University of Missouri to implement voluntary buyout program

By Ashley Jost

Saturday, September 20, 2014 at 12:00 am

University of Missouri faculty received emails Friday afternoon announcing a voluntary buyout program for tenured professors who meet certain requirements.

The Voluntary Separation Program gives faculty who are at least 62 years old and retirement-eligible by Aug. 21, 2015, the chance to receive a one-time payout of 1.5 times their base salary, not exceeding $200,000.

There are 261 faculty members eligible for the program, university spokesman Christian Basi said. Faculty can accept the buyout between Dec. 31 and Aug. 31, 2015.

“This program will help us recognize significant contributions made by tenured faculty members during their time with the university,” MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said in a news release. Basi said the program was Loftin’s idea. “This also will allow the university the opportunity to manage a challenging financial environment by providing flexibility for funding new positions and granting appropriate salary increases.”

Faculty Council Chairman Craig Roberts said “there’s a chance” the decision is related to the need for MU to increase its AAU ranking. Part of that includes motivating faculty to pursue publications, federal grants and citations, all which benefit the university’s standing.

“A professor’s career follows an arc,” Roberts said. “Toward the end of the arc, the professor spends his/her final years by assuming responsibilities that cannot be assumed by younger faculty. These responsibilities include governance, mentoring, visioning and other forms of high-level service. These responsibilities are critical to the success of the next generation faculty and the campus, but these service activities do not generate metrics of research productivity.”

A separate opportunity will be offered at a later, undetermined date for administrators who also are tenured faculty as of Sept. 1 and meet the eligibility criteria. Basi said there are 28 eligible academic administrators. These could include deans, the provost and any other administrator with tenure.

According to the letter sent to all faculty Friday afternoon, eligible faculty will receive an informational packet in October.
COLUMBIA — MU faculty were given a buyout option Friday that would give those who qualify a one-time payment equal to 1 1/2 times their eligible base salary.

The offer was extended to tenured faculty who are at least 62 years old and eligible for retirement by Aug. 31, 2015. This includes 261 MU faculty members, according to MU spokesman Christian Basi.

These employees must make a decision to apply by Nov. 21 and can leave the university between Dec. 31, 2014 and Aug. 31, 2015. The letter emphasized that this a voluntary separation program.

A letter sent to all faculty members framed the offer as a way to achieve budgetary savings and allow funding for new hires and raises.

Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said in the letter that "it helps the university manage a challenging financial environment by providing budget flexibility for funding new positions and appropriate salary increases."

Basi said the amount of savings would depend on the number of people who accept the package and their salaries.

Another offer will be extended later this fall to tenured faculty with administrative duties, including deans, vice provosts and some assistant and associate deans.

This pool includes about 28 additional MU employees. The eligibility criteria are the same.

Basi said he does not anticipate this program causing disruptions in university operations. He said the deadlines give MU enough time and flexibility to plan for the future.
In October, eligible faculty members will receive an information packet with program details, a timeline and available resources.

"We recognize this will be a major decision for eligible faculty members," Loftin said in the letter.

To help faculty make the decision, the university will offer personal pension benefit calculations, information sessions and retirement seminars, as well as a dedicated webpage.

Program questions can be addressed through the Provost's Office, 882-6596, and the Human Resource Service Center, 882-2146, can handle benefits questions.

Mizzou offering early retirement plans to faculty

September 19, 2014 5:35 pm  •  By Koran Addo kaddo@post-dispatch.com 314-340-8305

The University of Missouri-Columbia is offering nearly 300 retirement-age faculty members and administrators the chance to walk away with a one-time payout in exchange for retiring between Dec. 31 and Aug. 31.

The Voluntary Separation Program announced Friday afternoon is a way for the university to free up money to pay for employee raises and new positions.
The university has identified 261 tenured faculty at least age 62 who are eligible for the payout. Participation is entirely voluntary.

Those who accept the offer will receive a one-time payment of 1½ times their annual base salary, not to exceed $200,000.

Another 28 administrators will be offered a similar opportunity at a later date.

Mizzou would be on the hook to pay out $10 million in one-time funds if all eligible employees were to accept the offer, spokesman Christian Basi said.

By removing nearly 300 employee salaries from the payroll, the university would be able to recoup payout funds in less than 18 months, he added.

Basi said the program wasn’t the result of a money crunch, but rather an attempt to become more nimble.

“It’s one thing to have a stable budget, another thing to be able to move forward with new raises and bringing people in,” Basi said.

Eligible faculty members will receive an information packet early next month with further details. The university will also hold seminars and one-on-one information sessions for employees with questions.

Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said the payout plan recognized the “significant contributions made by tenured faculty members during their time with the university.”

MU offers voluntary buyout offer for some faculty

September 20, 2014 3:28 pm

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — The University of Missouri's flagship campus in Columbia is offering a buyout option for some of its tenured faculty members.
The school said in a news release Friday that qualifying faculty who retire by next fall can receive a one-time payment of 1½ times their base salary, not to exceed $200,000. To receive the buyout, faculty must be retirement eligible and turn 62 by Aug, 31, 2015.

"This program will help us recognize significant contributions made by tenured faculty members during their time with the university," MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said in a written statement. "This also will allow the university the opportunity to manage a challenging financial environment by providing flexibility for funding new positions and granting appropriate salary increases."

MU spokesman Christian Basi told the Columbia Missourian that the amount of savings would depend on the number of people who accept the package and their salaries. He said about 260 university faculty members are eligible.

Basi said he does not anticipate the program causing disruptions in university operations. The university stressed that participation is voluntary and that it will offer information sessions.

A second buyout will be offered later to about 30 retirement-eligible tenured faculty members with administrative duties.

Title IX investigator talks office details and rule changes

By Ashley Jost

Saturday, September 20, 2014 at 12:00 am

Two months after hiring an investigator, the University of Missouri Title IX Office is making its rounds to student organizations and interested groups, talking about the importance of and details about the sex discrimination law.

Title IX investigator Salama Gallimore spoke to just more than a dozen students Friday afternoon about the federal law as part of MU’s Safety Week. She outlined procedures the office follows during investigations and fielded questions from students, faculty and staff.

“We want the community to be involved, to know the university doesn’t stand for sex discrimination,” Gallimore said to the group. Between Gallimore and Linda Bennett, the Title IX coordinator, they have spoken to more than 1,000 students about Title IX in the past two months, she said.
Gallimore started at MU Aug. 1 and makes about $68,000.

During the discussion, Gallimore explained a few issues her office deals with that fall under the umbrella term of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual assault and sexual exploitation. The Title IX Office is focused solely on students, Gallimore said. Faculty and staff issues related to sex discrimination will be handled by the Equity Office, which formerly housed all Title IX responsibilities.

Among the audience questions was whether the names of students who report a sexual assault or any other Title IX complaint would ever become public information during the investigation process.

“We try to respect their confidentiality,” Gallimore said. “If we determine” the situation “could be dangerous to the community at large, we might proceed with an investigation with the university as a complainant rather than the victim.”

Because of federal privacy laws that protect students, victim names wouldn’t be released at any point, she stressed.

Gallimore also mentioned a few first response tips for a person who is approached by a victim. The steps include accessing safety and determining a need for emergency response, disclosing mandatory reporter status so the person can decide what they want to disclose, listening empathetically, providing campus resources and finally, submitting a Title IX report.

Title IX reports can be filed directly to Gallimore or Bennett, but sometime soon the office will also have an online form for reporters.

There were additional questions about the new requirement that makes everyone in the campus community — students, faculty, staff and even visitors to campus — mandated reporters in the event of a Title IX violation. The requirement came from UM System President Tim Wolfe earlier this year. Details and training for all affected parties haven’t come down the pike yet, but will soon, UM System administrators said recently.

Gallimore explained that though the majority of the campus is a mandated reporter, there are still places a person could confidentially report an incident, including the Counseling Center and the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center.

A full list of which people and officers are confidential and which are mandated reporters is forthcoming, she said. It’s all dependent on a series of changes to the Collected Rules and Regulations — the governing laws of the UM System — the administration and a consultant are working on. The changes will include specifics about who is a mandated reporter and will include changes to the student conduct process.

Those changes are not yet finalized and unavailable for the public for now. The rule changes could be ready for a Board of Curators vote at their meeting Oct. 3-4.
“Unfortunately a lot of the policy on this is evolving now,” Tim Evans, associate professor and Faculty Council student affairs chairman, said after the meeting. “In a perfect world, this all would have been ready to go at the beginning of the school year. That hasn’t happened. I think the idea of having this type of meeting and the meetings that they’re going to all over campus are extremely useful. It will be great when policy is more etched in stone so we can widely disseminate that.”

Student groups interested in having the Title IX Office representatives speak to their constituents are encouraged to email Gallimore or Bennett directly.

MU professor says complaints led to tenure denial

BY ALAN SCHER ZAGIER
09/20/2014 12:28 PM

COLUMBIA, MO. - Gaining tenure is never a sure thing. Dylan Kesler figured his chances were pretty good.

The 42-year-old wildlife biologist has published nearly 30 scientific papers since his 2007 hiring as a University of Missouri assistant professor. He's received high marks for his teaching and is a favorite of the school's public relations team, which recently featured his work on mallard duck migration.

What those university press releases don't say, though, is how Kesler filed a 2013 complaint with government prosecutors alleging the misuse of federal grants by colleagues. Or how a researcher whose work regularly exceeded
expectations in his annual job reviews was subsequently accused of plagiarism in what he calls a targeted effort by his superiors to silence him. Though a university inquiry found "insufficient" evidence of misconduct, Kesler was nonetheless denied tenure by Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, despite strong support from both colleagues in his department as well as a faculty advisory panel from the broader campus.

"I was the golden boy," Kesler told The Associated Press in his first public comments since filing a sealed complaint against the university and three superiors in May 2013 under the federal False Claims Act. "They had to drum up something to make me look bad."

The confidential complaint was made public in July after the U.S. Attorney's office in Kansas City declined to intervene for reasons it did not provide to Kesler, nor in response to an AP request. Kesler's attorney, George Smith, attributed the government's move to the relatively small amount of money at stake compared to its previous False Claims prosecutions.

The Justice Department told Kesler he can continue to litigate on the government's behalf, but since the university is a public entity, he wouldn't be eligible to receive any money, including for legal fees, should his claims prevail. Unable to afford a prolonged legal fight against his employer, Kesler said he plans to drop the federal case but may pursue other legal action.

In the meantime, he's out of a job after the spring semester.

In his complaint, Kesler said endowed professor Joshua Millspaugh and associate professor Francisco Aguilar have improperly paid their spouses at least $130,000 from large pools of federal grant money since 2010 while the women curtailed their job duties as research assistants and lab managers to remain home with newborns. Both women are listed in university records as working for other professors but actually report directly to their husbands, he said.

The use of spousal supervisors would violate university nepotism rules and also put access to tens of millions of dollars of annual federal research money at risk, Kesler said.
"When I found out this was happening, the first thing I thought was, 'That is (university) funding,'" he said. "That defrauding these (sources) creates a situation where we may not get that money anymore ... It was my primary concern."

Millspaugh and his wife Rami Woods declined comment. So did Aguilar and his wife Satu Lantianen, as well as department chairman John "Jack" Jones and Mark Ryan, director of the School of Natural Resources. University officials declined to make Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin available for an interview, but spokeswoman Mary Jo Banken said in a written statement that "the results of our investigation and the information we provided to (the government) showed that those identified in the complaint were in fact working, and that the allegations that they were not ... were unfounded."

Banken said university confidentiality rules prevent a public discussion of the research misconduct charges against Kesler, but she said "the allegations were not initiated by university administrators."

Rather than promote a family-friendly workplace, the administrative accommodations fostered widespread resentment among other professors who had to juggle childcare duties on their own, said Kesler, who has a small child.

According to Kesler and his lawyer, the misconduct charge stemmed from a disgruntled former graduate student’s complaint that Kesler published a scientific paper without giving her proper credit. The student was hired by Millspaugh two years after she left Columbia for Canada, and just before lodging the complaint with Ryan. University investigators subsequently "raided" his office, Kesler said, removing three computers and other material in a move he said was meant to embarrass him and intimidate others from coming forward.

Gabrielle Coulombe, the graduate student whose email formed the basis of the misconduct charge, declined to discuss the case. Although the plagiarism charge against him wasn't proven, Kesler said he is working with the academic journal that published the disputed research to issue an addendum crediting his former student's contribution as part of an agreement with the university.
MU professor says complaints led to tenure denial

By ALAN SCHER ZAGIER The Associated Press

Sunday, September 21, 2014 at 12:00 am Comments (2)

Gaining tenure never is a sure thing, but Dylan Kesler figured his chances were pretty good.

The 42-year-old wildlife biologist has published nearly 30 scientific papers since his 2007 hiring as a University of Missouri assistant professor. He’s received high marks for his teaching and is a favorite of the school’s public relations team, which recently featured his work on mallard duck migration.

What those university press releases don’t say, though, is how Kesler filed a 2013 complaint with government prosecutors alleging the misuse of federal grants by colleagues. Or how a researcher whose work regularly exceeded expectations in his annual job reviews subsequently was accused of plagiarism in what he calls a targeted effort by his superiors to silence him. Though a university inquiry found “insufficient” evidence of misconduct, Kesler was denied tenure by Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, despite strong support from colleagues in his department and a faculty advisory panel from the broader campus.

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The Justice Department told Kesler he can continue to litigate on the government’s behalf, but since the university is a public entity, he wouldn’t be eligible to receive money, including for legal fees, should his claims prevail. Unable to afford a prolonged legal fight against his employer, Kesler said he plans to drop the federal case but might pursue other legal action.

In the meantime, he’s out of a job after the spring semester.

In his complaint, Kesler said endowed professor Joshua Millspaugh and associate professor Francisco Aguilar have improperly paid their spouses at least $130,000 from large pools of
federal grant money since 2010 while the women curtailed their job duties as research assistants and lab managers to remain home with newborns. Both women are listed in university records as working for other professors but actually report directly to their husbands, he said.

The use of spousal supervisors would violate university nepotism rules and also put access to tens of millions of dollars of annual federal research money at risk, Kesler said.

“When I found out this was happening, the first thing I thought was, “That is” university “funding,”” he said. “That defrauding these” sources “creates a situation where we may not get that money anymore ... It was my primary concern.”

Millspaugh and his wife Rami Woods declined comment. So did Aguilar and his wife Satu Lantianen, as well as department Chairman John “Jack” Jones and Mark Ryan, director of the School of Natural Resources. University officials declined to make Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin available for an interview, but spokeswoman Mary Jo Banken said in a written statement that “the results of our investigation and the information we provided to (the government) showed that those identified in the complaint were in fact working, and that the allegations that they were not ... were unfounded.”

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Kesler and his lawyer say the misconduct charge stemmed from a disgruntled former graduate student’s complaint that Kesler published a scientific paper without giving her proper credit. The student was hired by Millspaugh two years after she left Columbia for Canada, and just before lodging the complaint with Ryan. University investigators subsequently “raided” his office, Kesler said, removing three computers and other material in a move he said was meant to embarrass him and intimidate others from coming forward.
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MU relives 175 years in one night with light show on MU Columns

Friday, September 19, 2014 | 11:45 p.m. CDT; updated 8:09 p.m. CDT, Saturday, September 20, 2014

BY KENDALL FOLEY, LURIA FREEMAN

MU relives 175 years in one night from Columbia Missourian on Vimeo.

COLUMBIA — Students, parents and Columbia residents gathered Friday night on Francis Quadrangle for a lighting of the MU Columns in celebration of the university's 175th anniversary. They had been promised a surprise and what they witnessed did not disappoint them.

Those gathered on the grass at the quadrangle were taken back to Jan. 9, 1892, to witness the burning of Academic Hall, recreated by a light show projected on to the columns.
There was a notable silence in the crowd as spectators stood in awe of the presentation.

Newly inaugurated Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin delivered a speech about MU’s resilience and the hope he has for its progression as a community. He led the audience in a heartfelt "M-I-Z, Z-O-U!" chant to carry home the the night's themes: pride, spirit and tradition.

Following the recreation of Academic Hall's burning, all six columns were illuminated with bright white beams that extended into the sky. The crowd took photos as the school's alma mater was played.

**Schools Offer Gee-Whiz Gyms**

*Your college’s rec center could be the fanciest health club you ever join.*

There are eight basketball courts, a 1/3-mile corkscrew track suspended high above the ground floor, a 20-foot climbing wall rising out of an outdoor pool, a PGA golf simulator and a hot tub that seats 50 people. Atop the “fitness tower,” five stories of cardio equipment and exercise rooms, sits a yoga studio whose enormous windows open up to the sky like garage doors.

A five-star spa? A billionaire’s vacation home? Actually, this is the new student recreation center at Auburn University in Alabama, $72 million worth of exercise opportunities.

Auburn is hardly alone in offering up fitness facilities “that you can’t match once you leave,” says Patricia Ketcham, president of the American College Health Association. Eastern Washington University boasts an indoor climbing wall with 33 routes, including one that simulates ice-climbing. Virginia Commonwealth University has a water slide, 18,000 square feet of fitness and weight lifting equipment, and a gym with artificial turf for indoor soccer games. The University of Missouri–Columbia’s website describes a “resort quality” beach club, complete with waterfalls, whirlpools and a “lazy river” for floating. “It’s always Spring Break in the Tiger Grotto,” adds the website.
The University of North Carolina–Greensboro has broken ground on a $91 million recreation center; a $78 million expansion at Louisiana State University will include a suspended track and an indoor rock climbing wall. James Madison University in Virginia is spending $57 million to double its recreation facilities, adding, among other things, a batting cage, a water volleyball court and an additional indoor running track. According to a survey released in 2013 by NIRSA: Leaders in Collegiate Recreation, 92 institutions reported plans for construction or renovation, for a total of more than $1.7 billion in capital projects.

What’s driving the boom? “Students are a lot more interested in health and wellness these days,” says Brad Cardinal, a professor of exercise and sports science at Oregon State University who has studied student fitness. Cardinal recently surveyed international students within their first five years in America and found that “they all noticed how prominent student health is relative to the culture they’d come from,” he says.

Often, in fact, the push to build comes directly from students, who vote to tax themselves to pay for facilities that won’t even be open until nearly all have graduated. Auburn University’s project, for example, got its start in 2008, when the student government president ran on a platform to overhaul student recreation. During her term, more than 70 percent of students voted in favor of gradually raising their activity fee from $7.50 to $200 to help fund the building.

And the move toward bigger, shinier rec centers is coinciding with society’s growing focus on preventing disease, as well as accumulating evidence that physical activity and academic success appear to go hand in hand.

As Donna Shalala, former Health and Human Services secretary and current president of the University of Miami noted in March during a discussion about the role of colleges at a Partnership for a Healthier America summit, “We have a captive audience, and campuses are good places to learn healthy habits.”

Many schools are wasting no time. Stanford University recently launched a Student Wellness Passport Program, which awards students stamps for 12 health-related “trips” such as attending a group fitness class, getting a physical and wearing a bike helmet. Students who complete nine of the 12 are entered in a drawing to win a prize. At the University of Miami, students are encouraged to take classes on meditation, healthy cooking and smoking cessation, as well as to attend play sessions that include finger painting, board games and hula hooping.

“It takes more than daily physical activity to maintain good health,” notes the wellness center’s website. Indeed, many of these new gyms – actually, they’re more apt to be called “recreation and wellness centers” – are designed with sofas, meeting rooms and courtyards as places to de-stress, socialize and study as well as sweat.

“It’s easy to criticize these amenities as overdone, and say it’s just administrators saying, ‘We need to have the best and the biggest,’ ” says Don Stenta, director of student life’s recreational sports department at Ohio State University. “We need to help students be successful academically and then successful after graduation, and there’s a lot of research about how important a positive recreation experience is.”
Maybe it’s just that overachievers are more likely to hit the gym: A 2009 study published in the journal Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise found that the more hours a student spent studying, the more likely he or she was to also show up for some exercise. On the other hand, a 2010 study at Saginaw Valley State University in Michigan found that even controlling for study time, students who regularly participated in vigorous exercise had higher GPAs.

Whatever the explanation, a Purdue University analysis of student behavior has linked gym time and GPA, too. Students who worked out 16 times a month earned a GPA of 3.1 or higher, while students who used the gym at least seven times had an average GPA of 3.06. Students who didn’t use the gym at all: 2.82. Purdue’s fitness facilities recently underwent a $98 million makeover.

The ever-increasing range of activities available isn’t just for show – it’s to draw students in for one thing, and intrigue them enough to come back for others. It gets much harder to form an exercise habit, Ketcham notes, once students graduate and land a job.

At Ohio State, for example, a Hogwarts Express spin class invited participants to wear Harry Potter costumes. Stenta says the class drew people who’d never been inside the rec center or tried a cycling class – his goal.

Auburn University’s old facility drew about 900 students a day. The new one generally draws 3,500 and has even topped 5,000 on occasion. Colorado State University in 2011 spent $32 million renovating its recreation center. An additional $3.3 million was spent on converting a virtually unused lap pool into a leisure pool, complete with a climbing wall, lights and speakers for a grotto effect. There was a 77 percent jump in aquatic facility traffic from fall 2011 to fall 2013.

The increasingly luxe facilities can be potent recruiting tools, some observers say. “I can’t tell you how many tours I start with prospective students where I say, ‘Hey, are you thinking of coming here?’ And the kid is like, ‘Eh, I don’t know,’ ” says David Frock, Clemson University’s director of student recreation. “But by the time you leave the rec center, they’re like, ‘Oh, I want to come here.’ ”

A 2013 study released by the National Bureau of Economic Research suggests that fancy amenities matter less at elite colleges and universities, where prospective students tend to be more focused on the quality of instruction.

Growing up in a working-class neighborhood of Portland, Oregon, Tram Hoang, the first member of her family to get a four-year degree, had never worked out at a gym – and in fact had only seen cardio equipment on TV. Hoang, who graduated from Oregon State University in the spring, was drawn to the rec center first to play volleyball, and gradually got up the nerve to ask for help using the machines. By senior year, she practically lived there, she says.

“During a weekend where it snowed, the campus was closed for three days, but the rec facilities were open. Everyone was there, renting snowshoes, working out and studying,” she says. “I don’t think people realize how important recreation is until they get here.”
MU's new ceremonial mace is 'Mizzou Made'
Saturday, September 20, 2014 | 4:23 p.m. CDT
BY CAITLIN BUSCH

COLUMBIA— MU’s new ceremonial mace is "Mizzou Made" to its core.

The one of a kind mace, made of wood from Switzler Hall, includes a printed 3-D replica of the Jesse Hall dome and medallions engraved with university symbols. The mace was unveiled at Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin's inauguration on Thursday in honor of MU's 175th anniversary. Built in 1871, Switzler Hall is MU's oldest classroom building.

A mace is a a wooden club with roots dating to the Middle Ages. The MU mace was created and designed by students, faculty and staff.

"It’s ‘Mizzou Made,’ and that’s important to us,” said Todd McCubbin, executive director of the Mizzou Alumni Association.

Phil Temple, manager of special projects in auxiliary and service operations at MU, took the university's history into account when he designed the gift. He said the mace took about six months to design and build.

“We wanted to capture the importance of the university,” Temple said. “We have such very talented people at the university, and because of that, we can accomplish anything.”

Tyrone Turner of MU’s Planning, Design and Construction Department volunteered to create the handle of the mace. In a video released by MU, Turner showed the process of using a section of a beam taken from Switzler Hall to make the handle.

“They said they needed someone that worked at the university here to do it," Turner said in the video. "I think it's a privilege to ask this department to do it.”

In the video, John Murray, senior director of MU’s auxiliary and service operations, said a new mace could have been purchased for $25,000. Instead, MU decided to build a mace of its own.
"We wanted something that more thoroughly represented our university," Murray said in the video.

At the top of the mace is a replica of Jesse Hall’s dome, designed by MU mechanical engineering student Carl Fuemmeler. According to the video, the dome was created with the use of the MU School of Engineering’s 3-D printer, a $200,000 machine that uses liquid resin and an ultraviolet light to print out 3-D objects.

“I helped with design and the mechanical components of the mace itself. I made computer aided design files, CAD files, and pretty much drew it all in a computer,” Fuemmeler said in the video.

Among the mace’s finishing touches are the four brass, laser-etched medallions at the top, just below the dome. Each medallion is engraved with a different image: Thomas Jefferson’s face, the MU Columns, Memorial Student Union and the original academic seal of MU.

The Mizzou Alumni Association donated $5,000 for the design and creation of the mace. Christian Basi, associate director of the MU News Bureau, said that he’s “99 percent sure” the final bill for the mace won’t be more than that.

McCubbin said the symbolism of the mace rang true with the Alumni Association’s vision.

“It’s a gift from the Alumni Association to the university,” McCubbin said. “Were we OK without it for the last 175 years? Yes. Could we have gotten by another 175 years without it? Yes. But I think it enriches the experience.”
MU announces $10 million gift for journalism faculty

By Ashley Jost

Friday, September 19, 2014 at 1:00 pm

The University of Missouri School of Journalism announced a $10 million gift from the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation to support faculty fellowships.

With this donation, the Reynolds Foundation has given $100 million to the university. The Reynolds Journalism Institute at MU’s journalism school started in 2004 with a $31 million grant from the foundation.

This $10 million gift, along with matching funds being raised by private donors, will create the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation Faculty Excellence Fund. The fund will support 50 endowed faculty fellowships for associate and full-time professors at the journalism school. Donors who provide matching funds will name the individual fellowships.

“In the spirit of its founder, the Reynolds Foundation has made a significant impact on the University of Missouri and the entire journalism profession over the past 60 years,” MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said in a news release. “This investment in our faculty means that our students are taught by the very best and will ensure Missouri’s continued prominence in journalism higher education. We are very grateful to the Reynolds Foundation for their partnership and generosity.”

The gift is the last of its kind from the foundation, which will cease operations in 2017.

The final $10 million will be distributed to MU in 2021, when the last of the foundation’s assets are given away. The journalism school can start accepting gifts of $200,000 from donors immediately, and when the foundation’s gift is available in 2021, the money for each fellowship will double to $400,000.

The Reynolds Foundation was set up in honor of Donald W. Reynolds, a 1927 MU journalism school alumnus who owned more than 100 enterprises in newspaper, radio, television, cable television and outdoor advertising.

“Mr. Reynolds attributed his business success to his education and life experiences while a student at the University of Missouri School of Journalism,” Foundation Chairman Fred Smith said in a statement. “We feel certain he would have been pleased to know that his Foundation
provided significant support to his alma mater and made its final grant to endow salary support for faculty in the journalism school.”

Mizzou journalism school gets $10M donation

COLUMBIA, MO. - The University of Missouri's journalism school on Friday announced a $10 million gift from a charitable foundation whose total contributions now exceed $100 million in a first for the flagship Columbia campus.

The donation by the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation will pay for faculty fellowships. Previous contributions of more than $30 million by the Las Vegas-based charity helped create the university's Reynolds Journalism Institute in 2004 and fund its continued research into the digital future of news.

Donald Worthington Reynolds was a 1927 graduate of the Missouri School of Journalism whose early newspaper purchases grew into the Donrey Media Group. The company's properties included the Las Vegas Review-Journal.

His alma mater's alumni center is also named after the late Reynolds.
Mizzou School of Journalism to receive $10 million for faculty

The Donald W. Reynolds Foundation will give the University of Missouri School of Journalism $10 million to increase faculty salaries, the school announced Friday.

The Donald W. Reynolds Foundation Faculty Excellence Fund will support 50 faculty fellowships for associate and full Mizzou journalism professors.

The school will receive the funds in 2021, when the foundation distributes the remainder of its funds. The foundation is closing operations in 2017.

Dean Mills, dean of Mizzou’s School of Journalism, said in a statement, “This investment in our faculty means that our students are taught by the very best and will ensure Missouri’s continued prominence in journalism higher education. We are very grateful to the Reynolds Foundation for their partnership and generosity.”

Higher education budgets head to governor with stagnant numbers

By Ashley Jost

Sunday, September 21, 2014 at 12:00 am Comments (1)

Budgets for fiscal year 2016 operating and capital expenses approved earlier this month by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education show little to no change from the current fiscal year.

Higher education leaders attribute the lack of changes to the current budget situation in the state and a mandate from the governor that state departments only request funding increases that are mandated by law.

Leroy Wade, deputy commissioner of the Missouri Department of Higher Education, said the only changes in both the base operating appropriations request and the capital improvement requests are small and primarily related to asking permission to spend grants the department hopes to attain by the time fiscal year 2016 starts July 1, 2015, among other typical annual requests.
The core institutional appropriation requests for all two- and four-year public schools total about $912 million, according to documents approved by the Coordinating Board. The requests for each institution are the same as each school’s fiscal year 2015 appropriation, including the $43.4 million in restricted performance funding Gov. Jay Nixon recently released.

Capital improvement items all stayed the same as last year as well. Each institution prioritizes one capital project to the state for that year. While there were some dollars loosely allocated for a few capital projects through a bonding bill for fiscal year 2015, those funds have been restricted by the governor. Among the projects included in the bonding bill was an array of fixes for Lafferre Hall, which houses the University of Missouri’s engineering school.

Wade said Nixon’s budget office has told departments the last several years that they must limit the number of new requests. Unless it’s mandated by law that a program receive a particular funding increase or change, it’s best to leave it off of the request, Wade said.

Several other capital projects included in the appropriations process were either restricted or vetoed by the governor.

“Those are all back again this year … In terms of capital, I’m encouraged that last year the legislature recognized the growing need in some of those areas and included them in the capital appropriation bill,” Wade said. “I’m more optimistic about those odds than in years past.”

Paul Wagner, executive director of the Council on Public Higher Education in Missouri, which represents all 13 public, four-year colleges in the state, said in addition to the operating and capital funds, COPHE’s leaders are “always ready for the state to reinvest in student financial aid the way they have in the past.” Wagner called financial aid a top priority.

All three state-funded financial aid program requests are stagnant to last year’s appropriations. The need-based Access Missouri grant is slated at $78.5 million, the merit-based Bright Flight program is at $22.7 million and the community college reimbursement scholarship, the A+ program, is slated for a $35 million budget.
Mizzou Arena to get upgrades after 10 years

By: USA Today September 19, 2014 10:08 am ET

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — University of Missouri athletic officials are planning multimillion-dollar renovations to the university’s 10-year-old basketball arena.

Athletic Director Mike Alden spoke about the project in a gathering with reporters earlier but it was officially announced Thursday, the Columbia Daily Tribune reported.

Planned updates include the team lounge, locker room, weight room and academic area. The project was started by a $1.5 million private gift to go toward a new video board.

“Mizzou Arena is entering its 10th season and is tremendous facility for our basketball programs, but we need to enhance the areas that impact the fan experience, student athlete well-being and assist in the recruitment of prospective student-athletes,” Alden said in a statement.

Deputy Athletic Director Doug Gillin was credited with helping secure the donation. He said in a statement that officials will soon begin asking for donations over the next three years for the project.
“We have a great deal of work to do, but we are committed, as are our fans, to provide Coach “Kim” Anderson with valuable recruiting tools to attract the most gifted student-athletes to campus and equip them for success in the classroom, in the community and on the court,” Gillin said.

The hallway that leads to the team locker room already received a new paint job over the summer and new lighted signs were installed outside of the arena last spring.

The men’s basketball coach said the renovation project will be phased in as funds are raised.

'It's On Us'

September 22, 2014

By

Jake New

NO MU MENTION

WASHINGTON -- The White House launched a major public awareness campaign about campus sexual assault on Friday -- the aim of which, President Obama said, is no less than to "fundamentally shift" how the country thinks about campus sexual assault.

"We are going to organize campus by campus, city by city, state by state," Obama said. "This entire country is going to
understand what this is about, and we're going to put a stop to it.”

The campaign, called "It's on Us," encourages student bystanders to intervene when they see situations that could lead to sexual assault, as well as attempts to change harmful attitudes that young men may have about women and sex. The breadth of the campaign is expansive, with the White House enlisting support from Hollywood, Washington, and campuses across the country. But some sexual assault advocates worry that altering cultural norms to such a degree will be a taller order than the campaign can fill, and that it could divert attention from more policy-driven prevention efforts.

Actors like Jon Hamm, Connie Britton, and Kerry Washington lent their voices to slickly-produced PSAs. Media partners include entertainment juggernaut Viacom, video game publisher Electronic Arts, and Millennial-focused TV station Pivot. The National Collegiate Athletic Association will offer resources on its website and play PSAs on stadium video screens during championship events.

Other corporate sponsors include College Humor, Newsweek, Tumblr, Microsoft, Clear Channel, and SB Nation. Some of the companies switched out their Twitter avatars for the campaign's logo on Friday.

More than 200 student body presidents signed the White House’s “It’s On Us” pledge, which states that a student will recognize that nonconsensual sex is sexual assault, identify situations where assaults could happen, intervene in situations where consent has not been or cannot be given, and create an environment in which sexual assault is unacceptable. NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education announced its support of the program, and urged student leaders to sign its own version of the pledge as well. Lisa Maatz, vice president of government relations at the American Association of University Women, said that the AAUW partnered with the White House precisely because of the scope of the campaign and its partners.

“We were impressed by the diversity of this membership,” Maatz said. “It moves beyond the victims’ rights groups and the women’s rights groups to include the gaming industry, professional sports leagues, and celebrities. You need that to create the kind of cultural change we’re talking.”

During an event launching the campaign on Friday, Vice President Joe Biden said that the burden for raising awareness about campus sexual assault has been strictly on the shoulders of activists for too long, and that it's time for people of all kinds to intervene and condemn sexual violence. “Violence against women is not a women’s issue alone,” Biden said. “It’s a man’s issue.”

At the event, Neil Irvin, executive director of Men Can Stop Rape, urged parents to help boys learn about a different kind of masculinity. Young boys are often taught to “disconnect from their emotional intelligence,” Irvin said. He said boys are taught not to cry, show love, or know empathy.

“Now those boys are 18 years old and in relationships with our family members and they have no idea how to deal with this,” Irvin said. “Don’t be surprised when this happens, because this violence is coming from how we teach boys to be men. It's coming from the minute we painted their room blue.”

While changing ideas about how men should treat women will be a key part of the cultural shift the White House is aiming for, the campaign is also largely focused on encouraging more bystander intervention from both men and women. To help with the effort, the U.S. Department of Justice will provide $6 million to sexual assault prevention programs at 18 colleges. The White House will release three new documents detailing “best practices” through the campaign's website.
Steven Knapp, president of George Washington University, said the campaign is a welcome “shift in direction” for the administration, which has so far focused its energies on the legal requirements colleges must meet when dealing with campus sexual assault.

“I think what the president made clear was that after several years of trying to inform colleges and universities of their legal responsibilities and the polices that govern this area, he’s now addressing the underlying culture,” Knapp said. “I think that turn from policy to culture is a very important next step in this process. You can’t do this without the focus on justice, but you also can’t do this without the focus on culture.”

Dana Bolger, the founding co-director of Know Your Title IX, said she worries that the administration is moving onto the "next step" before finishing the previous one. While the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights is still investigating nearly 80 colleges and universities for how they handle sexual assault investigations, Bolger said the federal government has not done a good enough job sanctioning institutions.

Colleges, she said, are still letting rapists off the hook, and the federal government is still letting off colleges with a slap on the wrist.

“I think an important part of prevention always is enforcement,” Bulger said. “Sometimes I think we paint cultural change as different from enforcement. If schools were punishing perpetrators with more than book report, I think we would start to see a cultural change more quickly. Bystander prevention can’t be a substitute for real enforcement.”

Some critics also wonder how much a public awareness campaign -- even one as large as "It's On Us" -- can actually transform a culture. What happens when the campaign ends, and the PSAs are no longer running on MTV?

John Foubert, president of sexual assault prevention program One in Four, however, said he was cautiously optimistic. Changing a longstanding culture of male violence will be a particular challenge for the campaign, he said, but it could get the ball rolling in the right direction.

"Honestly, the campaign can only be so successful," Foubert said. "I think the success of it will be determined by how many new individuals sign on to this. If it is just your campus coordinator and people in peer education groups taking the pledge and clicking a button on a website, then that's pretty limited. But if there ends up being a more widespread buy-in, then change could become possible."
MU play festival is all in a day's work - almost

By Amy Wilder

Sunday, September 21, 2014 at 12:00 am

Get ready to do some math: Friday and Saturday, six playwrights — five University of Missouri graduate students and one alumnus, Matt Fotis, who started the whole thing several years ago; six directors — five graduate students and Ed Hanson of Talking Horse Productions; and six groups of an unknown quantity of actors will come together and produce, from the first written word to the final production, six 10-minute plays in a 24-hour period.

Actually, it’s technically a 23-hour-and-59-minute period.

“We don’t call it ‘24 hours’ because — I think — that’s a copyrighted name,” said Natalie McCabe, vice president of the graduate theater organization at MU and an organizer for the 23:59 New Play Festival.

“This year our theme is ‘Sex and Death,’” she added. In addition to the theme, “we give” the playwrights “a sentence that they have to include in their plays.”

William Palmer is a graduate student participating in the festival for the third time — the first was as a director, and this is his second year writing a play.

“We show up at 8 p.m. the night of the initial meeting, and we’re all assigned our actors and our directors — which is important for playwrights in deciding what kind of characters we want to create,” he said of the process. “... It’s really fun to create a story within the constraints they give you and then hand it over and see what the actors and directors come up with.”

McCabe said this is the festival’s sixth year. Those interested in participating as actors are invited to an informational meeting Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. in the Fine Arts Annex room 116, on the MU campus.