bharucha's salary in half could pay for the full annual tuition cost of at least 9 students, out of an average freshmen class consisting of roughly 200 students.

What Every Millennial Can Relate To

And finally, a Hunter College graduate Stefanie Gray, who has a master's degree and is struggling to find a job, sums up how many recent grads buried in student debt feel:

"The value of my education is priceless but the value of my education is also not $140,000 in debt. I feel bad talking about any dreams I have these days because there's all this talk that Generation Y is entitled and selfish, just for wanting the same opportunity as our parents."
MU, Extension join EPA task force on watershed issue

By Ashley Jost

Wednesday, June 25, 2014 at 9:44 am

The Environmental Protection Agency has tapped 12 land grant universities, including the University of Missouri, from states along the Mississippi River to help in an ongoing effort to decrease pollution running into the river.

The EPA requested help from one researcher and one person from each school’s extension in an effort to collect input from all parts of each state.

At MU, that researcher is Jason Hubbart, assistant professor of forest hydrology and water quality. The MU Extension representative is Bob Broz, Extension water quality program director.

The land grant university team is a partner of the existing Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force, which includes federal and state agencies.

The task force has worked for decades to address the damage to wildlife because of nutrient-filled runoff, primarily from fertilizer used in agriculture, flowing into the river and ultimately the Gulf.

The task force’s first step is to collect information from each state’s research on the issue and to share the data with everyone else to create a dialogue about the best practices or policies.

Hubbart said Missouri is sharing its ongoing effort to find grant money for farmers and producers to create an incentive to change their farming practices in ways that could curb the runoff problem. If they can secure the funding, Extension employees such as Broz would be charged with finding farmers willing to participate. Then, Hubbart and his team could help validate the farmers’ practices.
Hubbart said he and several others at MU have started their work and are trying to get support from the General Assembly and state agencies that could help move the project along. They’re also considering reaching out to large agricultural corporations, such as Monsanto, for help.

This incentive money for farmers is just one idea, but every state is working on something different, Hubbart said. Because asking farmers to change their practices is a complicated and expensive issue, explaining the problem is key. So far in Missouri, Hubbart said the task force has received support from the agriculture industry.

“The most important thing we can do right now is communicate and build trust,” he said. “That’s why I’m optimistic about this task force. The industries get it. They see why it’s good to address this issue, but they’re also realistic about the dollar sign attached to changing practices. As long as we remain realistic, we can navigate through this.”

Getting people in Missouri on the same page is Broz’s job on this task force.

“Even the very best research in the world will not convince someone to do something,” Broz said, adding that some people in the corridor states struggle with why they should care about damage to the Gulf of Mexico. “We have to identify what it will take to show someone they have a role to play, and they have to buy in.”

All of the land grant universities are working on a plan for the next several years that Hubbart said will be completed in the next few weeks.
5 Key Areas of the Senate Democrats’ Bill to Renew the Higher Education Act

By Kelly Field

Senate Democrats formally unveiled on Wednesday their plan to reauthorize the Higher Education Act, introducing a 785-page bill that aims to make college more affordable, programs more accountable, and student debt more manageable.

The sweeping measure won’t get far in the Republican-led U.S. House of Representatives, where lawmakers have laid out very different priorities for reauthorization of the law. But the legislation reveals what the Democrats will push for in negotiations with Republicans, once both chambers pass a bill.

The huge bill is likely to grow further. Sen. Tom Harkin of Iowa, the bill's sponsor and chairman of the Senate education committee, said he wanted to add provisions to reform accreditation, simplify the student-aid system, and create a unit-record system for tracking students. The unit-record proposal was in an earlier draft of the measure but was stripped for technical reasons.

Here are some of the measure's highlights in five key areas:

**Student-Aid Eligibility**

- Revive year-round Pell Grants, with some modifications.
- Restore eligibility for some students without high-school diplomas or GEDs.
- Allow students to use two-year-old tax data when applying for financial aid.
- Reduce the "work penalty" by shielding more earnings from the federal needs-analysis formula.
- Provide grants to states to aid "Dreamers," students who were brought to the United States illegally as children.

**For-Profit Colleges**

- Limit the amount of money that for-profit colleges can receive from the federal government to 85 percent of their revenue, down from 90 percent.
- Count military tuition-assistance and veterans benefits, not just federal financial aid, toward the 85-percent limit.
- Ban the use of federal funds for marketing and recruiting.
- Create an interagency committee to coordinate federal oversight of for-profit colleges.
- Require the committee to publish "warning lists" of for-profit institutions for parents and prospective students.

**Consumer Information**

- Require colleges to use the Education Department’s standardized financial-aid-award letter.
- Set minimum standards for colleges’ net-price calculators.
- Create a universal net-price calculator that would allow students to compare costs across colleges.
- Update the Education Department’s College Scorecard with disaggregated information on colleges’ net prices and student-loan borrowing and repayment rates.
- Require the education secretary to publish cohort default rates for borrowers of Graduate and Parent PLUS loans.

**Student and Borrower Protections**

- Establish a centralized system to track student complaints at the Department of Education and set timelines for responding to complaints.
• Extend many of the restrictions on agreements between colleges and lenders to providers of debit cards and other financial products.
• Limit collection costs on defaulted student loans and define what constitutes reasonable payments for borrowers rehabilitating such loans.
• Create an index of student-default risk based on loan-repayment rates at individual colleges.
• Require annual federal program reviews of institutions with high default rates or large numbers of student complaints.

Loan Repayment

• Replace the menu of repayment options with a single income-based repayment plan.
• Allow students to refinance private student loans.
• Make it easier for disabled borrowers to discharge their student loans.
• Make it easier for members of the military and veterans to obtain interest-rate reductions, loan deferments, and other borrower benefits.
• Provide loan forgiveness for American Indian educators.
In O’Bannon Antitrust Case, NCAA’s Best Chance May Come on Appeal

By Brad Wolverton

As testimony concludes this week in a closely watched trial challenging the NCAA’s ban on paying college athletes for the commercial use of their images, many pundits have already declared the National Collegiate Athletic Association the loser.

The federal judge presiding over the case has shown signs of siding with the plaintiffs, who include Ed O’Bannon, a former UCLA basketball star. The players’ lawyers have poked holes in several key NCAA arguments. And many legal analysts believe that the plaintiffs have proved that the association’s rules prohibiting player pay violate federal antitrust laws.

The NCAA has argued that its rules are necessary to maintain competitive balance, differentiate college sports from the professional ranks, and promote the importance of education. Its witnesses have argued that, if players received a share of licensing revenue, they would treat their studies less seriously than they do now, and fans would lose interest.

To win the case, the NCAA must convince Judge Claudia Wilken, of the U.S. District Court in Oakland, Calif., that the benefits of its rules—including competitive equity and education—outweigh any harm that they may cause.
Such a burden has been difficult for many professional sports leagues and governing bodies to prove, said Matthew Mitten, a law professor and director of the National Sports Law Institute at Marquette University.

"It’s very difficult for a league to show an overriding procompetitive justification for a rule," he said. "That’s why some people are saying that this is a tough case for the NCAA to win at trial. I would agree with that."

A Valid Claim?
The NCAA may lose at the district-court level, but its chances would improve on appeal, several legal observers said.

Gary R. Roberts, a former dean of Indiana University’s Robert H. McKinney School of Law, in Indianapolis, believes that Judge Wilken will rule in the plaintiffs’ favor, issuing an injunction that would bar the NCAA from limiting player pay.

But Mr. Roberts, a past president of the Sports Lawyers Association who has taught classes on antitrust law, does not believe the O’Bannon plaintiffs have a valid antitrust claim.

"Antitrust law is designed to protect consumers from rigged markets," he said. "It’s hard for me to imagine how consumers or consumer welfare is damaged by not allowing college football or basketball players to negotiate publicity-rights contracts."

If the NCAA loses in district court, it could appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, which Mr. Roberts believes would overturn Judge Wilken’s ruling. If the NCAA were to lose there, it could appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court, a process that could take years.

To appeal, the NCAA would have to cite specific instances in which Judge Wilken had erred. The association’s lawyers have objected to dozens of arguments by the plaintiffs, a pattern that offers the possibility of appeals on numerous issues.
Legal experts say the NCAA could ask the appellate court to review how its amateur rules enhance economic competition among colleges or help consumers—questions that cut to the heart of antitrust law, which is designed to make sure consumers get the benefits of competition.

The NCAA could also ask the courts to reconsider its amateurism defense—that the ideal of the amateur student-athlete is worth protecting, even at the expense of commercial competition. Judge Wilken has ruled that such a defense, which has long protected the association from antitrust scrutiny, does not apply here. But an appellate court might feel differently, legal analysts said.

"Often appellate courts take a broader, more policy-oriented approach to an issue than lower courts," Mr. Mitten said.

**What Fans Think**

Legal observers note two other significant grounds for an NCAA appeal.

In the months leading up to the trial, the NCAA argued that the First Amendment guaranteed news-media organizations unlimited rights to broadcast college football and basketball games. The association used that defense to justify its limits on paying players for the use of their images.

Judge Wilken rejected the NCAA’s argument that live television broadcasts are commercial speech. Because of the broader interest in that issue—broadcasters have filed supporting briefs in the NCAA’s defense—an appellate court would probably feel compelled to consider it. But it’s uncertain how higher courts might view the issue.

The NCAA could also find fault with the plaintiffs for failing to introduce into evidence a consumer survey showing how a change in NCAA rules would affect fan interest, one of the core issues in the case.
On Wednesday an NCAA witness described a handful of consumer surveys that ostensibly show fans would have less interest in watching college sports if they knew that athletes were making money beyond the value of their scholarships.

The plaintiffs tried to discredit the methodologies of the surveys, saying that the surveys did not ask fans specifically how they would view players’ being paid for the commercial use of their images.

But the plaintiffs’ expert witness did not conduct his own surveys to rebut the NCAA’s claims. Such an oversight could prove damaging to the plaintiffs on appeal.
Key U.S. Official Wants to Ease Accreditors' Compliance-Monitoring Role

By Dan Bauman

Speaking to an audience of accreditors and university representatives on Wednesday, the federal government’s top higher-education official said clarifying the role of accrediting institutions was a major goal for him.

Ted Mitchell, the under secretary of education, told attendees at a workshop held by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation that accreditors’ acceptance of more responsibility over the years for monitoring colleges had created "complicated expectations for institutions, regulators, politicians, and the public."

Much of the work accreditors do to ensure that colleges comply with federal regulations is "less appropriate to accreditors than it may be to the state or federal government," said Mr. Mitchell, who is the No. 2 official in the Department of Education and oversees all programs related to postsecondary education and federal student aid.

"If I could focus on a spot today," he said, "it would be the compliance work and seeing if we could relieve accreditors of the burden of taking that on for us."

Mr. Mitchell also expressed support for a tiered-accreditation system, in which historically well-performing institutions would be subject to less-intrusive reviews. Mr. Mitchell said the department also supported regulations for accreditors that were
"less prescriptive, less costly, and less granular," while still upholding a standard of gatekeeping.

A tiered-accreditation system was on a list of recommendations submitted to the secretary of education, Arne Duncan, in 2012 by the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity, which advises the secretary on accreditation matters.

Mr. Mitchell also said the department supported accreditation’s role as the gatekeeper between colleges and federal funds. The work of accrediting agencies and bodies, Mr. Mitchell said, ensures that students and taxpayers are aware of an institution’s academic quality.

The Obama administration’s proposed college-rating system was in no way meant to replace the accrediting system, Mr. Mitchell said. Rather, department officials hope the data collected for the proposed ratings would benefit accreditors and colleges.

Mr. Mitchell also announced during the workshop that the department would pause action on the proposed "state authorization" rule regarding online programs for the time being. Given the complexity of issue, Mr. Mitchell said, the department hopes a timeout will allow the government and stakeholders to get the regulations right. Under a draft rule, on which stakeholders and the department failed to reach agreement during negotiations this year, colleges’ online programs would have to obtain approval to operate in each state where they enrolled students. The department had previously announced that it would push the deadline for finalizing the state-authorization rule to July 2015.

Mary Ellen Petrisko, president of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, said she was encouraged by the department’s recognition of the heavy responsibility accreditors were bearing as compliance monitors. Ms. Petrisko said she hoped that in the future the federal and state governments, as well as accrediting bodies, could concretely define their roles and responsibilities in the higher-education system.

"The ability for accreditors to step back from regulatory work and compliance work would be welcomed," Mr. Larkin said.
TigerPlace independent living to celebrate 10 years

Wednesday, June 25, 2014 at 7:55 am

TigerPlace, the University of Missouri Sinclair School of Nursing and Americare’s independent living center for the elderly, is celebrating 10 years of operation with an open house event this weekend.

The open house event, featuring a barbecue lunch and live music, is from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday at TigerPlace, 2910 Bluff Creek Drive.

The event will include a program that starts at 11:30 a.m. where MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin and several TigerPlace key members will speak, according to a news release.