There is one memento of his days as the president of Texas A&M that has made its way to University of Missouri Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin’s office. It is a football signed by Coach Kevin Sumlin, wide receiver Mike Evans and quarterback Johnny Manziel commemorating the Aggies’ 29-24 victory at top-ranked Alabama in 2012. As the biggest proponent of Texas A&M’s switch from the Big 12 to the Southeastern Conference, Loftin took great pride in seeing his Aggies prove they belonged in the new league.

Now the chancellor at Missouri, another school that left the Big 12 for the SEC, Loftin has already become a familiar face at MU sporting events, introducing himself to major donors and students alike and then popping into the locker room to watch coaches and players interact after the game.

On Tuesday, Loftin spoke with Tribune sports editor Joe Walljasper about NCAA reform, conference realignment and how involved in athletics he’ll be at Missouri.

**Q: To begin with current events, the NCAA recently approved more autonomy for the Power 5 conference members. What are your thoughts on that?**

A: This has been a long time in coming. I’ve been in this kind of job for quite a while, not just here but also at Texas A&M, a similar school. So we’ve dealt with a lot of issues. You remember about three years ago (NCAA President Mark) Emmert tried to get legislation passed that would give $2,000 to the athletes, which got overridden by the small schools. That’s just one more example of what happens here. So over a period of the last 18 months or almost two years the commissioners of the Big 5 conferences and people like myself have been in conversation about how to make things better for student-athletes. So I want to make sure it’s clear that this is really about the student-athlete.

Some of us have the ability to do things. Some of us don’t. But when you think about the kind of school Missouri is, Texas A&M is, other SEC schools, ACC, Big Ten and so on, we tend to recruit
nationally. Most of the players we bring in, especially for football and men’s basketball, are dirt poor. They come here with no money at all. They can’t work. That’s prohibited by the NCAA. We give them a scholarship that covers their educational costs, and we provide them some money to handle housing and food. But, basically, these people can’t go home again. They can’t afford to buy a plane ticket back to California or Florida or where they come from. Smaller schools tend to recruit much closer to home. So if I am at a small Division I school, then most likely most of my players are in-state players. That sort of thing is a difficult thing for us. We have the resources, in my opinion, to provide a modest amount of support for athletes beyond the minimum to live on to let them actually have a chance to go home a couple times a year. That’s important.

The other thing: How many shoplifting cases have you heard about among athletes? It happens all the time. Why? They’ve got nothing. No money. They want a shirt, a pair of shoes. By prohibiting us from giving the athlete anything beyond the bare minimum to survive, we’re taking a young man from across the country or a young woman from across the country or across the world sometimes and tell them, “You’re going to be in abject poverty for four years playing for us. You can’t go home again, and you can’t do things that other students do, because you can’t get a job.” That, to me, is egregious.

What we’ve tried to do over the last several years is find the schools that have this issue and have the resources to deal with it. The driver behind the Big 5 conferences doing this is really that very thing. We do have that capability, and we have these athletes that deserve a little bit more than the bare minimum to survive. How much that should be is a debatable issue. Is it $2,000? A judge says $5,000 is the cap. What’s the right number here? I don’t know. That whole thing in California with the O’Bannon case will be a long time getting resolved, so that is maybe not even relevant to the current conversation. The $5,000 she cited in her judgment as a cap has some degree of relevance to the conversation.

Q: Does it concern you at all that more autonomy will create a more stratified Division I. If you were at, say, Rice now, would you feel the same way?

A: My friend David Leebron, who is the president there, was on the committee, by the way, that worked on this, along with Harris Pastides from South Carolina, who was our rep on the committee. David and I have talked about this a lot. The issue there is who you’ve got. Rice is a private school that does recruit nationally more than others do, but Rice students are a little bit different students than most big publics have. So I don’t have much concern about them. I have more concern about a public Division I school.
But the stratification is already there. Look at facilities. Look at coaches’ pay. It’s already there. If you’re at a small Division I school, your head coach is going to be making a lot less than (Missouri’s Gary) Pinkel makes. Right? You know that. That’s the issue. We have resources, and resources have driven the economic level these schools operate at in terms of facilities, coaching staffs, coaching salaries, those kinds of things.

I’ve been at two Division I schools, Texas A&M and Missouri, in this kind of role, so I’ve watched this pretty carefully. There’s jealousy out there. I understand that. But, again, it just reflects reality. The issue has been for the NCAA that equity has been used as a way to bring us all down to the same lowest common denominator. Is that the right thing to do for a school that recruits across the country and around the world? I don’t think so. So I’m very supportive of this and have been since the beginning of the conversation.

Q: You obviously were one of the driving forces that got Texas A&M to the SEC and even wrote a book about it (“The 100-Year Decision: Texas A&M and the SEC,” which comes out next month). You can’t really sum up a book in a five-minute answer, but what were the key factors in why you thought that was right for Texas A&M, and do the same things apply at Missouri?

A: I was very public about that. There were three major reasons.

They were, in order of priority: visibility. Texas A&M is a great school. Missouri’s a great school. Both schools lacked, to some extent, a true national image and certainly lacked an international image. Being in the SEC has changed all that. What happened this year in terms of our collegiate licensing? We’re No. 19 in the country. We were below 40 a couple of years ago. Why is that? It’s strictly because we’re more visible now. That’s a good thing. It really enhances the brand of a Mizzou diploma. So this is something that doesn’t just speak to athletics. It speaks to the entire university’s visibility. Here and A&M, your recruiting goes up. Your ability to attract appropriate people to your faculty and staff is influenced by this, as well. All these things occur because you’re more visible in a public way to people in this nation and beyond. There were people watching football games in Europe involving this school and my previous school that wouldn’t have seen those games before. It will be even better now with the SEC Network in play. Look at that change. That was No. 1 for me.

No. 2 was being in a conference that had great stability. If you read the book, you’ll find I start off by talking about the unnatural creation of the Big 12. The Southwest Conference, where I grew up, it fell apart. There was a very reasonable push toward adding two schools to the Big Eight. Politicians got involved, and it became 12. A lot of folks didn’t like that. A certain man named Osborne (former Nebraska football Coach Tom Osborne) hated it a lot, and we’ve talked about that a lot, Tom and I
have. Anyway, the point is, the stability of the SEC is really legendary. What’s the penalty for leaving the SEC? There is none. In the ACC, what is it? Fifty million or whatever. Think about that for a minute. That’s a huge thing. The SEC is a very different place. I’ve been in both the Big 12 and SEC, and it’s a very different place from where I was. My book talks about my first Big 12 meeting and some of the things I discerned there and walks through all that. So you can read it for yourself and see a more descriptive version of what I’m saying right now. It’s very nice to be in a family that has mutual respect and equality. The Big 12 didn’t share equally. Texas was on top by far. Kansas and Iowa State were on the bottom, basically. We were in the middle somewhere at Texas A&M, and so was Missouri. So it wasn’t an equally shared conference as far as revenues were concerned.

The third thing was money. I thought at the time that the resources available to the school as part of the SEC would be superior to the Big 12. Now, this particular year, some of the Big 12 schools got more than we got in the SEC, but that’s a function of them not giving their two newest members (TCU and West Virginia) equal shares and also the fact that their contract is newer than ours. But the thing that happened on the 14th (the launch of the SEC Network) was a game-changer. We started Day One of our network with more coverage than the Big Ten had after three years. That’s incredible. We, unlike the Big Ten, have kept our other contracts. We still have our CBS contract and our ESPN contract. This is additive. (The Big Ten) rolled it all into one. They’re the most lucrative in a sense right now in terms of their distribution to the schools, but think about what’s going to happen now. It won’t take us probably a year to really recoup the investment that the ESPN people have made. It will become a very good revenue-generator for schools like Mizzou.

Q: The fact the Big 12 is precluded from having its own network because of the Longhorn Network, did that make the Big 12 seem like a revenue dead end compared to what the other conferences could do?

A: I go to great lengths about that in the book. I wasn’t worried about the LHN as it was first proposed. All of us knew, we thought, what the rules were: That each of us was entitled to one nonconference game on pay-per-view or broadcast on our own network. At A&M, we toyed with forming a network either for ourselves or with a few other schools but never really got there. Oklahoma worked on it, too. Kansas State’s done it. What happened was, the board — I was a negative vote, one of the few — empowered Commissioner Dan Beebe to make a lot of the decisions about LHN and what could be done or not done. All of a sudden, it went from one nonconference game to two. Then a conference game was added. It got bigger and bigger and bigger all of a sudden. “Wow,” I said, “this is not a good way to go.”

Q: And high school football games.
A: Yeah, that was one of the more public things that came out. That got stopped. But my point simply is, and I still believe this to this day — I can’t prove this by any means, but my opinion is — that the LHN was simply a water-testing for Texas being independent like Notre Dame. Can we stand on our own feet or not? It was (former Texas Athletic Director) DeLoss Dodds’ way of testing that, basically. I still think that could be a long-term goal for that school. It’s got the name brand. It’s got the resources to do it.

That wasn’t the driver for me personally, but that event was so public, and all the things that were happening were so unequal, it made my job so much easier the second time we tried it. We tried in 2010 to create an SEC membership for Texas A&M. I didn’t succeed. We came back in 2011, and it worked. The difference was the LHN from the public viewpoint. I didn’t change my opinion at all on why I did this. This was something I wanted to do the first year. But it did give me ammunition and really energized the fan base. In 2010, it was 50-50. I had as many negatives in terms of my alumni and fan base about the SEC move as I had positives. It was 95-5 the next year. Why did that happen? I think the LHN was the primary driver of it.

Q: Safe to say, in your opinion, conference realignment has been good for Texas A&M and good for Missouri. Has it been good for college athletics and fans of college athletics?

A: It depends on how you look at it. There are fans, and there are fans. Obviously, the fans of individual schools are going to be happy or sad depending on how their school fared. But there is a fan base beyond that that just likes college sports. Why do you think the SEC Network has so many subscribers already? What happened? Why is that? It’s a very exciting place to be. It’s driven not just by the folks who are alumni of the individual schools of the SEC, but there’s a bevy of people out there that just enjoy college sports. They watch preferentially the most exciting games they can find, and they tend to be in our conference. I get that. So you already see and you’ll continue to see subscriptions well beyond the footprint of the SEC itself geographically.

Q: As chancellor, how involved do you like to be in the major athletic decisions, like facility building, hiring and firing coaches and major disciplinary decisions?

A: The AD is responsible for a lot of things you just mentioned but not all of them. I do have to get involved in facilities for several reasons. Even though they’re probably going to be paid for with the athletic revenue we have, they may impact the bonding capacity of the university. So I can’t ignore that. If I suck up too much bonding capacity over there, I can’t do it anywhere else. I can’t let us squeeze out the possibility of being able to borrow money for an educational facility, for example, or for a dormitory. So it’s a balancing act. So I’m involved there, and clearly I’m a pathway they must go
through to get to the Board of Curators, which has the final legal authority in all those kinds of issues.

I counted up, when I was dealing with Gary Pinkel and Kim Anderson, that I’ve done 86 coaching contracts in my career. Many of them have been just renewals or amendments to them and not brand new. I was very involved in hiring Kevin Sumlin at Texas A&M because I was in a situation where I had an AD that I didn’t have the greatest faith in, quite frankly. The book talks about that, too. I don’t know if you know Bill Byrne or not, but Bill has great strengths — I will be the first to say — as an AD, but he also had some weaknesses, too, and we had issues about that. And the book talks about that pretty plainly. So I’ve had a lot of experience dealing with that AD. I’ve hired a new AD, Eric Hyman, who is very well respected. I’ve known of Mike (Alden) for a long time but didn’t know him well until I got here. We’ve become quite close.

I’m not going to step in there. They’re the ones that have to deal with disciplinary issues every day. It may get to me at some level, but they’re the ones that are on the front lines of all this, so, to me, the AD needs to be out there handling the oversight of the coaching processes and have to be the starting point for the sort of planning you do and prioritization you do for facilities. So that’s where it starts. But in some areas it’s going to bubble up, not just to me but beyond me to the system president and the Board of Curators. And I’m a pathway to that.

But my goal has been to always work closely with athletics. Even though Bill and I had problems, we used to meet at least once a week, sometimes more than that. Not every chancellor or president does that. In fact, that was one of the problems Bill had. He had not been provided much guidance by my predecessors. They pretty much left him alone. That’s what led to other issues.

But my point simply is, I pay attention. I’m very interest in athletics personally for two reasons. In my role, I focus on students, as you probably know. It’s a really galvanizing thing for our students to be out there, be part of the game-day experiences at Faurot Field and over at the arena and places like that. I’m there, too, and enjoy being with them in that context. It’s also a very good place for me to meet with and thank and interact with those people that are very generous donors to the university. I’ve done that for a long time and continue doing that here. It’s just a venue where people show up. If you watch me during a game, I work all the suites. Stop in just a minute and thank them. Don’t distract them from the game, but I’m just going to stop in and shake their hand and say, “Thanks for all you do for Mizzou.” That builds good will for the institution and provides me a way to assure people that their impact here is being noticed and being measured by me.

If you watch me at a football game — you haven’t seen me yet — what I do is I’ll work the suites during the first half, and I’ll try get down on the field to watch the band at halftime. I prefer that
viewpoint to one that’s up high. Of course the A&M band was quite good to watch. I like to interact with our cheerleaders, the Golden Girls, the band. Those are all people I like to talk to. I’ll walk around the area where the students sit and shake hands and thank them for being there and their enthusiasm. That’s all part of what I’ll do. Those moments are very special to me.

Q: With the hiring of Kim Anderson, how involved did you get? Did you sit in on interviews or anything like that?

A: Basically, as is well known, we hired a firm. That was Mike’s desire. There were probably 20 or more coaches looked at, talked to about it. Mike had a small advisory group I wasn’t a part of but did know existed. He kept me in the loop. That group down-selected to four (candidates), and he went out and talked to all four of them face to face and came back to me and said, “Here’s the guy.”

Then he brought Kim to the house. I spent about an hour talking to him, not about coaching in the technical sense of the word — that’s Mike’s job. I talked to him about academic performance, behavioral issues, how you handle these things. You know and I know that there are always issues. I am very proud of what this university is able to do academically. We have an extraordinary performance here in terms of graduation rates and APR. Very proud of that. Better than where I was. So that’s a good thing, and I really don’t want to lose that. It’s an important thing for the image of this university.

So that’s the No. 1 question I had for Kim: How are you going to help keep these athletes focused on this. It’s hard. Secondly, given what you know happens all the time and happened here, I’m very interested in how they handle behavioral issues. What are their standards? How do they communicate their expectations to their team? That’s the kind of questions we explored in our hour together. I was very impressed.

… I always do that with a major coaching hire, but I never really interfere a lot. It was very different with Sumlin. I was much more involved and was day-to-day with that as we walked through it. Bill sort of handled it, but I was much more involved just because there were different circumstances there. I have great trust and faith in Mike Alden, so there’s no reason for me to get involved too much. Mike’s good about keeping me posted. We talk almost every day either directly or in some other form to make sure I’m in the loop about various things going on. I feel very up to date on what’s going on in the department without having to get involved in it unnecessarily.

Q: You talked about the great exposure athletics bring the university, but sometimes it’s the reverse. There were a series of incidents the brought bad publicity, culminating in Dorial Green-Beckham being kicked off the football team. With those incidents, do you get involved in the decisions?
A: Well, I had to be. This school is different from where I was as far as their policies are concerned. Those are being changed now. But understand that here at this point in time — which will not be much longer — I’m in the loop in the following way: There’s a student-conduct process here, but the appeal of any decision they make at that level comes to me. That was not the case at Texas A&M, and that will change here. It will be the same person as it was at Texas A&M, and I will not be in that loop anymore. So I inherited, without any way to control that, a process here that had been in place a long time that places the chancellor in an appellate role for decisions involving student conduct. I was involved to some extent with the appellate activity that took place with DGB after the student-conduct process.

Q: In a case like DGB, you’re presented with the facts and you decide their fate?

A: Well, the student has to come forward and appeal on some basis, and I have to make a decision on whether to overturn or not the decision. I’m an appeals court. I don’t get involved at the lower levels. There is a separate process there that produces a result. If the student doesn’t accept that result, they have a right under current rules to appeal to me. But there must be a basis for that.

(At this point, a spokesman clarifies that Loftin had nothing to do with the original decision to kick Green-Beckham off the team.)

Oh, sorry, I misunderstood that. That decision was totally the coach’s call. I got a call from Mike one day saying, “Pinkel just called me and told me he was going to kick DGB off the team.” I had nothing to do with that. He then appealed. The problem was what he did in this assault case (Green-Beckham was accused, but never charged, of forcing his way into an apartment and pushing a woman down a set of stairs) not because of his team dismissal. That was a separate issue totally. He then was brought before the student-conduct process to be looked at from the standpoint of being treated under our rules here for any student about this assault that happened off campus. That’s where I got involved. I had nothing to do with the decision to kick him off the team. I am involved with the student-conduct process as an appellate. I have nothing to do with the decision a coach makes to dismiss a player. That was something Pinkel made his own mind up about and informed the AD and me. I got a call from Mike within minutes, I think, of his being told by Pinkel. The same with Frank Haith when he kicked off the basketball player (Zach Price).

Q: There was a string of incidents where athletes were accused of sexual assaults against other students. Never arrested, no charges, so they went undetected by the media and public until after the fact. (Among these was the claim by former swimmer Sasha Menu-Courey, who said she was raped by a football player a year before she committed suicide in 2011). This
wasn’t on your watch, but as you look back on what you’ve learned about how those cases were handled, did Missouri handle those cases in a way you would have liked them to?

A: I think in some cases we could have done much better. That’s all I can say. I don’t think we had any deliberate effort to do things in a way that benefited one type of student over another. I can’t find any evidence at all of that. But we have individual cases that were handled inconsistently. I’ve learned over a long period of time that there’s been communication failures, miscommunications and assumptions that somebody else knew or would do something that just happened because we weren’t doing things the best way we could have. So my thoughts have been directed over the last several months to improving all that, codifying processes, making sure we’re all on the same page so we do things in a very consistent manner going forward.

If you ask the question is there evidence I found that athletics had somehow influenced the rest of the institution to cover these things up, the answer is no. I can find no evidence that anybody tried to hide anything. But we handled both student-athletes and nonathletes differently, inconsistently. We haven’t done things in a way that’s treating everybody exactly the same. But there’s no bias between those two groups, as far as I can tell. It’s just been that individual decisions were made or not made, and there was not a consistent way for us to handle every single case. We need to be much better than that. We ought to be better than that going forward.

Again, it’s not just the student-conduct issue. It’s also the revision of support structures for those who have been victimized. And that was one of the issues that came out of the Sasha Menu-Courey story is that she felt the university did not provide resources for her. There were resources provided to her. She used some of them, but there were a bunch more. We’ve done a lot of thinking about that. I’ve actually engaged with the mayor, the city manager and the presiding commissioner about how we can better utilize all the resources of the university, the city and the county to be much better equipped than we have been to help everybody who needs assistance with mental-health issues.

Q: Lastly, at Texas A&M you developed some personal relationships with athletes like Johnny Manziel. Is that something you like to do?

A: As appropriate. It just sort of happens. Johnny, I dealt with him a little bit personally. I dealt with his parents from time to time. Of course, that was just a matter of being in certain places. I went to the Heisman Trophy awards event with him and things like that.

I show up. I like to, for example, go into the locker room at the end of a game and just stand in the back. I stay out of the way totally. I like to hear what the coach says after a win or a loss. That’s a telling thing, what the coach tells the players and watch their reaction to it. I’m all about making sure
these young men and women get very good guidance, not simply in how they play a game but in how they behave and how they interact with life. So you’re just there.

… I tend to go to practice occasionally, just to watch what’s going on there. And get a sense of who’s who out there on the field. My concern is I don’t want to intrude. I don’t want to appear to be trying to be in place of the AD or the coach. I’m not that person. I don’t have any skill sets there. My goal is just to get acquainted a little bit with the athletes so they understand that I do pay attention to them and I do care about them.

… My family has a lot of soccer, so I got to know a lot of the soccer girls at A&M, and I’ll do the same thing here. My wife played soccer from the time she was born in Germany and she’s coached soccer a lot. My kids played soccer. My daughter was captain of her college team, so we have a soccer background. I go to women’s tennis and met the girls over there already. Been to softball, baseball, so I show up.

I don’t just limit it to those sports. I go to club sports, too. Do you know that KU beat Missouri in quidditch? Did you know that?

Q: That must have been a tough one to take.

A: They got several yellow cards, though. It was a nasty game, a nasty game. No more comments on that.

Q: Understood.

A: My point simply is, I don’t limit myself. How many hours are there in a day? I can’t do it all. But I try to show up at every club sport once a year if I can just to be there. That’s tough sometimes to make happen because we’ve got 30 club sports here and only 20 NCAA sports. … It’s important that the athletes realize we do know them and pay attention to them and care about them. They rep us very well. They are who you’ll see. If you’re not on this campus, who will you see? Most likely, you’ll see an athlete. I want to make sure they understand that’s an important role. You’re not just out there for yourself and even your team. You’re out there for the university. I try to thank them for being good role models and doing great things that catch the attention of people that wouldn’t otherwise see Mizzou.

It’s trite, but we are a great university, but people who don’t have experience here, who aren’t our current students and alumni, they only see us through the lens of athletics. That’s why it’s so important. Some of my colleagues aren’t very interested in athletics. That’s wrong. It’s a very important part of the university. It’s not why we’re here, but it contributes a great deal to attracting people to the university.
Make room for new dorms on college campuses in Missouri and Kansas

BY MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS
THE KANSAS CITY STAR

The University of Missouri-Kansas City this month will open its fourth and, at least for now, final residence hall after a decade of building new student housing on campus.

The University of Kansas is erecting two residence halls to replace a nearly 50-year-old dorm that will be razed because it would cost too much to fix up.

And in Columbia, the University of Missouri has moved away from the popular suite-style floor plan and back to old-style community living for its newest residence hall, the 11th built in the past 13 years.

The nation’s campus housing boom continues to play out in Missouri and Kansas where, despite complaints of less state support for capital improvements, some of the largest public schools are opening, building or planning to erect new student housing.

“I’ve been with the Association of College and University Housing Officers for nine years, and during that time I’ve seen a tremendous increase in new buildings spurred by growing enrollments,” said James Bauman, association spokesman.

“The last housing boom was in the late 1960’s-early ’70s. Most residence halls on campuses were built 30 or 40 years ago, and obviously college students of today have different desires than students had 30 years ago.”
Shrinking state funding doesn’t stop schools from building dorms, campus facility officials say, because residence halls pay for themselves. Universities use student housing fees to pay off construction bonds.

Other schools use a private/public partnership in which the college owns the land and leases it to a private company that constructs and manages the building.

UMKC used the private/public model to build its Oak Place residence hall a few years ago. The university has since taken over management of that building.

Oak Place also represents another trend: the housing tower with street-level retail, including restaurants.

The University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg expects to open a residence hall called The Crossing — South at Holden by the fall of 2015. The project is a $41 million, 325-bed mixed-use residence hall and retail facility with a Spin Neapolitan Pizza and a Starbucks.

“The rent from the retail helps finance the facility along with fees students pay to live there,” said Jeff Murphy, university spokesman.

At UMKC, the rent students pay to live in the new Hospital Hill student housing will go toward retiring the 30-year bond debt on the $30.3 million apartment building.

About 300 of UMKC’s medical, dental, nursing and pharmacy students will move this month into the apartments, built on Troost Avenue between 24th and 25th streets. Crews have been busy wheeling in furniture and putting the last touches of paint on walls.

The new building brings the school’s on-campus housing capacity to 1,800 beds, said Bob Simmons, an associate vice chancellor.

The monthly rates on Hospital Hill: $974 for a one-bedroom unit, $882 to share a two-bedroom apartment or $774 to share a four-bedroom apartment. Those fees, which include utilities, are comparable to what students would pay for off-campus apartments, UMKC officials said.
Students also want the latest in amenities.

“Students are the customer,” Bauman said. “So, the saying goes, what the customer wants, they get.”

They want laundry rooms, kitchens, living rooms and private or semiprivate bathrooms. They want study rooms, fitness areas, computer labs and Wi-Fi. All those are included in the new Hospital Hill building.

Even as they cater to student desires, university officials say they must be careful to keep housing costs down.

“No one wants a beautiful residence hall that students can’t afford to live in,” Simmons said.

For now, he said, UMKC — where the oldest residence hall is only 10 years old — is done building housing. “You have to be very careful not to overbuild,” Simmons said. “You want to fit the growth curve.”

Among the projects on other campuses:

KU is more than two months into construction of two five-story residence halls on Daisy Hill. The new dorms will combine with existing residence halls to form a residential quadrangle.

“Once the two new residence halls are completed, McCollum Hall will be torn down,” said Gavin Young, a KU spokesman serving the provost’s office. He said McCollum “is an outdated facility that was cost-prohibitive to renovate.”

The two freshman-focused halls will include a mix of public and private areas and will give 350 students the option of living alone or bunking in a two- or four-person suite, Young said. The $47.8 million project is to be done by fall 2015.

KU’s next project will be a new apartment complex for single upperclassmen and graduate students at 19th and Iowa streets in Lawrence.
“The size and scope of that proposal are still very much in the discussion stage,” Young said. The goal is to have it completed by 2017.

On the swankier side, KU is using private, donated dollars to build a new complex, largely for athletes, to open for the 2016-17 school year south of Allen Fieldhouse on Naismith Drive.

The $17.5 million apartment project will house about 66 students, including men’s and women’s basketball players. Each apartment will have a full kitchen, living and dining room. The building will include lounges on each floor, two team meeting rooms, tutoring space and a multipurpose room.

K-State will name a new residence hall in honor of former president Jon Wefald.

Wefald Hall will be the first residence hall built on the Manhattan campus since 1967. Construction of the eight-floor residence hall is to begin in September and be completed by fall 2016.

Wefald Hall is part of a larger, $76 million project that includes a new dining facility and renovations to two other residence halls in what is called the Kramer Complex.

MU’s Department of Residential Life is nearing the final phase of a master plan approved by University of Missouri curators 13 years ago for the Columbia campus, said Frankie Minor, director of residential life.

“We have been in a pretty aggressive plan since 2001,” Minor said. At that time, the newest residence hall on campus had been built in 1965, back when most facilities didn’t have air conditioning and dorm rooms came with only two or three electrical outlets. Today’s freshmen come to campus with 20 to 25 electrical appliances, Minor said.

In a little more than a decade, 11 residence halls have been built at MU and nine dorms have been renovated, including an all-female hall reopening this fall. Six dorms have been torn down.
A 10th renovated hall will reopen next fall, and at the same time MU will open a $29 million, 330-bed, community living hall on Virginia Avenue. The interior will be mostly traditional double student rooms with community bathrooms.

Not many schools are building community-style campus housing these days. Most lean toward suites where residents of two rooms share an adjoining bathroom.

MU had been building suites, Minor said, but it has gone back to putting a community bathroom on a hallway shared by many students to promote its community living and working philosophy. The community bathrooms are not gender specific, but do provide privacy for shower and toilet stalls.

MU housing officials noticed, Minor said, “that with suite-style housing, students had more privacy, but it was harder for them to get to know one another.”

The school first revisited the community-living style with three dorms built in 2009 that also included a few suites.

Next the university plans to demolish three high-rises across from Mizzou’s football stadium and erect five residence halls in their place. By the time MU is done in 2023, the work will have taken about 22 years, Minor said, “and we will have completely new and renovated housing facilities.”
Thinking Out Loud: How MU prepares for the school year

By DARREN HELLWEGE & TREVOR HARRIS

Listen to the story: http://cpa.ds.npr.org/kbia/audio/2014/08/THINKTUE081814.mp3

As thousands of students arrive in Columbia for the new school year, much work must happen behind the scenes to prepare. On this week’s Thinking Out Loud host Darren Hellwege visits with a range of staff from University of Missouri departments whose work impacts and is impacted by the student experience at MU.

First in this week's Thinking Out Loud, Darren talks with Captain Brian Weimer of the University of Missouri Police Department about how MUPD is preparing for a new school year, and their responsibility for keeping the campus and its occupants safe.

Darren also visits with Frankie Minor, Director of MU's Residential Life. Minor and his department have the complicated job of arranging on-campus housing for thousands of students who arrive in Columbia over the next few days.

We also hear in this program from Barbara Hammer, Director of MU's Office of Disability Services. We learn more about how the University is working to make education more accessible for people with all sorts of disabilities.

Finally, hear an excerpt from Darren's interview with Michelle Froese, the Assistant Director of Strategic Communications at the University of Missouri's Student & Auxiliary Services. She talks with Darren about The Mizzou Store, where students get textbooks and Tiger fans can buy Mizzou gear.
St. Louis area residents make up bulk of Ferguson arrests

By Steve Giegerich, Joel CuRRIER and Joe Holleman Post-Dispatch

FERGUSON • The perpetrators of violence who have instigated a response that has filled the air with tear gas the past 10 days are generally not a presence among the demonstrators protesting the death of Michael Brown. Rather, police and peaceful demonstrators say, the rocks, Molotov cocktails and gunfire directed at police are the product of a small group of young men who gather furtively as darkness falls near Red’s Barbeque and the adjoining warren of avenues off Canfield Drive — the street where Brown was killed Aug. 9.

St. Louis County Jail records say at least 85 people have been booked for “refusal to disperse” since Aug. 13, the day before the Missouri Highway Patrol took command of the situation.

At least 52 protesters were arrested Monday night into Tuesday morning for refusing to disperse, unlawful use of a weapon and interfering with a police officer, St. Louis County records say.

All had been released, according to jail officials.

Highway Patrol Capt. Ronald S. Johnson calls some of the protesters a “dangerous dynamic in the night.” Some of those, he has said, have come to Ferguson from outside the St. Louis area, but most are local.

“There are some outsiders,” Johnson told CNN Tuesday. “There’s a lot of people who live here ... we can’t just blame it on outside instigators.”

Jail records available for those arrested Monday night show that 38 of those arrested were from the St. Louis region, including 15 from St. Louis city.

Fourteen have addresses outside the region including Chicago; Des Moines, Iowa; New York City; Huntsville, Ala.; Washington, D.C.; and San Diego.

“We continue to worry about folks who are coming in from outside who are using this,” Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon told the Post-Dispatch on Tuesday.

The governor said the state is working with intelligence experts on the matter and is in contact with the FBI.

“What started as a peaceful protest has been attracting bad guys across the country,” he said.
Brian Houston, co-director of the Terrorism and Disaster Center at the University of Missouri-Columbia, predicted Ferguson has not seen the last of what officials characterize as “outside agitators.”

“The longer trouble goes on in Ferguson the more time people have to come to St. Louis to cause the trouble,” Houston said.

Among those arrested were New York City residents Carl Dix, a member of the Revolutionary Communist Party, and Travis Morales, who identifies himself as a party supporter.

Reached by phone Tuesday, Morales confirmed the arrests.

The special section dedicated to the events in north St. Louis County on the organization’s website carries the subheadline: “People are standing up in Ferguson! It’s Right to Rebel!”

“It may be about Communism,” Ferguson Township Democratic Committeewoman Patricia Bynes said of a group she has encountered tangentially in her nightly effort to quell the Ferguson unrest. “But that doesn’t mean it should be about anarchy.”

St. Louis Alderman Antonio French has been another constant presence in Ferguson since Brown’s death.

French says the numbers may show that the majority of those provoking the situation are local, but out-of-town antagonists are exacerbating the tension.

“We had two guys last night from Chicago, one of them who calls himself Joey, who was set on getting people worked up,” said French, who has worked incessantly as a mediator between police and demonstrators.

French at the same time concedes that some of the agitation is coming from “those Canfield boys,” referring to the apartment complex where Brown lived.

But he maintains that the violence over the past several days attracts nonresidents.

“Some people think that the revolution is starting now, and they want to be here,” the alderman said.

Police are additionally coming face-to-face with another enemy: hopelessness.

“There are two kinds of demonstrators out here,” Lyfe Yusen, 40, of Jennings, said as he stood on the sidewalk watching the West Florissant protest Monday night. “There are the ones that are here to make a stand over injustice. And the ones who don’t give a (expletive) and think they have nothing to live for.”

Chuck Wexler, executive director of the Washington-based Police Executive Research Forum said differentiating between the two groups is the greatest challenge facing officers on Ferguson streets.

“Most people are there to protest,” Wexler said. “But you can’t make the mistake of treating everyone the same way. The police need to appeal to community leaders. They are critical to establishing calm.”
Houston said the role social media has played in bringing outsiders to Ferguson cannot be discounted.

Twitter in particular, he said is “intimately” connecting people around the world to the situation in the no longer obscure St. Louis suburb.

From advocates joining the peaceful protest over Brown’s death, to provocateurs intent on wreaking havoc, to those drawn by the presence of international news crews, “social media is sustaining the events in Ferguson in lots of different ways,” said Houston. “And when it goes on day after day without seeming to abate, it draws in more people who say, ‘I want to be a part of it.’”

As the unrest moved toward its 11th night, French credited police for adapting to the environment along West Florissant Avenue by dispatching small units to remove agitators from the larger groups of peaceful protesters.

“They come in and get those guys out of there,” he said.

He further noted that not everyone who has arrived in Ferguson is bent on disruption and confrontation.

“There’s a group of Tibetan monks here. I’d hardly call them agitators,” the alderman said.

Greg Jonsson and Matthew Franck of the Post-Dispatch contributed to this report.
effort from the group Repeal 6214. The development agreement would have obligated Opus to put up $450,000 for improvements to downtown water and sanitary sewer infrastructure.

However, a legal challenge to the Opus project is still in the courts.

The council voted 4-3 on the American Campus Communities rezoning request and 5-2 on the development agreement for the project. Third Ward Councilman Karl Skala and Fourth Ward Councilman Ian Thomas voted against both measures, and Sixth Ward Councilwoman Barbara Hoppe voted against the rezoning request but voted to approve the development agreement.

Before voting against the measure, both Skala and Thomas said that while a parking garage was being included in the project, automobile traffic on Providence Road would likely increase.

Thomas noted the city recently faced controversy when it sought to alleviate traffic congestion on Providence Road by proposing to expand the roadway near American Campus Communities’ project site. New tenants there would likely exacerbate the problem, he said.

American Campus Communities plans to construct two buildings northeast of the intersection of Providence Road and Turner Avenue. The eastern building will contain a 546-space parking garage for its tenants.

As part of the development agreement, the company will provide $300,000 to improve a sanitary sewer line running underneath Turner Avenue. The developer plans to have the building ready for tenants by August 2017. Chuck Carroll, vice president of development for American Campus Communities, said the company plans to hold on to ownership of the complex for the long term.

“We’re not merchant builders,” Carroll said. “When we develop, we develop for our own portfolio.”

The city’s Public Works Department has said its improvements to downtown sanitary sewers to make them suitable for new growth should be completed within two years.

Several attendees to the council meeting spoke in favor of the project, and one — John Clark, a City Hall regular who has made unsuccessful bids for a council seat — spoke against the project. Clark suggested the council hold its decision until after the November elections, when Columbia voters will consider increasing the city’s property tax rate and establishing a new and increased development fee schedule.

Tracy Greever-Rice, who has collected signatures with the Repeal 6214 citizen group to oppose the Opus project, said in testimony before the council that American Campus Communities has “listened in good faith” to residents’ concerns, and the location of the project is “absolutely appropriate.”

“It’s time for some new development there,” Greever-Rice said.
After the council’s unanimous vote to rescind the Opus development agreement, the conflict between Repeal 6214 and the city over the Opus project — which has raged for about five months — will now move to the courts.

Last week, local attorney and Repeal 6214 organizer Jeremy Root filed a lawsuit against the city and City Manager Mike Matthes on behalf of two Columbia residents alleging that the residents’ civil rights were violated when city staff presented the second development agreement for the Opus project while the referendum petition for the first agreement — which was approved on March 19 in a controversial special meeting — was still under review. The plaintiffs hope to block the city from issuing permits for the Opus project for six months after the rescission of the development agreement — which happened at yesterday’s meeting — and “until such time that adequate infrastructure exists” to serve the site.

Boone County Circuit Judge Christine Carpenter issued a temporary restraining order against the city, preventing it from issuing any of the permits that the developer needs to proceed with its project. A few days after the suit was filed, Opus filed motions to intervene in the case and to dissolve the restraining order. A hearing on the restraining order was continued yesterday morning.

HOK to buy Kansas City sports architecture firm

HOK has agreed to acquire Kansas City-based 360 Architecture, which will bring the St. Louis-based global architecture firm back into the sports and entertainment market.

Terms of the deal, in which HOK will acquire the sports architecture firm by the end of October, were not disclosed.

HOK President Bill Hellmuth said in a statement Tuesday that 360’s 180 employees and its offices in Kansas City; Columbus, Ohio; and San Francisco will become part of HOK.

HOK provides architecture, design, engineering and planning services worldwide through 23 offices and is one of the largest privately held companies in St. Louis, with total 2013 revenue of $409 million. It has more than 1,600 total employees, of whom some 172 are in St. Louis. HOK has 397 licensed architects firmwide, 34 of whom are in St. Louis.

HOK ran a sports practice, HOK Sport Venue Event, from 1983 to 2008. That practice in 2009 split off to form Kansas City-based sports architecture firm Populous.
360 is currently working on the design of several sports stadiums, including the renovation of Sun Life Stadium for the National Football League’s Miami Dolphins; the Rogers Place arena for the National Hockey League’s Edmonton Oilers in Edmonton, Alberta; the AT&T Center, home of the National Basketball Association’s San Antonio Spurs; the design of Cisco Field, a proposed stadium for Major League Baseball’s Oakland Athletics; and a new stadium for Major League Soccer’s San Jose Earthquakes.

It has also worked on projects at the University of Notre Dame, the University of Portland and Auburn University.

360, which has 64 licensed architects firmwide, according to the latest Business Journal research, is currently involved in creating athletic facility master plans for the University of Missouri-Columbia and the University of North Carolina.

360 senior principals Brad Schrock, Tom Waggoner, George Heinlein, William Johnson, Tracy Stearns and Chris Trainer will join HOK, according to a statement from the companies.

Colleges add luxury touches to new stadiums

By DAVE SKRETTA

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Lining the brightly lit hallways of Populous, one of the leading architectural firms behind college sports, there are hundreds of scale models and graphic renderings of college football stadiums in various stages of renovation and construction.

There are blueprints for Kyle Field at Texas A&M, in the midst of a $420 million redevelopment. There's a model of TFC Bank Stadium at Minnesota, the recent replacement for the Metrodome as home of the Golden Gophers. And there are pictures of McClane Stadium, the glitzy new home for Baylor.
Each project showcases ways Populous is helping schools to lure fans to their next-generation stadiums in an era where good seats are not enough: enhanced Wi-Fi, better video boards and party decks for socializing. The results are twofold: The flashy facilities offer a better game-day experience while also generating more revenue than their predecessors.

"When you do a stadium, it's not a normal building. It's a building, but it has to wrap this big stage where all this athletic drama takes place," explained Jeff Spear, a senior architect at Populous who's been responsible for many of the projects, including the Baylor stadium. "What they want is a reflection of their university and a stadium that sells their brand."

When it comes to trends in stadium design, the folks at Populous are experts. The Kansas City-based company traces its roots back more than three decades, and has been responsible for everything from Reliant Stadium in Houston to the main Olympic stadiums in London and Sochi, Russia.

"The thing about college football is it's this big event where you're rooting for your alma mater," Spear said, "and now your alumni are returning to campus and spending money."

That's the hope, anyway.

Flat-screen televisions have made the home viewing experience better than ever, and the rising costs of tickets and travel have sent many fans to watch games from the comfort of their couch. It's a problem that has plagued professional sports for years but has trickled down to colleges, where the prevailing notion was that the alumni would always show.

At Tennessee, in the heart of the football-crazed SEC, attendance sagged for years before a modest bounce-back last season. Yet empty seats still abound at cavernous Neyland Stadium, even with recent improvements that reduced capacity, improved premium seating and offered other enhancements, such as LED signage, better restrooms and wider concourses.

In the Big Ten, eight schools showed a decline in average attendance last season.

"We're grateful that we continue to sell out our stadium during some times in which it's not as easy as it once was," Oklahoma athletic director Joe Castiglione said. "People have chosen to allocate their resources somewhere else. That doesn't necessarily mean they are less interested in following their favorite sports team. There are other demands on their resources."

To counter those demands, Oklahoma recently announced a $370 million renovation to Memorial Stadium that will hardly add a seat. Instead, it will create new plazas — "fan cooling areas," for example — improved team spaces and the kind of sizzle that appeals to recruits.

Elsewhere, stadiums are being tricked out with wifi that allows fans to not only stay better connected but also access replays, statistics and other information on mobile devices. Schools are adding bigger high-definition
video boards and better sound systems. And they're going away from traditional grandstand seating in favor of clubs, loge boxes and other priority offerings.

"It's hard to sell a regular seat in any sport right now," said Robert Boland, a professor of sports business at New York University and a consultant to universities and conferences. "Having premium seats is a way to manage that issue."

It makes sense, too. Many schools are flush with cash from the recent round of TV contracts, so they are pouring into upgrades that offer a return on their investment. And well-heeled donors not only have the disposable income to spend on loge boxes and luxury suites, they also can use them as a tax deduction because they are classified as contributions to the school.

Baylor is a good example of these trends.

When school officials met with architects from Populous, they could have asked for anything; they were building from scratch rather than renovating. And what they asked for was a capacity of about 45,000, making McLane Stadium one of the smallest venues in a major conference.

Yet school officials believe the stadium will produce more revenue than Floyd Casey Stadium, the Bears' aging home a few miles away, because of its myriad of seating options: Pay a bit more to go from bench seating to chair backs, a little more for the club level, a little more yet for loge boxes, and still more for premium suites that feature private entrances, food and beverage services, flat-screen televisions and other perks for the highest level of comfort.

"We have a different seat with a different price point to sell to whatever interest level," said Todd Patulski, Baylor's associate athletic director for finance and administration.

"With TVs and other reasons that fans have for staying home, you have to create differences for them. They don't want to sit on a bench and hope they don't get rained on."

All of that planning appears to be paying off.

Buoyed by its Big 12 title and the allure of a new stadium, Baylor sold out its season-opener in minutes. Tickets for the rest of the season have been snapped up at a rate unseen in years.

"They sold all their suites, and then they sold out all their loge boxes. They had 73 of them," Spear said, clearly delighted by the response. "And then they call us up and they're like, 'Can we add more?' And we're like, 'No! You didn't charge enough!'"