MU looks to provide better mental health care access

Posted: Dec 15, 2014 4:24 PM by Mark Collins, KOMU 8 Reporter

View the story at: http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=26916&zone=5&categories=5

Columbia - The United States Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has given a $1 million grant to the University of Missouri and University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL). The grant is to help fund programs in each university's school of social work.

The main focus of these programs is to help improve access to mental health care for young people between the ages of 16-25 throughout the state of Missouri.

The program will help fund more training for mental and behavioral health professionals throughout the state. It will also fund 84 students at both universities (44 from MU and 40 from UMSL), over the next three years, who are going after their master's of social work.

The grant will provide a $10,000 stipend to each student while they train in the field with professional agencies. It will also provide funding for on-site and web-based training for health professionals all over the state.

Marjorie Sable, director of MU's School of Social Work, is in charge of MU's portion of the grant. She said it's important this is a joint grant. Sable said UMSL is in a very concentrated urban area, while MU has satellites outside of town in the more urban parts of town. This allows them to have a wider reach to people with mental health issues.

She said it is also important to target the age range of 16-25 because it is more beneficial to diagnose mental problems earlier in life. It helps health professionals get patients the help they need in a timely manner.

The other service the grant will help fund is a newer model called integrated behavioral health services. It places a behavioral health professional in the doctor's office with the primary care providers. This will help diagnose young people who display tendencies for mental health issues.

The HRSA is a branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It works to help improve access to health care throughout the country. According to its website, its programs work to provide health care to people who are geographically isolated or economically or medically vulnerable.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Million-dollar gift will fund MU, UMSL social work students
Monday, December 15, 2014 | 5:58 p.m. CST
BY JACK HOWLAND

COLUMBIA — **MU and the University of Missouri-St. Louis will use a $1 million federal grant to train social work students in professional clinics across the state.**

**The three-year grant from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration will fund 84 masters students from both schools, according to an MU news release. They will focus on caring for vulnerable people between 16 and 25 years old.**

Sharon Johnson, a professor of social work at UMSL, applied for the grant in June. Her department realized early on it would have a better shot if it had a larger network of students and clinics. Together with MU, the grant writers secured commitments from companies such as Bridgeway Behavioral Health and Bootheel Counseling Services to train their students.

Johnson hopes the grant will help boost mental health services in clinics that focus on primary care.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Two-story fall leaves MU student in critical condition
Monday, December 15, 2014 | 8:57 p.m. CST
BY TAYLOR WANBAUGH

COLUMBIA — **An MU student was still in critical condition Monday night after falling two stories early Saturday morning.**

**Jack Lipp, 19, was at a house party in the 500 block of S. Fourth St. when he fell off a balcony over a gravel driveway — about a 15-foot drop.**
Mike Novak, who lives at the house, said the balcony's railing was broken and he told people it wasn't safe to stand on.

Novak said nobody in the house saw Lipp fall. "We came outside and he was lying on the ground," he said.

Novak, 20, said he kicked everyone out and called an ambulance. Emergency responders arrived shortly before 2:30 a.m., according to a Columbia Police Department news release.

Police said about a hundred people fled the party when police arrived, limiting investigators' ability to gauge the scene. Novak said fewer than 50 people were at the party, and he told people to leave in an effort to manage the situation.

The Columbia Police Department has asked witnesses to contact Detective Julie Ray at 874-7610 or jamarty@gocolumbiamo.com.

**Threatening messages lead to arrest**

*Monday, December 15, 2014 at 2:00 pm*

*University of Missouri police arrested a 21-year-old man Sunday for allegedly sending threatening, anti-Semitic slurs to a woman’s phone, Capt. Brian Weimer said.*

Robert J. Sauer was arrested at 12:28 p.m. Sunday at the MU Police Department on suspicion of two counts of harassment. Both were labeled as a hate crime, which provides for stiffer penalties. He was released from the Boone County Jail after posting a $10,000 bond.

The messages were first reported to university police at 1:07 p.m. Dec. 8, Weimer said, by someone other than the victims. Police contacted the victims, an 18-year-old woman and 20-year-old man, both of whom are Jewish. Several messages were sent to the woman’s phone beginning at 2:30 a.m. Dec. 7, said Weimer, who declined to provide specifics about their content. The investigation led police to Sauer, Weimer said, and he came to the department Sunday and was subsequently arrested.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Man suspected of sending threatening messages to woman's phone
Monday, December 15, 2014 | 7:15 p.m. CST
BY JACK HOWLAND

COLUMBIA — MU police arrested a 21-year-old man on suspicion of two counts of harassment Sunday for allegedly sending threatening, anti-semitic slurs to a woman’s phone.

MUPD Capt. Brian Weimer said the hateful messages were directed at an 18-year-old woman and a 20-year-old man, both of whom are Jewish. The victims, whose identities police kept private for their protection, helped officers identify the suspect as MU junior Robert J. Sauer. He was charged with a hate crime and eventually released from Boone County Jail after posting a $10,000 bond.

The harassment was first reported to university police by someone other than the victims on Dec. 8, Weimer said.

Through the department’s investigation, they found several messages on the woman’s phone beginning at 2:30 a.m. Dec. 7. Officers were led to Sauer and told him to come to the MU Police Department where he would be arrested.

Drinking to fall asleep just wakes you up

Posted by Derek Thompson-Missouri on December 15, 2014

Drinking alcohol to fall asleep can interfere with your body’s sleep-relating mechanism, called sleep homeostasis.
Alcohol is known to be a powerful somnogen, or sleep-inducer, and approximately 20 percent of the US adult population drinks alcohol to help fall asleep.

The researchers, led by Mahesh Thakkar, associate professor and director of research in the University of Missouri School of Medicine’s department of neurology, have studied alcohol’s effects on sleep for more than five years. They found that alcohol interferes with the brain’s built-in system for regulating a person’s need for sleep.

“The prevailing thought was that alcohol promotes sleep by changing a person’s circadian rhythm—the body’s built-in 24-hour clock,” Thakkar says. “However, we discovered that alcohol actually promotes sleep by affecting a person’s sleep homeostasis—the brain’s built-in mechanism that regulates your sleepiness and wakefulness.”

Sleep homeostasis balances the body’s need for sleep in relation to how long a person has been awake.

If an individual loses sleep, the body produces adenosine, a naturally occurring sleep-regulating substance that increases a person’s need for sleep. When a person goes to sleep early, sleep homeostasis is shifted and he or she may wake up in the middle of the night or early morning.

The researchers found that alcohol alters the sleep homeostatic mechanism and puts pressure on an individual to sleep. When this happens, the sleep period is shifted, and a person may experience disrupted sleep.

“Based on our results, it’s clear that alcohol should not be used as a sleep aid,” says Pradeep Sahota, chair of neurology department and an author of the study. “Alcohol disrupts sleep and the quality of sleep is diminished. Additionally, alcohol is a diuretic, which increases your need to go to the bathroom and causes you to wake up earlier in the morning.”

Withdrawal and insomnia

In addition to studying alcohol’s impact on sleep homeostasis, the researchers explored how alcohol withdrawal affects sleep. The investigators found that after extended periods of frequent drinking, subjects would fall asleep as expected, but would wake within a few hours and would be unable to fall back asleep. When the subjects were not given alcohol, the researchers found that subjects showed symptomatic insomnia.

“During acute alcohol withdrawal, subjects displayed a significant increase in wakefulness with a reduction in rapid eye movement and non-rapid eye movement sleep,” Thakkar says. “This caused insomnia-like symptoms and suggests an impaired sleep homeostasis.”

The researchers hope to use these findings to explore other effects of alcohol consumption.
“Sleep is an immense area of study,” Thakkar says. “Approximately one-third of our life is spent sleeping. Coupled with statistics that show 20 percent of people drink alcohol to sleep, it’s vital that we understand how the two interact.

“If you are experiencing difficulty sleeping, don’t use alcohol. Talk to your doctor or a sleep medicine physician to determine what factors are keeping you from sleeping. These factors can then be addressed with individualized treatments.”

The study is an invited article published in the journal Alcohol.

The National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism and the Harry S. Truman Memorial Veterans’ Hospital supported the work.

Alcohol Before Bedtime Won't Help Your Sleep, Study Finds

MONDAY, Dec. 15, 2014 (HealthDay News) -- As many as one in five Americans turns to alcohol sometimes to help them fall asleep, but that can lead to sleep problems later in the night, a new study finds.

This is because alcohol hampers the brain's system for regulating a person's need for sleep, researchers found.

"The prevailing thought was that alcohol promotes sleep by changing a person's circadian rhythm -- the body's built-in 24-hour clock," study lead author Mahesh Thakkar, an associate professor and director of research in the neurology department at the University of Missouri School of Medicine, said in a university news release.

"However, we discovered that alcohol actually promotes sleep by affecting a person's sleep homeostasis -- the brain's built-in mechanism that regulates your sleepiness and wakefulness," Thakkar said.

Alcohol's effect on sleep homeostasis can lead to poorer quality sleep, according to the study published recently in the journal Alcohol.

Study co-author Dr. Pradeep Sahota said, "Based on our results, it's clear that alcohol should not be used as a sleep aid." Sahota is chair of the neurology department at the University of Missouri School of Medicine.
"Alcohol disrupts sleep and the quality of sleep is diminished. Additionally, alcohol is a diuretic, which increases your need to go to the bathroom and causes you to wake up earlier in the morning," Sahota explained in the news release.

Thakkar pointed out that sleep is an important area of study. "Approximately one-third of our life is spent sleeping. Coupled with statistics that show 20 percent of people drink alcohol to sleep, it's vital that we understand how the two interact," he said.

"If you are experiencing difficulty sleeping, don't use alcohol. Talk to your doctor or a sleep medicine physician to determine what factors are keeping you from sleeping.

Nixon makes Capitol renovations a priority
By Alex Stuckey

JEFFERSON CITY • Stalactites hung above Gov. Jay Nixon's head, dripping water onto the muddy floor, as he examined Monday a wall covered in water lines.

Unfortunately, these are just a few signs that water damage is causing structural problems in the Capitol.

"Water infiltration from damaged exterior building elements has caused cracks and rusting to occur, compromising the structural integrity of the building," Nixon said.

It requires significant repairs, Nixon said, which lawmakers prepared for after passing a bonding bill last session.

So, the Democratic governor is asked the Republican-led Legislature to consider Capitol renovation projects, requiring $40 to $75 million worth of bonds, this coming Legislative session, which begins Jan. 7.

On Monday, he and a number of lawmakers toured some areas of the Capitol basement most affected by water damage.

Senate Majority Leader Ron Richard, R-Joplin, was one of them. He's been pushing for capitol renovations throughout his legislative career, about 12 times, he said.

"It's an unsafe place to work," Richard said Monday. "Something better happen or we'll all be working in the mud."

Nixon said low interest rates and bonding authority passed by the Legislature last year, among other things, prompted him to make this a priority. It's "the most cost effective time," he said.

During the 2014 session, lawmakers passed -- and Nixon signed -- a bill authorizing the Board of Public Buildings to issue $600 million in bonds for repair and maintenance projects on state and public higher education facilities.
Now that the bonds are authorized, the state can take on new deferred maintenance projects. Nixon recently has traveled across the state, talking to public higher education institutions about potential deferred maintenance projects that need addressing.

**In October, the Board of Public Buildings voted to begin the process of issuing $38.5 million in bonds to repair and update Lafferre Hall, which houses the University of Missouri's College of Engineering.**

He also hopes to address the Capitol's problems with appropriations made during the coming session.

"We have an obligation to be good stewards of the public assets with which we've been entrusted," Nixon said. "And each day we wait to address these issues, we add to the ultimate cost of fixing them."

### COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

FROM READERS: Kids with autism get special photo op with Santa

Monday, December 15, 2014 | 5:16 p.m. CST

![Photos of Santa with children](image)

BY ADRIENNE CORNWALL/MISSOURIAN READER

*Adrienne Cornwall is the strategic communications associate at MU's Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders.*

For many families, a photo opportunity with Santa is a holiday tradition. But for patients at the Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders, factors such as crowds, lights and lines put the experience out of their reach.

To help bring the holiday magic to more children, Santa and his helper **made a special visit** to the Thompson Center on Dec. 6 for one-on-
one photo sessions with 21 children, including patients at the center and their siblings.

Tara Arnett had tried to take her son, Logan, 5, to see Santa last year at a local outdoor retailer, but all the sensory stimulation proved too overwhelming.

This year, Logan shared the experience at the Thompson Center with his younger sister, Reagan, 3.

“We didn’t have any fighting or fussing. It was much more relaxed and on his own terms,” Tara Arnett said. “He warmed up to Santa. He really enjoyed it.”

Children with autism spectrum disorders have, to varying degrees, difficulty with social and communication skills and display restrictive and repetitive behaviors. Often, their symptoms are influenced by even minor disruptions to their sensory environments.

“Whenever he’s on the spot, it’s harder for him,” said Averie Gomel, of her son, Roman, 5, who was diagnosed with autism in 2011 after his pediatrician found he had fewer than 10 words at age 2. “I think this went really well.”

Lora Hinkel, whose son, Blake, 12, has autism, volunteered herself as Santa’s helper for the first Thompson Center Santa event last year and again this year. She came as a package deal with her dad, Vince Eversgerd, of Pierron, Illinois, who plays Santa for his grandchildren and friends every year.

“I personally know how challenging it is to bring your child with sensory needs to a crowded, loud, overstimulating environment. Those adults never knew how to interact with my son, and it often ended in tears more than smiles,” she said. “It is so wonderful to provide an opportunity for children to get to participate in a normal tradition that other children do, in an environment that is appropriate for their needs.”

As a speech-language pathologist and special educator with Columbia Public Schools, Hinkel brings her professional expertise to communicating with the children during the visits. Her dad’s experience with Blake, along with the Santa suit already in his closet, gives him a passion to provide kids such as his grandson with a special holiday experience.
The children also had some things in mind to share with Santa about their wish lists. Roman planned to ask for Scooby-Doo or Bane, one of the Marvel villains. Anything Santa might forget can be saved for next year, when Santa will make a return visit.

“It was a delight to see so many happy faces and help make their holiday season special,” Hinkel said. “I can’t wait for next year!”

This story is part of a section of the Missourian called From Readers, which is dedicated to your voices and your stories. We hope you’ll consider sharing. Here's how. Supervising editor is Joy Mayer.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Avenue of the Columns developments continue

Monday, December 15, 2014 | 7:11 p.m. CST

BY ISABELLE GUSTAFSON

COLUMBIA – A plan to complete the next phase of work on the Avenue of the Columns between Walnut and Cherry streets is moving forward.

The plan, which is subject to a Jan. 20 public hearing before the Columbia City Council, calls for further sidewalk brickwork, tree plantings and other embellishments along the avenue, also known as Eighth Street. It also includes the removal of traffic signals at Walnut and Eighth streets, the installation of a stop sign on Walnut Street and construction of decorative planters and installations on Walnut to reduce pedestrian crossing distance and improve safety.

The Avenue of the Columns project began as a vision in the early 1990s and has slowly begun to come to fruition. The goal has been to create a more beautiful walkway between the columns outside the Boone County Courthouse and those on MU’s Francis Quadrangle, which anchor the north and south ends of the avenue, respectively.

The District's project overview describes an effort "that incorporates landscaping, trees, brickwork/stonework and creative lighting that encourages the development of retail and gathering space wherever possible."
The first phase of work began during the construction of the addition to the Daniel Boone City Building at Broadway and Eighth streets. Beautification work also has been done at the south end of the avenue, at Eighth and Elm streets.

City engineering supervisor Cliff Jarvis said the traffic signal at Walnut and Eighth was determined to be unnecessary, using the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices as a reference.
"It actually impedes traffic," he said.

Jarvis also said it's too early to say when construction on the next phase would begin or how long it will last.

Mary Wilkerson, vice president of Boone County National Bank, has been a driving force behind the project since its inception. She couldn't be reached for comment but stated her enthusiasm for the next phase of work in a public comment form submitted to the city in November.

"This is a very exciting development for the AOC," Wilkerson wrote. "Thank you for taking the lead in making this happen. With completion of this project, then Elm Street won't be far behind!"