Demolition is expected to begin Monday at the University Village Apartments in Columbia, where a firefighter died in February.

University of Missouri spokesman Christian Basi told The Columbia Daily Tribune (http://bit.ly/1pkD0GO ) that Marschel Wrecking of Fenton won the contract to tear down 11 of the 14 buildings in the 57-year-old complex.

Lt. Bruce Britt, a 23-year veteran of the Columbia Fire Department, died Feb. 22 while trying to rescue residents trapped by a walkway collapse.

Britt's widow filed a wrongful death lawsuit against the University of Missouri Board of Curators in March after an investigation revealed that structural deterioration of the concrete and steel supporting the walkway led to the collapse.

The university has also commissioned inspections of other campus buildings.

Read more here: http://www.kansascity.com/news/article760893.html#storylink=cpy
University Village demolition to begin Monday

COLUMBIA — On Monday, Marschel Wrecking LLC will begin the demolition process of University Village, nearly five months to the day of a walkway collapse that killed firefighter Lt. Bruce Britt.

University Village, on Providence Road near the Stewart Road intersection, closed June 30. It housed graduate students and their families.

The demolition process will include putting up fences, bringing in equipment and ridding the buildings of asbestos, MU spokesman Christian Basi said. He didn't know how many days of prep work would precede building demolition.

The cause of the Feb. 22 collapse was University Village's state of deterioration, according to previous Missourian reporting. Basi said three of the 14 apartment buildings were renovated — two in 1999 and one in 2003 — and will not be torn down because they are in good enough condition to be used for storage.

Of the 10 bids the university received, Marschel Wrecking, of Fenton, received the demolition contract because it had the lowest bid that included the services needed to properly tear down the apartments, Basi said.

The cost is $378,490, which includes demolition, asbestos abatement and recycling of half the materials left after demolition.

Basi said J.C. Industries Inc. submitted the highest bid for the project, more than $1.5 million for the same services provided by Marschel Wrecking.

Jeremy Frye, project manager for Marschel Wrecking, said Friday that his contract did not allow him to answer questions about the demolition.
COLUMBIA, MO. - **The University of Missouri has set up a program that allows its employees to finish their high school diplomas at the university's expense.**

Employees from the University of Missouri, MU Health Care, MU Extension and UM System workers in Columbia can finish their high school diploma work through MU High School as part of a two-year online pilot program that started this week, The Columbia Daily Tribune reported (http://bit.ly/1wBbOq0).

MU High School includes more than 180 high school courses and is operated by the university's College of Education, which is funding 25 percent of the tuition costs for participants in the pilot project. The other 75 percent is paid by the university's tuition assistance benefit program.

The university will assess completion rates and other data after the two-year pilot ends. If it's a success, the program could be expanded to Kansas City, St. Louis and Rolla campus employees.
"Offering MU employees the opportunity to earn their high school diplomas from an accredited and well-respected entity like MU High School just makes sense," Daniel Clay, dean of the education school, said in a release. "It is good for the employees and the university."

Kiki Gross, a lead custodian with the MU Office of Residential Life, has already started gathering paperwork to figure out what classes she needs. Gross, a Columbia native, who dropped out in her last semester of high school, has regretted not walking across the stage with her classmates.

"I am really excited about this," Gross said. "And I know this is really opening the door for a lot of these other people."

Read more here: http://www.kansascity.com/news/business/article765525.html#storylink=cpy

COLUMBIA DAILY TRIBUNE
COLUMBIA, MISSOURI

MU composers festival delivers music in the present tense

By Aarik Danielsen

Sunday, July 20, 2014 at 12:01 am

Jose Martinez is a percussionist, so it’s natural that he wants to get the pulse of things.

Upon arriving at the University of Missouri last year as a graduate student, Martinez asked professors how he might discover the musical zeitgeist. He wanted an answer to the question, “What is happening in music right now?” Preaching patience, they said satisfaction wouldn’t be found in books or online. Rather, they promised the answer would come this summer, as he looked and listened to everything happening at the Mizzou International Composers Festival.

Martinez is one of eight who will experience the festival, in its fifth iteration next week, as resident composers. These emerging artists will engage with established guest composers — Nico Muhly and Zhou Long — during a series of workshops, rehearsals and performances before
having their works premiered by one of the world’s vanguard chamber ensembles, Alarm Will Sound, in concert Saturday.

While each composer is rooted in various traditions, the festival is not a paean to the past. These artists might well represent the future of music, but the future has yet to appear. So, in a very real and important sense, the festival is delivering music in its present tense.

RISING UP

These resident composers, hailing from as far as Australia and as close as Columbia and Kansas City, benefit from a weeklong investment in their work. They are exposed to one another’s ideas, hear their pieces performed by world-class players and carry home tangible artifacts of the experience as well as inner imprints that are harder to sum.

The festival is composer-centered even as it maintains a larger outlook, managing director William Lackey said. An outgrowth of the Mizzou New Music Initiative, it is designed as a catalyst for the musical momentum patron Jeanne Sinquefield hopes to create. She has long envisioned Columbia and, specifically MU, as a hub for new music. That desire has spilled over into various projects under the umbrella of the Mizzou New Music Initiative, including a yearly prize, the creation of the Mizzou New Music Ensemble and a summer composition camp.

Integral to the process has been the continued commitment of Alarm Will Sound, an ensemble that has worked with everyone from Steve Reich to Aphex Twin. The group, which counts MU professor and cellist Stefan Freund among its ranks, is a definite draw for prospective composers, Lackey said. Composers don’t just hear their work performed by Alarm Will Sound — they also hear from Alarm Will Sound. Lackey said young composers are “always shocked about the amount of time they get with” the ensemble as its members, many of whom are composers, give important feedback during the week about everything from notation to the clarity of musical ideas.

Resident composers fill mental and musical storehouses with these lessons and suitcases with high-quality recordings of their premieres, which aid them in acquiring jobs and other awards, Lackey said.

Lackey is responsible for festival logistics while Freund and MU colleague Thomas McKenney guide the artistic elements. His mettle was tested this year when guest composer Beat Furrer, a Swiss-born, Vienna-based artist of great renown, bowed out because of health issues. Lackey, Freund and Alarm Will Sound principals put their heads together to find a replacement of similar stature. On two weeks’ notice.

The festival found its ace in Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Zhou, one of Lackey’s professors at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. While Lackey was initially saddened at missing out on Furrer’s distinct expertise, he is excited by the prospect of how Muhly and Zhou’s perspectives and life experiences will shape the visiting composers.
American-born Muhly brings a model of eclecticism and energy to the festival, having worked with operas, orchestras, pop stars and rock bands. Zhou exists as an example of great perseverance. He is, “for me, one of the masters of orchestration and blending Eastern and Western music,” Lackey said, and “his history of … going through the Cultural Revolution … the weight of his experience, going through all of that in China, coming to the United States, making his way, winning the Pulitzer Prize,” will be invaluable to the composers in his presence.

COLUMBIA BY WAY OF COLOMBIA

One of those ascending artists, Martinez, began composing out of necessity. Growing up in Cali, Colombia, he gravitated toward metal and progressive rock, albeit the more intricate, musical examples of those forms — Rush, Opeth, Dream Theater, Emerson, Lake and Palmer and their ilk. He played drums in those styles and composed for early bands, handing his mates handwritten scores, much to their bewilderment.

Initially, Martinez was self-taught, learning everything from books; as he entered the academy, he discovered many of those titles were canonical. To him, they were just books, words and ways to increase his acumen. As Martinez took actual composition courses, progressing to the Conservatory of Music at the National University of Colombia in Bogotá, he discovered his technique often had been misguided — he joked about writing noteheads in the wrong direction — but was encouraged that his ideas were creative and clear.

The more he wrote, Martinez became an accidental success. He intended to be a percussionist first, a composer second, but soon won awards such as the National Composition Prize for Young Composers, granted to those 25 and younger, from Colombia’s Ministry of Culture. Recognition of his own facility grew as his stature did — he won several other national honors for mixed-ensemble and orchestral pieces.

After graduation, he taught, performed and wrote for four years in Colombia. Seeking new challenges, he chose to study at MU, in large part, because of a sister’s presence in Kansas City. He was surprised by the resources and freedom the school affords. In Colombia, he worked with composer friends to secure their own performers, venues and equipment.

Professors at MU said all he had to worry about was writing — a message he initially met with skepticism — and that he could write whatever he wants. Here, his winning ways have continued — Martinez won the 2014 Sinquefield Prize. He still feels the world like a percussionist but tries to step outside himself and his early training as he writes.

“When I write for percussion, I’m trying not to think as a percussionist but just a composer,” he said.

He no longer plays works he writes for percussion, afraid he will temper his ideas to suit performers’ comfort. Instead, to achieve the most complete composition he can, he studies extended techniques for other instruments, then extends them further to percussion, asking the player to translate and understand this musical language. He does this “so we’ll have to find new
answers,” he said. If he writes in the way percussionists are used to, the literature and sense of forward motion won’t ever change, he said.

Martinez has embraced programmatic music, “pure” music and music at all points between. His muses have ranged from formal concerns to friends’ pets. He is now penning a work based on chapters from “One Hundred Years of Solitude,” written by the late author — and Colombia’s lone Nobel Prize winner — Gabriel García Márquez.

The piece Martinez premieres next week explores dances from his native region. He revisited these forms upon gazing home from his new stateside perch. Grappling with questions of who he is and what made him, he acknowledged that stereotypes are sometimes true. In this case, the lithe steps that have come to culturally define Colombia to outsiders are living, moving realities. Cali is known as the world’s salsa capital, he said.

Martinez incorporated salsa’s traditions into the piece even as he subverted them. The rhythm section will keep the music’s undercurrents moving and flowing while Alarm Will Sound explores tonalities — and atonalities — foreign to the form. Salsa is written in 4/4 to encourage danceability, Martinez said, but his piece changes and confuses that metric purity. And, whereas salsa usually leaves space enough for a lone melody, Martinez asks the ensemble to overlap melodic lines, ushering in a brave, new world music.

Writing for Alarm Will Sound, Martinez quickly realized his responsibility was not to make the music hard, but honest. The ensemble can play almost anything, so creating difficult work for difficulty’s sake seemed counterintuitive. Rather, Martinez chose to craft a piece that — as has been the arc of his compositional career — stays true to the things he loves and the music that moves him.

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Peering up and over this year’s festival to the horizon that lies behind it, Lackey wants to think sustainably and strategically about what’s next. He marveled at what the festival has already accomplished. By his count, it will have premiered 50 new pieces of music in five years, an achievement that’s striking when said aloud.

Lackey isn’t sure what the next five years will look like — but they might include bringing worlds and endeavors together, perhaps letting high school composition campers sit at the feet of Alarm Will Sound. There might be room to spread into other parts of the city, incorporating the sound visions of installation artists. “I think we have a great concert-style model,” he said. “But how can we break out into opportunities that go beyond the proscenium stage?”

Whatever the festival’s form, its function remains the same — to live and create in the present, with hope for the future.
Price coming down for low-income students at UMKC

Saturday, July 19, 2014 | 5:17 p.m. CDT

BY MARA ROSE WILLIAMS/THE KANSAS CITY STAR

KANSAS CITY — The University of Missouri-Kansas City finally has some good news for its lowest-income students.

Its net price is coming down.

Net price is the cost of attendance — tuition, books, housing, food, transportation and personal expenses — minus the scholarships and grants a student qualifies for from the federal government and the university. It’s the amount students and their families are expected to borrow or pay out of pocket.

In 2010-11, UMKC was one of the 10 most expensive public colleges in the country for students coming from households where the family income was $30,000 a year or less. Net price: $16,798.

The next year was worse: $18,111.

But newly released numbers from the National Center for Education Statistics show the average net price for in-state freshmen dropped 14 percent, to $15,522, in 2012-13. That’s a difference of $2,589.

"What I’m pretty pleased with, even excited about, is the fact that students who have zero to $30,000 in family income are paying less," Jennifer DeHaemers, associate vice chancellor for student affairs and enrollment management, told The Kansas City Star. And UMKC says it expects to provide more help in the future.

But even with the lower price, UMKC's low-income students on average pay more than their counterparts at the other University of Missouri System schools in Rolla, $11,127; Columbia, $12,731; and St. Louis, $9,757. UMKC's net price also remains higher than at the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg, $11,830; Kansas State University, $13,078; and the University of Kansas, $13,943.
The rising cost of college and pressure from the Obama administration to make college more affordable has many public colleges focused on lowering the cost for their students most in need.

It has taken three years for UMKC to see its efforts — a scholarship program that discounts the cost of tuition for low-income students, plus new endowed scholarships — work to lower its average net price.

"Our goal is to find more resources for need-based aid," DeHaemers said. "We have more need-based scholarships than we ever have had in the past."

But, she said, more are needed.

"That is the way to impact the net price for students," she said.

The school brought down its net price by making slight calculation adjustments that lowered the cost of attendance, while also giving out more need-based scholarships and continuing the Advantage Grant program that discounts the cost of tuition for Pell Grant-eligible, in-state undergraduates.

For the 2012-13 school year, UMKC awarded scholarships totaling almost $32 million to students from all income brackets.

The financial aid office also has seen an uptick in the number of low-income students who get their Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, in by March 1. Students who file forms for financial aid early are more likely to get need-based assistance from the school, DeHaemers said.

As at UMKC, net price for the lowest-income students also dropped on the university system's Rolla and St. Louis campuses.

**But at MU in Columbia, that price has crept up a few hundred dollars each of the last two years.**

"Our object is not to have the net price go down but to maintain a net price that stays fairly constant and affordable," said Nick Prewett, MU director of financial aid. **Keeping tuition down helps slow the rise in net price.**
As of 2013, tuition at Missouri's four-year universities had increased an average of 5 percent since 2008, the lowest in the nation. State law prohibits colleges and universities from imposing tuition increases greater than inflation.

Last year, University of Missouri System schools raised tuition 1.7 percent, but this year it will remain flat.

For the most part, the increase in net price at MU, Prewett said, is affected by larger enrollments that outpace increases in dollars available for need-based aid. Another factor is rising student costs of living that are not controlled by the university — transportation and off-campus housing, for example.

But the good news, Prewett said, is that "we are subsidizing students at a higher rate in 2012-2013 than we were in 2010-2011."

At UMKC, DeHaemers is expecting that next year may show another drop in net price for the lowest-income students. The school received a $175,000 matching grant from the university system that this fall will allow UMKC to dole out thousands of dollars more to low-income black and Latino students studying science, technology, engineering and math.

"It will be money they can use to cover expenses other than tuition," DeHaemers said. "That will help take the net price down."

Iowa: Mandatory Minimums for Juveniles Thrown Out

18, 2014

The Iowa Supreme Court ruled Friday that juveniles cannot be given mandatory minimum sentences, making it the first state to interpret federal court directives that broadly. More than 100 prisoners who as juvenile offenders were tried as adults and received mandatory minimum sentences before 2013 must be resentenced, the court ruled, 4 to 3.

The state law mandating that juvenile offenders who received a sentence with no chance for parole until a minimum time is served is unconstitutional, the court ruled. “There is no
authority from anywhere in the country that comes anywhere close to this,” said Frank Bowman, a law professor at the University of Missouri School of Law.

In 2010, the nation’s high court struck down life sentences for juveniles convicted of crimes other than murder, and in 2012 ruled that mandatory life sentences for juveniles violate the constitutional protection against cruel and unusual punishment. Judges were to consider many factors — such as education, home life and maturity — in sentencing, the high court said.

UConn to pay $1.3 million in sex assault handling lawsuit

Friday, July 18, 2014 | 11:27 a.m. CDT
BY PAT EATON-ROBB/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

STORRS, Conn. — The University of Connecticut will pay nearly $1.3 million to settle a federal lawsuit filed by five women who claimed the school responded to their sexual assault complaints with indifference, the two sides announced Friday.

The bulk of the settlement, $900,000, will go to Silvana Moccia, a former UConn hockey player who joined the Title IX lawsuit last December, a month after it was originally filed by four other women. She alleged she was kicked off the team after reporting she had been raped by a male hockey player in August 2011.

The other four women will receive payments ranging from $25,000 to $125,000.

The school, which has repeatedly defended its policies for responding to sexual assault complaints, did not admit any wrongdoing.

"It was clear to all parties that no good would have come from dragging this out for years as it consumed the time, attention and resources — both financial and emotional — of everyone involved," said Larry McHugh, the chairman of the school's Board of
Trustees. "In order to do this, compromise was required on both sides, which is reflected in the settlement. I hope this resolution will help the students find closure on this issue."

Messages seeking comment were left for the women’s attorney, Gloria Allred, who planned hold a news conference with four of the women at 1 p.m. Friday.

The lawsuit alleged discrimination based on gender and retaliation in violation of Title IX, which guarantees equal educational opportunities to students at schools that receive federal funds. It sought unspecified monetary damages and changes in university policies.

The U.S. Education Department’s Office for Civil Rights began a Title IX investigation in December based on complaints filed by four of the plaintiffs and three other women. That investigation, which could include the loss of federal funds for the school, continues even though these four women also have withdrawn their complaint to the Education Department.

School officials said they would continue to cooperate with that investigation.

The two sides issued a joint statement, which includes an acknowledgment by the plaintiffs that "certain UConn employees provided compassionate care and assistance to them" while contending the response of the school as a whole, showed deliberate indifference.

One plaintiff, Kylie Angell, said she was told by a police officer that, "Women need to stop spreading their legs like peanut butter or rape is going to keep happening until the cows come home."

Angell receives $115,000 in the settlement. Carolyn Luby will get $25,000; Rosemary Richi receives $60,000 and Erica Daniels receives $125,000. The Associated Press normally does not release the names of victims in sexual assault cases, but the women have decided to make their names public.

None of the men involved in the complaints ever faced criminal charges. The attacks allegedly occurred between 2010 and 2013, while the women were students at the school.

UConn officials have detailed numerous steps the school has taken to ensure women can report sexual assaults to police or schools and receive proper guidance and counseling,
noting is was the first in the state to adopt a comprehensive sexual assault policy in 2012.

The school also said it has expelled 27 students since 2005 who have been the subject of sexual misconduct allegations, including 15 in the past five years. The school could not say how many complaints had been filed during that time.

"This lawsuit may have been settled, but the issue of sexual assault on college campuses has not been," said school President Susan Herbst. "Our hearts go out to all victims of sexual violence. The University has taken many positive, important steps in the battle against sexual assault in recent years, which are described in the joint statement, but there is still more to be done."

Major Sexual Assault Settlement

July 21, 2014

By

Jake New

NO MU MENTION

The University of Connecticut will pay nearly $1.3 million to five current and former students to settle a federal lawsuit that accused the university of mishandling allegations of sexual assault and harassment. Most of the settlement -- $900,000 -- will go to just one student.

In a joint statement with the students, the university said it had agreed to settle to avoid a costly trial. It is not, UConn stated, an admission of guilt. “A trial would have burdened both UConn and the plaintiffs for years, fighting over the past rather than working on the future,” the statement reads. “Accordingly, UConn and the plaintiffs have agreed to put to rest their factual disputes, settle the
litigation, and move forward. That process has already started.”

Three of the students were also among seven sexual assault victims who filed a Title IX complaint with the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights in October.

As part of the settlement, the three students will withdraw their share of the OCR complaint, as well as separate complaints made with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities. The Title IX investigation initiated by the original OCR complaint will continue.

The settlement, one of the largest and highest-profile conclusions yet to a multitude of sexual assault cases filed against colleges in recent months, comes as many campuses are rethinking their approach to sexual violence.

At a sexual assault summit hosted by Dartmouth College this week, several attendees expressed concerns about how colleges are expected to approach the adjudication process of sexual assault cases. Nearly 70 institutions are now being investigated for their handling of sexual assault investigations under Title IX.

Campus judicial systems, some argued, were never designed to address misconduct as serious as sexual violence – particularly in cases of acquaintance rape, which can quickly devolve into a confusing debate of “he said, she said.” During question-and-answer sessions, federal officials were unable to offer much guidance, though Lynn Rosenthal, the White House’s advisor on violence against women, said the National Institute of Justice was researching the issue.

Catherine Lhamon, the assistant secretary who oversees the Education Department's Office for Civil Rights, made it clear that there was little wiggle room for colleges and universities who do not comply with the requirements of Title IX.

“There is no safe harbor,” Lhamon said. “If you satisfy the law, then you have safe harbor. If you don’t, you don’t. We’re not considering a middle ground.”
The UConn students, who are all represented by the lawyer Gloria Allred, went public with their identities and stories last fall.

Kylie Angell, who will receive $115,000 in the settlement, accused the university of not advising her of the resources and options available to her after she was raped in her dorm room by a classmate in 2010. That classmate was eventually expelled, but was allowed back on campus after an appeal – a fact Angell said she was not aware of until he literally bumped into her in a campus dining hall two weeks after his expulsion.

When Angell went to campus police about the incident, a female officer allegedly told her that “women have to just stop spreading their legs like peanut butter.” In its response to the lawsuit, the university denied that the officer made the comment.

Erica Daniels, who will receive $125,000, accused the university of not fully investigating her allegation that she was drugged and raped by a classmate in 2013. Following the filing of her Title IX complaint in October of that year, Daniels said she was further traumatized when a professor showed her criminal justice class a slide about the complaint that included a photograph of her.

Rosemary Richi, who will receive $60,000, accused the university of mishandling the investigation into her claim that she was raped by a UConn football player. Carolyn Luby, who will receive $25,000, accused the university of not taking any action when she became the victim of online sexual harassment and a widespread cyberbullying campaign after she criticized the university’s logo online. Another $60,000 of the settlement will be used to defray the students’ various legal fees.

The remaining $900,000 will go to a former UConn hockey player named Silvana Moccia.

Moccia, the last student to join the lawsuit, said she was raped by a male hockey player when she was a freshman in 2011. When she told her coach about the alleged rape a few days later, she said she was told that she was not “stable enough” to keep playing hockey at UConn and that she was no longer on the team. The university denies that the coach said this and maintains that the conversation
focused on a knee injury that Moccia had not previously revealed.

The university reimbursed the tuition Moccia had spent so far, as well as her medical expenses. Catherine Cocks, UConn’s director of community standards, wrote a letter for her, stating that Moccia had been the victim of an “incident” and had left the university in good standing. The university's response to the lawsuit confirms that the university provided Moccia with medical expenses, but, because of privacy laws, cannot clarify if the expenses were related to her knee, the alleged rape, or both.

None of the accused men named in the lawsuit were ever charged by police. UConn will not have to make any institutional changes as part of the settlement, despite the lawsuit and the students repeatedly accusing the university of “institutional indifference.” Even in the joint statement, the students still allege that the university’s "overall response showed deliberate indifference."

The university, in the joint statement, acknowledged the role of the five students in “inspiring important public discussion” and the additional measures now being taken to address sexual assault on campus. Since the lawsuit, UConn has established a new assistant dean of students for victim support services, added two staff investigator positions, and created a Special Victims Unit in the UConn Police Department.

The Office of the Title IX Coordinator will now oversee all sexual assault investigations.

In the settlement agreement, UConn said it still “categorically denies” the students’ allegations, though it is unable to provide many other details because of privacy laws. In October, Susan Herbst, UConn's president, said that she "completely rejects" the notion that the university is indifferent to sexual assault.

“The suggestion that the University of Connecticut, as an institution, would somehow be indifferent to or dismissive of any report of sexual assault is astonishingly misguided and demonstrably untrue,” Herbst said. "This is so obvious to those of us who work here and deal with these serious and painful issues, that I
am stunned that I even must say it, or that any reasonable person would believe otherwise.”

**ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH**

Editorial: Bottom line first, students second at some for-profit colleges

By the Editorial Board

**NO MENTION**

*So long, Everest College, and good riddance.*

The for-profit enterprise operating in three Missouri cities — Earth City, Kansas City and Springfield — will be closing those sites and some of its nearly 100 others around the country. What it doesn’t close, it will sell. Several states and the federal government are cracking down on Everest’s parent company, Corinthian College, over allegations that it distorted student grades, fudged attendance records and exaggerated job placement claims.

In an agreement with the Department of Education, a DOE-appointed independent monitor will supervise the college’s dissolution and oversee the interests of its 72,000 students and 12,000 employees.

There should be more to come.

**What Everest** college and others like it — Phoenix University, ITT Educational Services, Apollo Education Group, and locally based Vatterott College, to name a few — have in common is that their primary purpose is a hefty bottom line. They are businesses first, educational institutions somewhere further down the line. As Kevin Kinser, an associate professor of higher education policy at the State University of New York at Albany, told the Wall Street Journal: “You could be quite profitable as a business even when you weren’t successful as an educational institution.” They’ve grown fat by picking the pockets of hopeful students and parents who qualify for federal student loans. Nearly all of the colleges depend on such loans for the majority of their revenue.

A 2010 Senate investigation of 30 for-profit colleges, including the ones listed above, shows that in the preceding nine years the share of federal financial aid to the companies more than doubled, from 12.2 percent to 24.8 percent. In dollars the schools captured $5.4 billion in federal aid in 2001, and a whopping $32.2 billion in 2010.
Together, 79 percent of the money to the 30 companies was from federal financial aid programs in 2010, up from 69 percent in 2006.

Vatterott’s bottom line tells the tale as well as any. In 2010, Vatterott reported that 86.9 percent of its revenue was from student loan programs, or 88.1 percent if you add the $2.3 million from education programs in the departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs.

The Post-Dispatch’s Koran Addo recently interviewed Jeremiah Hood, president of Everest College in Earth City. Mr. Hood defended for-profit higher-education companies against criticism that they tempt students by marketing promises of high-paying careers that don’t materialize.

“Our intentions are to get our students to the point where they are gainfully employed in the most cost-effective way,” Mr. Hood said. “There’s a misperception that (the industry) can be predatory. At the end of the day, we are proud of what we do overall.”

Predatory is a good word. Mr. Addo wrote that a diploma from Everest costs about $19,000, compared to a two-year associate’s degree from St. Louis Community College for about $6,100.

For-profit colleges do provide some students with degrees, although the dropout rate is high — 50 percent to 70 percent, compared with 31 percent at public colleges and universities.

Taxpayers pick up the lion’s share of tuition costs at the for-profits. The Senate investigation found that the level of student borrowing cost taxpayers $32 billion in 2009-2010, and that the companies spent more on marketing and profit-sharing than on classroom instruction.

Students leaving for-profits have median debt of $32,700, while students who leave community colleges have debt of about $20,000, according to the Senate investigation.

And those exaggerated job placement claims?

Corinthian Colleges admitted to Department of Education officials that it had falsified job placement and/or grade and attendance records at various locations. The company refused to turn over data that would have allowed education authorities to determine whether the for-profit’s students were succeeding. We don’t wonder why.

The companies can be criticized for their greed. But the government enabled them. The current crackdown is long overdue.

Not all for-profit schools are scam artists; those that are performing well should be able to prove their worth. It would help them attract prospective students. These companies should not be flourishing at taxpayers’ expense. Operating rules for the for-profits need to be strengthened and federal oversight expanded.

Closing Everest College is a step in the right direction.