The University of Missouri Faculty Council is preparing to throw its support behind Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin as he and campus leaders attempt to tackle cultural changes around race at MU.

At a council meeting on Thursday, Chairman Craig Roberts, a plant sciences professor, announced the creation of a faculty committee to address “race relations” on campus.

Roberts said the need for such a committee became apparent after listening meetings hosted on campus last semester related to the death of Michael Brown and the events that followed in Ferguson.

“I think it’s hard for people like me, white faculty, to be in tune of the mistreatment of faculty of color,” Roberts said. “We all know that this occurs. I think we’ll be surprised at the magnitude.”

This committee’s charge is still in the works, but it will address race relations as a campus issue, not just among faculty. Roberts has asked that Berkley Hudson, an associate journalism professor, lead the effort.

The council heard from Roberts and Berkley about a three-hour meeting the pair had attended Wednesday night along with the chancellor, a handful of other administrators and student leaders from several campus groups, including the Legion of Black Collegians. Roberts said the student leaders brought a list of suggested changes, including ways to boost recruitment and retention of students and faculty of color, changes in the student handbook and a request for more frequent meetings with administration to discuss these issues.

Student attendees were unable to be reached for comment about the specifics of the list.

“We’re talking about a cultural change that actually does need to happen,” Hudson said during the meeting. Once Hudson saw Loftin sit and talk with students for three hours Wednesday, he was convinced of the chancellor’s commitment to this issue. It was all he needed to see before he accepted Roberts’ offer to spearhead the new committee.
“My main thing is having a committee or group that can support and maybe, in some ways, guide whatever efforts” the administration has “in place,” Hudson said. “And down in the weeds there are all kinds of things, but right now it’s just this basic, overarching idea of how to create an environment that’s more inclusive than it is now, and how that inclusivity relates to issues around race and ethnicity.”

No decisions have been made on the structure of the committee, where students and staff fit in, or goals and timelines. In the next week or so, Hudson will be drafting a resolution — that the council could suspend the rules to vote on — that would stress the governing body’s support of Loftin’s efforts to address the issues students have raised.

Earnest Perry, an associate journalism professor, has agreed to help Hudson with the committee. Perry was asked at the end of last semester to be an adviser of sorts to Loftin on the issue of race on campus. He said he is one of several people the chancellor has tapped for that adviser role.

“I think there’s a cultural change that’s needed, and it’s not something that’s going to happen overnight,” Perry said. “It’s going to happen in steps. We might take two steps forward and one step back. But it’s going to take a shared vision on what kind of campus environment we want, and some give and take on how we get there. I think this is a very good moment to make that happen because it usually takes an event to sort of set the stage and push people in a certain direction and I think that’s where we are right now.”

There is no timeline on future student and administrative meetings, but the issue of race and this new committee’s efforts are expected to continue to be discussed at biweekly faculty council meetings.

Technology troubles lead to low compliance on Title IX training

By Ashley Jost

Friday, January 23, 2015 at 2:00 pm

University of Missouri Faculty Council had a string of questions and negative comments for human resource representatives at their Thursday meeting about the university’s online Title IX training.
After an UM System executive order made all employees mandated reporters for any violation of Title IX, a federal sexual discrimination law, the university announced it would roll out online training for employees to explain what it means to be a mandated reporter and how to act in certain situations when confronted with Title IX violations.

“So I want to start off by saying I’m sorry,” Betsy Rodriguez, UM System vice president for human resources, said to the council. She apologized because the rollout of the online training has yielded a slew of problems for employees, many of whom cannot access the training program from their computers.

Rodriguez said the “different configurations” of individual computers make it difficult for many people to access the program — and make it very hard for the university system and outside developers to find a fix.

“We went too fast, I think,” Rodriguez said, explaining that as discrimination and sexual violence on college campuses became such a hot-button issue in 2014, it became necessary to get policies and training in place quickly. “We got it out, and it has caused a lot of problems.”

The training program started in November, and the deadline for employee completion is Jan. 30, though administrators indicated they will have to extend the deadline to an undetermined date because of the computer access issues.

As of Jan. 16, only about 9,500 of more than 39,000 employees — or about 24 percent — across the four campuses in the UM System have completed the training, according to Faculty Council meeting documents.

The Kansas City and St. Louis campuses achieved less than half of 1 percent compliance. MU has about 37 percent.

The help desk for the UM System had fielded 545 calls about the training as of Saturday.

“What are we wasting our time for?” asked MU associate teaching Professor Nicole Monnier. She said she’s worried the training — which she called “ineffective and inappropriate” — would ultimately have to be changed when the UM System and campuses have more time to analyze what employees should know, which could lead to new training.

Solutions for the technology issues are in progress. Among the ideas discussed at the meeting was making training available to employees at campus computer labs. No new timelines were set.
Faculty Council discuss race relations, trouble rolling out Title IX training

A new committee will be dedicated to addressing race relations on campus.

MU Faculty Council discussed race relations and issues with the current Title IX faculty training program during its first meeting of the spring semester Thursday.

Race relations

Faculty Council Chairman Craig Roberts said he has been acutely aware and sympathetic of the plight of students of color at MU since he attended the Ferguson Listening Session on Dec. 1.

He said he also understands the limitations some white faculty may have understanding their situation.

“It’s hard for white faculty to be in tune with the mistreatment of people of color,” Roberts said. “This is a problem under the surface that we may not detect.”

Roberts said Faculty Council will create a committee on race relations in the coming weeks. He said because race relations is such a pressing and important matter, the committee will likely become a permanent fixture of the council.

Roberts stressed the fact that the new committee will be separate from the current standing Diversity Enhancement Committee.

“If you throw (race relations) into the diversity issue, it gets lost, it gets camouflaged by all the other issues related to diversity,” he said. “This race problem is so distinct. The experiences the students are communicating are so distinct that it will serve us best if this is specifically a race relations committee.”

Faculty Council members Berkley Hudson and John Laurie will head the new committee and are currently working with journalism professor Earnest Perry to develop it.

Hudson said Perry was tapped to be one of Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin’s advisors on race relations after he moderated the listening session, and Perry will help ensure the committee includes all the voices necessary to achieve fairness and thoroughness.
In 2002, Perry received an award from the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication for his paper on the African-American press’ negotiation for a White House correspondent.

Hudson said he plans on drafting a resolution for the committee in the coming weeks. He said the resolution will be “an empathetic statement making it clear that (the council) understands the need for more of a dialogue”.

Hudson said the resolution will also commend Loftin for the work he has already done regarding race relations, namely his organization and promotion of listening sessions over the last few months.

In response to criticism that he lacked a quicker response to events in Ferguson, Loftin vowed to continue racial discussions and “craft responses as appropriate as we go forward”. However, Loftin has yet to publicly announce any additional initiatives to address concerns expressed by students at the listening session.

**Failure to launch**

Betsy Rodriguez, UM System vice president for human resources, attended the Thursday meeting to address faculty frustrations with the newly-launched online Title IX training program.

When Roberts asked his colleagues if they had had difficulty accessing the program, nearly every council member in the room raised his or her hand.

Roberts said the problem with the online system is that certain videos do not load properly on some operating systems.

Faculty Council Vice Chairwoman Rebecca Johnson said 50 percent of MU faculty have yet to complete the Title IX training course.

Student Affairs Committee Chairman Tim Evans said the Title IX training system, which had been in development for nearly seven months, did not live up to the standard that was guaranteed by administrators.

“We were told, ‘we’re going to have this training coming out’ and ‘we want to make sure it’s right,’” Evans said. “The training, when we got it, didn’t seem like something you would wait so long for.”

Rodriguez had anticipated she would be dealing with a disgruntled crowd from the onset. She began her speech by apologizing profusely and told the faculty that this was a time to “vent.”

Academic Affairs Committee Chairwoman Nicole Monnier said she was particularly vexed by the trouble developers were having with what she saw as a pedestrian technical issue.
“This is not new, and it’s also something that lots of people have already solved,” she said. “I kind of feel like there’s an answer that’s already there and you haven’t found it.”

Several faculty members suggested solutions, including having dedicated, stationary computers or reducing the online training to PowerPoint presentations.

Rodriguez said she is working with developers to improve the current Title IX training system, which lacks instructions for dealing with certain scenarios, such as written accounts of sexual harassment in an assignment.

“My students have written about being raped,” Hudson said. “I’ve never gotten an answer about how to approach these kinds of tricky, delicate questions.”

Title IX reforms

Dennis Miller, Faculty Council’s representative to the Intercampus Faculty Council, discussed proposed changes to Title IX policies that will be presented to the Board of Curators on Feb. 5.

Miller said the proposal, which IFC and Faculty Council have been working on over the past 6-8 weeks, includes recommendations for adjudicating student cases and the role of advisors and witnesses in Title IX hearings.

Miller said his main concern is not with the proposed changes themselves, but how they are implemented by the new provost. He said the goal is to review the implementation of the new rules 18 months after they are put in place.

Roberts said the new executive order, which contains the changes, is a substantial improvement from its predecessors, executive orders 40 and 41. He said that administrators collaborated with UM System attorney Marsha Fischer to create the new draft.

“Sitting through one of those meetings, you can spend thirty minutes on a phrase with her,” Roberts said. “I wish you could have seen the discussion on two adjectives that we had in there.”

The Faculty Affairs Committee reported it will continue to analyze the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) survey results, which indicated a higher rate of dissatisfaction among faculty of color.

Harry Tyrer, chairman of the committee, said administrators were “trying to figure out who was angry and why.”

Roberts announced that Loftin formed a new standing committee to focus on non-tenure track issues.

Monnier said the committee is still searching for NTT faculty members.

Faculty Council will hold its next public meeting Feb. 12.
Technology woes lead to low compliance on Title IX training

January 24, 2015

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — An online system used to train employees from the four-campus University of Missouri system to address violations of a federal law that bans gender discrimination in education has been fraught with problems.

Only about 9,500 of more than 39,000 employees — or about 24 percent — across the four campuses had completed the training as of Jan. 16, the Columbia Daily Tribune reported (http://bit.ly/1CoI9WV). The Kansas City and St. Louis campuses fared particularly poorly, achieving less than half of 1 percent compliance, according to documents from a University of Missouri Faculty Council meeting.

The issue arose after a UM System executive order made all employees mandated reporters for Title IX violations. Online training started in November, and the deadline for employee completion is Jan. 30. But administrators have indicated they will have to extend the deadline.

Betsy Rodriguez, UM System vice president for human resources, told the Faculty Council on Thursday that the "different configurations" of individual computers make it difficult for many people to access the program.

Rodriguez said that as discrimination and sexual violence on college campuses became such a hot-button issue in 2014, it became necessary to quickly get policies and training in place.

"We went too fast, I think," Rodriguez said. "We got it out, and it has caused a lot of problems."

The help desk for the UM System had fielded 545 calls about the training as of last weekend.
MU associate teaching professor Nicole Monnier called the training "ineffective and inappropriate." She said she's worried it would ultimately have to be changed when the UM System and campuses have more time to analyze what employees should know, which could lead to new training.

Title IX Training Troubled by Technology


MU Students to Take Part in Sexual Assault Survey

Three pedestrian accidents in one day an 'anomaly' for city

By Alan Burdziak

Friday, January 23, 2015 at 2:00 pm

One person was killed and two others injured, one seriously, in three vehicle-pedestrian accidents Thursday, a volume a fire official called an anomaly for a single day.

Kui Zou, 24, was killed as she crossed Providence Road at Carter Lane about 7 p.m. Thursday, Officer Latisha Stroer said in a news release. Zou was a visiting scholar from China working at the University of Missouri, MU spokesman Christian Basi said. She studied engineering, according to the MU directory. She was hit by a 2001 Lexus GS 300 heading north on Providence, according to a news release. The driver, 30-year-old Alvin B. Debrose Jr. of Columbia, told police he did not see her as she was crossing the road. Debrose wasn’t hurt.

Zou was pronounced dead at the scene. Columbia Fire Department Battalion Chief Brad Fraizer said no effort was made to resuscitate her.

“We arrived on the scene ... and the pedestrian was obviously deceased,” Fraizer said.

Police said Debrose is not suspected of being intoxicated and an autopsy and toxicology screen will be conducted on Zou.

Stroer, who has been a city police officer for 15 1/2 years, said Thursday’s number of pedestrian accidents is an outlier.

“I don’t remember three either bicycle or pedestrian accidents in a single day,” Stroer said.

Earlier in the day Thursday, Darryl N. Darling, 20, was hit when he crossed Providence at Nifong Boulevard at 12:51 p.m., not far from Thursday night’s fatal incident. Darling was taken to a hospital for treatment for serious injuries that were not life-threatening, police said.

Spokesmen for University Hospital and Boone Hospital Center couldn’t find information about Darling.
The driver of the Isuzu SUV that hit Darling, Blake C. Ward, 19, of Columbia is not suspected of driving impaired or recklessly. No citations were issued or arrests made in either accident, but the investigations are still active.

About 10 a.m. Thursday, Amy Wasowicz, 18, was hit by a van as she was crossing College Avenue at Rollins Road, University of Missouri Police Capt. Brian Weimer said. Karla Geerlings, 50, was driving east and made a left turn onto College and hit Wasowicz, who was walking west among a group of people, Weimer said. Wasowicz was at University Hospital in good condition on Friday morning, hospital spokesman Jeff Hoelscher said.

Geerlings received a summons for not avoiding a collision.

Columbia Fire Department personnel responded to all three accidents, providing treatment at the scene in the two nonfatal incidents. Three pedestrian accidents in one day is a lot for the city, Fraizer said.

“It’s definitely an anomaly,” he said.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Pedestrian death prompts community concern

Friday, January 23, 2015 | 8:05 p.m. CST; updated 8:19 p.m. CST, Friday, January 23, 2015

BY BROOKE VAUGHAN, JACK FLEMMING

COLUMBIA — The intersection where an MU visiting scholar was hit and killed Thursday night is a busy area with no traffic light or crosswalk.

Kui Zou was struck and killed by a car at Providence Road and Carter Lane. The car was traveling north on Providence Road and Zou was walking east toward Carter Lane, according to a Columbia Police Department news release. The area Zou was attempting to cross was not a pedestrian crossing area.

The accident, along with two other pedestrian accidents reported Thursday, prompted concerns within the social media community regarding road safety. People responded to the Missourian's Twitter and Facebook accounts with their concerns.
The speed limit along the stretch of Providence Road near Carter Lane is 55 mph despite the frequent number of traffic lights. In the area where the accident occurred, there is no stop light, but rather a left-hand turn lane for drivers turning east onto the outer road.

Because of this setup, the driving environment around the area is somewhat chaotic. Southbound drivers turning left have to face oncoming cars without a traffic light, and it leaves little room for error for drivers trying to turn.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

UPDATE: Police identify pedestrian killed in vehicle collision

Friday, January 23, 2015 | 1:14 p.m. CST; updated 4:12 p.m. CST, Friday, January 23, 2015

BY CAROLINE BAUMAN

UPDATE: This article has been updated to include information from a Columbia police news release and to clarify the location of the accident. The pedestrian's occupation has been corrected.

COLUMBIA — A 24-year-old pedestrian was killed Thursday night in a collision with a vehicle on Providence Road.

Kui Zou, an MU visiting scholar from China, died in the collision, according to Columbia police spokeswoman Latisha Stoer.

Alvin Debrose, 30, of Columbia was driving north on Providence and struck a pedestrian approaching Carter Lane, according to a Columbia police news release. The release said Debrose did not see the pedestrian, who was pronounced dead at the scene.

An investigation is ongoing.

Stroer said the accident was reported at about 6:58 p.m. The collision was the third vehicle and pedestrian accident to take place in Columbia on Thursday.
Further south, a male pedestrian was struck by a vehicle at about 1 p.m. near the corner of Nifong Boulevard and Providence. He was sent to University Hospital for non-life threatening injuries.

A woman was hit by a van in a crosswalk Thursday morning at the intersection of South College Avenue and Rollins Street. She was in good condition as of 1 p.m.

Op Ed: Medical shortage is fixable

By TIM WOLFE, CLIFTON SMART, STEVEN EDWARDS, JAY GUFFEY, MATT McCormick and MATT MORROW

Sunday, January 25, 2015 at 12:00 am

More than 90 percent of Missouri’s counties lack adequate access to health care professionals. At the same time, Missouri ranks among the top 20 states with citizens older than 65 who will require more medical care, and the number of elderly people with multiple chronic diseases is expected to double by 2030.

The need for physicians and other health care professionals is a startling — and growing — reality nationwide. Here in Missouri, that need is especially intense and immediate.

Thankfully, we have come a long way already toward addressing these realities. Health care organizations CoxHealth and Mercy Health have come together with the state’s two largest higher education institutions in unique partnerships designed to help alleviate this workforce shortage statewide.

Together, our institutions have developed training programs that would prepare dozens of additional students to enter the health care industry annually. With adequate funding, these programs would take shape in the form of a new University of Missouri School of Medicine Clinical Campus in Springfield and a Master of Occupational Therapy degree program at Missouri State University.

Last year, the state legislature approved a combined $11.3 million to keep these projects moving, but unfortunately we still await the delivery of that funding.
We understand there are many pressing needs competing for these dollars, leaving our public officials with many difficult decisions to make. But we strongly believe this is a wise use of taxpayer dollars that will have a tremendous impact on the state economy.

In fact, this is exactly the type of priority that should rise to the top of the list. It will help us meet the urgent health care needs of thousands of Missourians, growing the economy with new capital investment and Missouri job creation along the way.

We look forward to when these pivotal funds from the state of Missouri are released to allow for the immediate implementation of these vital programs.

Tim Wolfe is president of the University of Missouri System, and Clifton Smart is president of Missouri State University; Steven Edwards is president of CoxHealth, and Jay Guffey is senior vice president and chief operating officer of Mercy Hospital Springfield; Matt McCormick is president of the Columbia Chamber of Commerce, and Matt Morrow is president of the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce.

Facing the Nursing Shortage

Fast-paced nursing appeals most to Columbia College student Madelynn Grossman, in an emergency room or as a flight nurse, for example. She chose this career path for the variety of options, the outlet for her caring nature and because the nationwide shortage of nurses makes a post-graduation job almost a guarantee.

“The shortage definitely played into my decision to do nursing,” Grossman says. “Nursing is a field that will always have job openings, and typically nurses are able to find jobs right out of school.”

With the United States in the throes of a nursing shortage, mid-Missouri colleges are expanding their programs and adding accelerated degree paths to attract students like Grossman and get more nurses educated and out in the workforce.

The shortage of registered nurses compared to demand has been predicted and studied for more than a decade, when the health care industry began preparing for the impact of an aging baby-boomer population. The passage of the Affordable Care Act in 2010 brought millions of
Americans into the health insurance system starting in 2014, which further increased demand for nursing services.

“There will be an exponential need for nurses due to a lot of things, including the aging population and an increase in chronic illnesses,” says Judith Fitzgerald Miller, dean of the Sinclair School of Nursing at the University of Missouri.

Jobs for registered nurses will grow by 19 percent between 2012 and 2022, compared to the 11 percent growth average for all occupations, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. That makes it one of the fastest-growing occupations in the country.

The agency projects the RN workforce will grow by nearly 530,000 jobs to 3.24 million from 2012 to 2022. That’s considerable growth but still not enough: Health care industry analysts have predicted a shortfall of more than 500,000 nurses by 2015 and of a staggering 800,000 by 2020. Those numbers reflect the rising demand for care as well as the need to replace retiring nurses.

The retirement rate among RNs is a key factor in the shortage, with 55 percent of the current RN workforce age 50 or older, according to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. More than 1 million RNs will reach retirement age within the next 10 to 15 years.

Growing demand

Several mid-Missouri colleges are taking steps to expand programs and give more students a path to a nursing career, including Sinclair at MU, Central Methodist University and Columbia College.

Sinclair is the largest of the mid-Missouri schools offering nursing programs, with 1,372 students enrolled in fall 2014.

The school’s program is highly competitive and highly acclaimed, earning the No. 1 spot in a 2014 ranking of nursing schools across the country by CollegeAtlas.org, which evaluates the schools based on affordability, academic quality, accessibility and RN board exam pass rates.

As predicted, abundant jobs are the reality for students graduating with an RN or other nursing degree. Sixty percent of Sinclair graduates had confirmed jobs before graduation, with more than 80 percent staying in Missouri. Many of those graduates stay not only in Missouri but also in Columbia within the MU Health Care system. Of the 75 students who graduated in December 2014, 19 are now practicing at MU Health.

Sinclair’s ability to grow and expand is limited by state funding to MU. The school currently enrolls about 75 students each fall and about 55 each spring and must find creative ways to grow those numbers.

“Until we have more resources from the state to expand facilities, we’re at capacity for undergraduate space in the building,” Miller says, citing the need for additional simulation labs.
and dedicated practice areas. “We have to do enrollment management to not overextend our space.”

Despite the budget limitations, Miller has been able to expand Sinclair’s enrollment through an increase in graduate programs and an accelerated bachelor’s degree track.

In the accelerated program, students with non-nursing bachelor degrees can complete a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 14.5 months. The program has expanded in recent years, and today 50 students are accepted into that program each year.

The school also offers an RN to BSN program for nurses with associate degrees, with nearly 65 students currently enrolled. Because that program centers on distance learning, it’s a good option for students already working in the nursing field who want to further their education. Its virtual nature also makes it a good way to increase enrollment without expanding facilities.

Growth in graduate programs has also been substantial, thanks in part to a Doctorate in Nursing Practice program Miller implemented when she joined the school in 2008. The master’s program includes a Master of Science in Nursing with emphasis on education or leadership.

The increased focus on graduate and advanced programs is not only a way to grow Sinclair’s program, but it’s also a strategic move to meet the need for specialists and leaders within the nursing field.

The DNP prepares students for upper-level management positions, and the nursing master’s programs prepare students for faculty roles and advanced nursing positions such as nurse practitioner and clinical specialist.

A new nursing innovations and leadership focus in the DNP program rolled out in fall 2014. It’s designed for master’s-level nurses interested in organizational and executive leadership, clinical setting leadership, academic and research opportunities and health policy design.

The school also has a traditional Ph.D. program geared toward research and leadership roles.

“We’ve put our energy into preparing teachers and leaders at the doctoral level,” Miller says.

Accelerated programs

Columbia College offers an Associate of Science in Nursing, which qualifies students as an RN, as well as an RN to BSN program.

Grossman says the school’s smaller size and the ability to graduate after two years with an RN were key factors in her decision to pursue the program.

“It allows for people to start working immediately, which is necessary for me,” she says.

The remaining courses toward the BSN can be done online over two years.
Central Methodist University started its own accelerated BSN program in May 2013 at its Columbia location. The first class graduated in July 2014 with 10 students, and 13 more are currently enrolled.

The school plans to admit 15 students per year over the next few years, according to Angie Cornelius, coordinator of the accelerated BSN and MSN programs and associate professor of nursing.

“With the creation of and investment in the new accelerated BSN program, our goal was to specifically cater to a new and different market of students and increase the number of BSN graduates in mid-Missouri,” she says.

Demand is indeed growing for BSN-prepared nurses, and CMU’s graduates are helping fill the gap. Cornelius says 100 percent of the first accelerated BSN grads accepted job offers for nursing positions, with 80 percent of them going to mid-Missouri hospitals.

Demand is highest in acute care hospital settings, she says, and the overwhelming majority of CMU students start out in that area.

Statistics from the American Association of Colleges of Nursing back up that claim. A recent study showed 56 percent of nurses practice in a hospital setting, with 9 percent in ambulatory care settings, 6 percent in nursing homes or assisted living facilities and 6 percent in home health. Other areas offering nursing jobs include correctional facilities, academic settings, public health programs and insurance or regulatory organizations.

From a student’s perspective, acute care is attractive for its fast pace and variety, Grossman says.

**Future gap**

Although the job market for nurses remains strong locally, Cornelius says her students are seeing a tighter market in metro areas such as St. Louis and Kansas City.

CMU took a big step toward further expansion in August, when the school broke ground on a $6.5 million Center for Allied Health facility that will house the nursing and athletic training programs once it’s completed. The school is also undertaking an $8.5 million renovation of a 50-year-old science building.

“The new Center for Allied Health and a renovated Stedman Hall of Science will allow us to prepare greater numbers of students to make a difference in the world,” CMU President Roger Drake says.

Mid-Missouri schools are taking steps to help alleviate the nursing gap, but the numbers show the shortage is still a long-term challenge.

For example, nursing school enrollment across the United States is not growing fast enough to meet anticipated demand, according to the AACN. Nursing programs saw a 2.6 percent
enrollment increase in 2013, the AACN reports, which is not enough to meet the growing demand for nurses.

Another factor in the shortage is the aging of the nurse population itself. The supply of RNs hit a plateau in 2007 and has continued to decline from there, according to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

That trend impacts not only clinical settings but also education. Nearly three-fourths of full-time nursing program faculty members are age 50 or older, which reflects that younger nurses are choosing better-paying clinical jobs over full-time faculty positions.

Area hospitals grow to meet patient increases

By Jack Witthaus

Saturday, January 24, 2015 at 12:00 am

University of Missouri Health Care’s South Providence Medical Park launched ahead of schedule.

The facility, which opened Tuesday, was expected to be ready later this spring. Construction on the roughly $35 million project located near Providence Road and Southampton Drive started in June 2013.

Mary Jenkins, spokeswoman for MU Health, said the complex was created in response to growing inpatient volumes. Jenkins said the facility combines care options catering to the entire family, from toddlers to the elderly.

The facility is expected to serve about 100,000 outpatient visits in 2015, which is about one-sixth of the organization’s total projected outpatient volume. MU Health’s outpatient volumes have increased 26 percent over the last six years, according to a news release.

“To my knowledge this is the largest multiple-care clinic in Columbia,” Jenkins said.

The two-story, 85,000-square-foot facility offers pediatric primary care, family medicine and outpatient behavioral healthy services. Additional features of the facility include a 2,000-square-foot pharmacy with a drive-thru, an on-site laboratory for medical testing and radiology services.
Pharmacist Paige Harris said the move to the new facility went smoothly last weekend. Harris said people have found the complex easily and recognize the facility by its big fountains. She said she enjoys her new work environment.

“It’s beautiful,” Harris said.

Previously, some of those services were housed at different MU Health clinics.

Family medicine services at MU Health’s Woodrail and Green Meadows locations have moved to the new medical park. Right now, Green Meadows is vacant and up for sale. Woodrail will continue to offer some services, like dermatology.

MU Urgent Care and the Missouri Imaging Center also have relocated to the new complex.

Along with the transfer of services, staff also have moved from their previous facilities. Jenkins expects about 250 employees — including 100 physicians — will eventually be housed in the new building.

On top of its multiple care options, the new facility is designed to lessen its environmental impact. An unoccupied room’s lights will automatically shut off, and exterior water basins also will serve as decorative water features to provide a natural-looking landscape.

Sitting on 25 acres, the complex has room to grow. Jenkins said there are no specific plans right now for new development.

“The university is a little landlocked, so this will give us room to expand if needed,” Jenkins said.

A few miles away from the new MU Health facility, progress continues on Boone Hospital Center’s new medical campus, said hospital spokesman Ben Cornelius.

Located at Nifong and Forum Boulevards, the new complex will feature an 80,000-square-foot building. It eventually will be home to internal and family medicine doctors’ offices, radiology, mammography, lab, physical and occupational therapy, a convenient care clinic, a pharmacy and other outpatient services.

According to previous Tribune reporting, the project is estimated to cost about $20 million.

The campus also will have a walking trail and reflecting pool with park benches, which will serve as a memorial to Columbia police Officer Molly Bowden, who was killed in the line of duty in 2005.

Members of the board of trustees broke ground last July. The new medical campus is expected to open this fall.
“We want to give our patients efficient, easy access to high-quality care, just the same as if they came to our main campus,” Hospital President Jim Sinek said in a press release. “Boone Hospital Center is in a growth mode. It’s going to be an exciting year for us.”

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU: Nurses with post-graduate training can improve health

January 24, 2015

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — Researchers from the University of Missouri's flagship campus in Columbia say nurses with post-graduate training can help improve the quality of health care.

In a recently published study, MU Sinclair School of Nursing researchers found that care is better in states where so-called advanced practice registered nurses, also known as APRNs, are allowed to practice independently. Examples of APRNs include nurse practitioners.

The university said in a news release that Missouri has restrictive laws that require physicians to oversee nurse practitioners’ work. In some states, APRNs may manage groups of patients with physicians consulted only as needed.

The research team analyzed data from previous studies that evaluated health outcomes and hospitalization rates of Medicare and Medicaid patients by state. Their findings were published in the November-December issue of Nursing Outlook.
Jefferson City, Mo. (AP) — State college and universities say they welcome the $12 million in extra funding Gov. Jay Nixon is seeking in the next budget, but it's not enough to make up for years of underfunding.

Some universities said the proposed basic aid increase — a minimal gain from the current fiscal year's more than $911 million and one of few increases in an otherwise stagnant budget plan — doesn't compensate for rising costs and could lead to a tuition increase in the 2015-2016 academic year if the Legislature does not provide a higher bump.

Nixon's funding boost, proposed this week, averages about 1.3 percent across the board, though it ranges from about 0.82 percent at St. Louis Community College to 1.93 percent at Ozarks Technical Community College. Funding in part depends on how well those institutions retain and graduate students, among other performance factors.

Nixon requested another $13 million for higher education if the Legislature passes proposals including expanding the Medicaid health program, although Republican legislative leaders have said that's a nonstarter.

Efforts to issue bonds to repair aging state buildings or create new university labs appear to have more support from lawmakers, and Nixon proposed $200 million this week in bonds for higher education including more than $161 million for those repairs.

University of Central Missouri Chancellor Chuck Ambrose said state funding for core operations still hasn't surpassed the amount given in 2000, despite rising inflation. That means the burden of other expenses has been shifted to students at Central Missouri and other universities around the state, Ambrose said. Central Missouri's
tuition was $99 per credit hour in 2000, and has risen to $242.15 per credit hour (with fees that did not exist in 2000) this school year.

Schools are further financially strapped by a 2007 state law capping tuition hikes to the same rate of increase as inflation without Department of Higher Education permission, although several have said that has helped keep colleges and universities more affordable compared to other states.

But that also means schools have cut budgets, forgone pay increases for staff for years and delayed needed building repairs.

"The funding levels simply haven't kept pace with the costs," St. Louis Community College Interim Chancellor Dennis Michaelis said. "One of the results of that has been a lot of pressure in higher education, whether Mizzou or SLCC, to not raise tuition."

Missouri State University President Clifton Smart said finances at the Springfield school are getting at least slightly better after years of hardship, and employees received a pay raise in the last two years after a three-year span without one.

Still, without additional state money beyond what Nixon proposed, MSU might ask the Department of Higher Education to raise tuition 1 percent to 2 percent for out-of-state and graduate students, Smart said.

Whether lawmakers will increase higher education's piece of the budgetary pie next fiscal year is unclear, said Sen. Kurt Schaefer, a Columbia Republican and a leader in shaping the state budget.

"I don't know if that's something we can do for next year or not," Schaefer said, referencing last session's average 5 percent increase in performance-based funding for higher education. "But it's definitely something I want to look at."

Sundance doc paints a harrowing picture of campus rape

January 23, 2015 By LINDSEY BAHR
PARK CITY, Utah (AP) — The campus rape epidemic is given a face, dozens of them in fact, in "The Hunting Ground," director Kirby Dick's sobering investigation into the systematic silencing of sexual assault victims which premiered Friday at the Sundance Film Festival.

Through an expert juxtaposition of personal accounts and damning statistics, the film paints a brutal picture of university administrators more concerned with keeping campus crime statistics low than helping the students who have come forward to report rape.

Dick and producer Amy Ziering explored sexual assault in the U.S. military in 2012's "The Invisible War," and were inspired to tackle the issue on college campuses after hearing from women at their university screenings.

"The Hunting Ground," in theaters on March 20 and on CNN later this year, indicts a wide range of institutions for their lax punishments of reported rapists including Notre Dame, the University of Virginia, Swarthmore College, Stanford University, the University of Southern California, and others.

In a particularly revealing sequence, the paltry repercussions are listed by institution, including $25 fines and suspension over the summer.

Beyond the dizzying statistics and myriad talking heads, ranging from former campus police guards to clinical psychologists, the heart of the movie is rooted in the personal stories, whether it's a father describing the rape of his daughter who committed suicide, or the assault victims themselves, some of whom are men.

Audiences see Annie Clark and Andrea Pino, both of whom were assaulted at the University of North Carolina, and subsequently ignored and belittled by their administrators, rally support around the country for their End Rape on Campus movement and filing a Title IX complaint against UNC.

The filmmaking may not be noteworthy, but it is the stories that are both illuminating and essential and will likely not leave a dry eye in the audience.

Missouri foster children are given higher-than-average amounts of psychiatric drugs
Saturday, January 24, 2015 | 6:00 a.m. CST; updated 8:00 p.m. CST, Saturday, January 24, 2015
BY MADI ALEXANDER

His seven years in foster care are chronicled in a pile of medical records more than a foot thick. The pages are wrinkled from sitting in a damp garage, the edges stained a dark reddish brown from the rusty paperclips.

Quetiapine, risperidone and oxcarbazepine are just a few of the drugs Mohannad took to control his violent, aggressive outbursts.

He has been diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, mild mental retardation and autism. Past psychologists and psychiatrists have mentioned other illnesses — oppositional defiant disorder, reactive attachment disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, unspecified mood disorders and bouts of depression.

Bounced around between foster homes and doctors, Mohannad never had a steady support system. He needed treatment, but the foster care system simply could not keep up with his high needs.

One psychiatrist wrote in an evaluation: "He is probably a rather sad, lonely, confused little boy."

Missouri’s foster children
Like Mohannad, more than 30 percent of Missouri’s foster children take psychotropic medication, and most of the drugs are approved only for children with severe mental problems.

Often neglected and abused, foster children are one of Missouri’s most vulnerable populations. But experts say the state cannot always give children the emotional support they need. Instead, their problems are dealt with another way — by prescribing drugs.

Nationally, 18 percent of foster children are given psychotropic medications. In Missouri, it’s nearly twice that amount.

Missouri foster children on psychoactive medication
The overprescription of psychoactive medication to foster children is alarming, said Connie Brooks, a psychologist at the Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders.
Even though foster children are at higher risk for behavioral and emotional disorders, Brooks said the sheer number of drugs given to children she sees is cause for concern. "I can’t remember a foster child I saw who was not on at least one psychotropic medication," Brooks said.

At least 20 percent were taking an average of two or more psychiatric drugs, she said, with a few foster children taking up to seven psychiatric drugs.

More than half were prescribed antipsychotic drugs, the class of medication with the highest risks. Antipsychotics are a class of psychiatric drugs used to treat severe mental impairment associated with illnesses like schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

"Children in foster care often have a number of other emotional problems that percentage-wise would be higher than normal children," said John Hall, a child psychiatrist at the Thompson Center and assistant professor of child and adolescent psychiatry at MU.

Missouri spent more than $81 million on psychiatric drugs for foster children in the last five years. Antipsychotics account for more than half of the state’s spending on psychiatric medication for foster children.

In Missouri, prescription records indicate that foster children as young as 2 have been given antipsychotics. Hall called that "concerning" and "surprising" because diagnosing and medicating children that young is rare.

**What are psychiatric drugs?**
Psychiatric drugs, also called psychotropic drugs, are used to treat mental disorders, such as depression, ADHD, bipolar disorder, autism and schizophrenia. Antidepressants, stimulants and antipsychotics are all considered psychotropic medications.

The Food and Drug Administration breaks antipsychotics up into two groups. First-generation antipsychotics, also called "typical" antipsychotics, are the older generation of antipsychotics. Second-generation antipsychotics, or "atypical" antipsychotics, are the newer drugs used to treat mental disorders.
The main differences between the two types of antipsychotics are the side effects and the times at which the drugs were developed. Most notably, patients taking typical antipsychotics can develop a neurological disorder that causes involuntary muscle movement.

Psychotropic medications can cause side effects such as headaches, nausea and dizziness. The FDA states that antipsychotics can cause blurred vision, skin rashes and rapid heartbeat.

The FDA adopted a "black box" warning — the most serious type of warning — in 2005 for all antidepressants to warn that the drugs can lead to an increased risk for suicidal thoughts in children and adolescents.

Stimulant medication for ADHD, such as Adderall and Ritalin, most commonly causes a loss of appetite and sleep problems. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, the bipolar medication lithium can cause seizures, irregular heartbeat and blackouts.

The FDA only approves atypical antipsychotics, or second-generation antipsychotics, for children with severe mental illness. The drugs are frequently used to control aggressive behaviors, such as hitting, kicking and biting, Hall said. Other symptoms of severe mental illness can include mood disorders, hyperactivity or hallucinations.

Risperidone, the one antipsychotic approved for children between 5 and 10 years old, is only indicated for aggression associated with autism, Hall said. Risperidone can cause significant weight gain, even in the first six months of treatment, according to the FDA. Only five atypical antipsychotics are FDA-approved for use in children older than 5. No atypical antipsychotics have been approved for children younger than 5. That’s because most medication, not just psychiatric medication, has not been studied in children, Hall said.

“It’s harder to meet the research ethics if you’re trying to study children,” he said.

'Mommy hurt me'
Mohannad was taken into emergency protective custody in 2005 after his mother, who has schizophrenia, had a psychotic episode and tried to bite off Mohannad’s fingers, according to hospital records.
He still has scars on his right hand.

Karen Alyasiry, who lives in Barnhart, Missouri, adopted Mohannad last year. Having a stable home environment has been one of the greatest improvements in his life, she said.

Mohannad’s life in foster care was filled with uncertainty, his adoptive mother said. He moved among foster homes five times in seven years because his aggressive behavior prompted families to request removal.

The boy has been suspended from school multiple times for fighting. He bites, kicks and punches other students when he gets angry or upset. One psychologist wrote that as a 9-year-old, Mohannad had a plan to kill his teacher with a big kitchen knife.

Mohannad started taking three psychotropic medications when he was 4. Since then, he has taken six different ADHD medications, two antidepressants, two antipsychotics and mood stabilizers, stopping and starting each one multiple times at varying dosages.

Alyasiry said medication plays a big part in ensuring Mohannad is capable of functioning at school and at home.

"I don’t honestly think he’s ever going to be without medication," she said. "Because he really does have a mental illness."

She said she wants the caseworker, psychologists and psychiatrists to all have input when medicating not just Mohannad, but all foster children that come into her care.

"That’s one of my goals, to make sure the medication management is a team effort," she said.

**Prescribing the medication**

One of the most difficult parts of prescribing medication to foster children is inconsistency in medical records and mental health providers, Hall said.

"Quite often, the foster care system doesn’t have a really good track record of what they’ve been given before." Hall said. "So the foster parent who brings me the child knows that these are the two bottles of what he’s been taking, but they don’t know what else has been tried or how long he’s been taking them for."
Getting in to see a child psychiatrist can also be a challenge because children move around so much, Hall said.

"We have a shortage of child psychiatrists across the country," he said. "Sometimes there’s a longer waiting list to see a specialist."

The Missouri Department of Social Services acknowledges that foster children are often seeing primary care physicians rather than psychiatrists.

Foster families often seek out their primary care physicians because of time constraints. When foster parents are dealing with aggressive and disruptive behaviors, waiting a month to see a specialist is not practical, Hall said.

"They can get in and see a family doctor this week if they’ve got a problem going on right now," he said.

Most primary care physicians are competent when it comes to prescribing psychiatric medication, Hall said, but they probably do not have the level of expertise necessary for long-term mental health care. They might also be "uncomfortable" managing the medications in the long run.

Another complication is that supervision might be inconsistent. According to Department of Social Services policy, once a foster child is prescribed a psychiatric medication, the caseworker, not the foster parent or doctor, has the final approval for new drugs.

In a "traditional" home, the parent has the primary relationship with a child, Hall said. That is not always true with caseworkers and foster children.

"Sometimes it’s not even somebody that knows the child well," Hall said. "The case manager may not have much more knowledge than I do, but they’re the one that, from the state’s perspective, needs to OK that."

**Diagnoses, drugs problematic in children**

Hall said he exercises caution when diagnosing young children with a mental disorder, and he uses even more care when prescribing medication.
Until children are up to about 4 years old, it is hard for doctors to distinguish between normal outbursts and what might be a mood disorder or emotional problem, Hall said. Children as young as 8 or 9 can be diagnosed with mood disorders, but anything younger than that is "stretching the boundary," he said.

Hall prescribes ADHD medication for children as young as 4, but even that makes him uncomfortable, he said. Treatment for children that young should be behavioral.

Behavior problems are often the most difficult to handle, and drugs can provide a quick fix, Brooks said. But medications often do not address underlying problems.

"There are all sorts of behavioral interventions or therapeutic interventions that we should try first before we put them on lots of medications," she said. "That’s just not how it ends up happening, though."

What children often need is emotional support and therapy, not drugs. One of the most common diagnoses she gives is post-traumatic stress disorder. Children who have experienced abuse or neglect are at high risk for developing PTSD, which can cause aggressive outbursts and violent tantrums.

"Children who are acting out get a lot of consequences when really what they need are some supports that look a little different," she said.

Marlene Howser, a licensed professional counselor at the Burrell Center in Columbia, said there are many therapies that can help treat children who experience attachment disorders and trauma.

Howser said doll houses, painting, puppets and role-playing are all used with young children to help them develop social skills and learn appropriate behaviors. With young children, Howser said sitting down and talking is not effective, so therapists have to be creative in the way they treat the child.

"When trauma occurs, it usually stops a lot of their emotional development," she said. "Often times when there is a lot of trauma, the child may be 15 but have the emotional maturity for a 10-year-old."

Howser said therapeutic board games are also used with younger children to create a fun environment to address emotional and behavioral problems. The board games address everything from anger issues to divorce to self-esteem problems.
**Medication sometimes necessary**

At one point, Mohannad was on five different psychotropic medications at the same time. Mohannad’s medication made him barely able to have a simple conversation, Alyasiry said.

"He was just looking at me, like he could look right through me. He was just dazed," she said. "You could see the drool coming down."

But Alyasiry said she is the most concerned about what side effects she can’t see.

"I have been really concerned about the long-term effects ... because your organs are being exposed to so many chemicals," she said. "I worry a lot about his liver, about his kidneys."

Mohannad has to have blood tests every three months to make sure the medications are not damaging his organs, she said.

Mohannad now lives in a residential facility during the week, where he goes to regular therapy and learns life skills. He comes home on weekends and Alyasiry said he is "thriving" now.

And despite all of the doctors visits, medication and therapy sessions, Alyasiry said Mohannad is still a typical kid who loves to laugh and have fun.

"Mohannad has a lot of good days and honestly, he doesn’t really have a lot of bad days," she said.

Mohannad's first case manager wrote that he likes hamburgers and video games. He is "creative" and "energetic." He loves his baby sister and likes to play basketball, the caseworker wrote.

"He loves his brothers and his sister. He would never let anybody hurt us, that’s for sure," Alyasiry said. "He loves to laugh. He’s so silly.

"Mohannad is just a really sweet boy."
MU enrollment numbers break spring semester record

Saturday, January 24, 2015 at 12:00 am

The University of Missouri is seeing record enrollment numbers for a spring semester during its first week of classes.

MU had 32,588 students enrolled on Tuesday when the semester started, spokesman Christian Basi said.

The enrollment is a record for spring numbers, following the fall semester where 35,441 students set a new record of enrollment in MU’s history. Basi said with a larger fall class, it makes sense that the university would retain more students in the spring.

Undergraduate enrollment this semester is 25,186, with 6,202 graduate students.

The increase in enrollment on the flagship campus last semester was about 2 percent. At MU, freshman enrollment was up 5 percent to 6,518 students, 25 percent of whom are first-generation college students.

The largest decline at MU last semester was in first-year professional students. That population saw a 2.6 percent dip from the 2013-14 school year to last fall. MU enrolled 1,222 of those students in the fall, and 1,200 for the spring semester.

Last fall, MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin attributed the change to decreased enrollment in the MU School of Law, saying the “too many lawyers” messaging that went out in several national publications this past year appears to have stunted enrollment.

Mizzou Alternative Breaks continues rapid growth

Saturday, January 24, 2015 | 9:04 p.m. CST
BY VIVIAN FARMER
COLUMBIA – Mizzou Alternative Breaks will extend its record-setting streak this spring.

Nearly 800 MU students will be spending their spring breaks serving others on 65 trips around the country this year, according to Mizzou Alternative Breaks adviser Bryan Goers. That's up from around 650 students on 53 trips last spring.

The program, which was founded in 1991, has grown rapidly in recent years. Just 88 students took part in eight trips in 2008, according to the MU Division of Student Affairs.

Last year, 842 students went on 69 trips during the winter and spring breaks, making Mizzou Alternative Breaks the second largest alternative break program in the country. Ohio State University holds the top spot, Goers said.

Hai Kim, Mizzou Alternative Breaks' director for spring service, said students are assigned to serve on a wide range of trips. Past participants have worked with animal rescuers in New Orleans, helped with disaster relief in New York and taken care of rescued tigers in North Carolina.

Kim volunteered for an alternative break during his freshman year in 2012. He spent his spring break helping Joplin, Missouri rebuild after a catastrophic tornado in 2011.

The trips are entirely organized by students. Group leaders determine where their groups will go and the organizations they will help serve. One group has chosen to travel to Jacksonville, Florida, this spring to work with children in the Wolfson Children’s Hospital. Students will help foster a relaxed and nurturing environment for sick children and create activities to take the kids' minds off of their illnesses.

Volunteers in Houston will work with the Creative Dreams Outreach Center, an after-school arts and tutoring program that offers free art, dance and music lessons. He said volunteers will help with creating lesson plans and work with the kids.

Not all of the alternative breaks are “necessarily fun,” Kim said, and some volunteers might end up doing paperwork. But fun isn't the focus of the trips.
“The big thing is our MAB principles,” he said. Those principles include putting service first and thinking selflessly.

Any lack of fun certainly hasn't stemmed interest from volunteers. The sheer number of students who want to participate in the alternative breaks program means there might be a few trips planned for the summer, Goers said, but there aren't any firm plans yet.

As for why the program has grown so quickly, Goers said that the program "speaks to Mizzou students."

"Mizzou is a very service-oriented place, and you see that through a ton of organizations," Goers said.

Goers also noted the profound effect the trips can have on students.

"People come back and it's hard not to talk about it," he said.

Cat genes could hold vital clues to treatments for human diseases

Scientists have recruited a new ally in their battle to fight disease: domestic moggies. They believe the genetic profiles of cats contain crucial clues about diseases to which humans and felines are both susceptible. These illnesses include diabetes, asthma and some causes of blindness.

To exploit the connection, researchers have launched a genome sequencing project, called 99 Lives, which aims to determine the exact genetic profiles of 99 domestic cats. The results should provide them with data that could generate new medicines for treating both cats and humans for such illnesses, they say. In addition, the project should provide data that will help zoologists track down the evolutionary origins of the domestic cat.
“Until now, genetic research on humans’ companion animals – pets such as dogs, cats and rabbits – has concentrated, almost exclusively, on dogs,” said Stephen O’Brien, a geneticist based at the Theodosius Dobzhansky Centre in St Petersburg.

“There has been widespread sequencing of canine genomes, as a result. Given dogs’ susceptibilities to certain cancers, the benefits were clear. But cats were ignored, and that was wrong, for they suffer from many diseases that humans also contract, from diabetes to the feline form of Aids. They have a lot to tell us.”

An example of this shared susceptibility to disease is provided by polycystic kidney disease (PKD), a key cause of renal failure in cats and in elderly people.

**In 2004 a team led by Professor Leslie Lyons, of the University of Missouri, discovered that the genetic mutations that cause the disease occur in the same gene in humans and cats.**

“This has given us a new approach to studying the disease,” Lyons said. “We are now studying other parts of the cat genome to see if these pieces of DNA have an influence on the speed and severity of the spread of PKD in an animal.”

“There is a lot of variation both among cats – and among humans – in the way that PKD takes effect. And once we understand these influences we may able to design drugs that could counter PKD, and then test them on cats. That will be of help for both cats and humans. In addition, the discovery has allowed us to create a test to let breeders know if a cat is susceptible to kidney disease and so help create future breeds that will be unaffected by the condition.”

However, when it came to looking at other diseases shared by humans and cats, scientists found there was a lack of genetic information. The first full canine genome was worked out in 2005 and the DNA of dozens of other dogs of various species has been sequenced since. By contrast, the first full genome of a cat – an abyssinian called Cinnamon – was not published until late 2014, the journal *Nature* revealed last week.

As a result Lyons has launched 99 Lives. Anyone with a cat can provide specimens of blood or other tissue, although the organisation – which is seeking funding support – will charge an owner $7,500 (£5,000) to become involved in the project. “We already have specimens from about 40 cats and are now sequencing their genes,” said Lyons.

The project will allow researchers to trace, in detail, the origins of the house cat. Most experts believe its domestication began in the Near East, about 10,000 years ago, when wild cats were attracted to the rodent-ridden grain stores created by the first farmers. Cats gathered to kill mice and rats, produced lovable kittens and were accepted into the homes beside the grain stores.

As agriculture spread, cats travelled with these early farmers. Thus Europe’s domestic tabby is likely to be related to the Arabian wild cat.

“That is the rough picture we have,” said cat genome researcher Razib Kahn, an evolutionary geneticist at the University of California, Davis.
“However, the detail is not clear. Genome sequences should help us understand exactly how cats arrived in our homes and tell us how much they have changed over the millennia in which they have been sharing their lives with humans.”

Bond proposal would convert MoDOT building into space for legislature

By Rudi Keller

Friday, January 23, 2015 at 2:00 pm

JEFFERSON CITY — A proposal to borrow $350 million for building repairs and renovation has revived the idea of converting the Missouri Department of Transportation headquarters into space for legislative staff and executive branch employees now housed in the Capitol.

The MoDOT building is just a few paces from the Capitol and would become the “Capitol Annex” under the plan being considered for using bonds authorized by lawmakers last year. The proposal for using that money sets aside $35 million for the conversion, along with $40 million for stone repairs to stop leaks in the Capitol itself.

“It will provide more office space, more hearing rooms and, probably more important, get staff to where they have decent working conditions,” Sen. Mike Parson, R-Bolivar, said as he presented a list of projects Thursday to the Senate Rules, Joint Rules, Resolutions and Ethics Committee.

Decisions on which legislative staff members and executive branch employees would move to the MoDOT building have not been made, Senate Majority Leader Ron Richard said after the hearing.

Other MoDOT buildings can house operations currently in the headquarters building, Richard said. Along with offices, the annex building would be outfitted with committee hearing rooms and a media center for lawmakers to do live television interviews.

Dozens of House members are now crammed into offices stacked on the Capitol’s first floor. The upper offices are cramped, hot and inaccessible to people with disabilities.

“Anyone who has been speaker of the House understands the problem,” said Richard, who was speaker from 2009 to 2011.
In his State of the State Address on Wednesday evening, Gov. Jay Nixon endorsed using the new authority. His budget proposal asks lawmakers to approve spending the money in the current fiscal year, a necessary step before the bonds can be issued.

Parson’s project list is similar to one approved by the state Senate last year. The proposal sets aside $200 million for state college and university buildings — including $38.5 million already slated for Lafferre Hall in Columbia — and $191.9 million for state buildings. The list is split into two resolutions, which might speed up debate by allowing the Senate to consider which projects it will support while the House starts with bills to authorize spending.

A bill passed last year authorizes the Board of Public Buildings to issue up to $600 million in state bonds, with $400 million dedicated to repair and renovation needs and $200 million set aside for a new Fulton State Hospital.

The state hospital is being financed with money borrowed through the bond authority of another agency and Nixon is asking lawmakers to make the authority more general. He wants $50 million to build a new veterans nursing home, but unlike the repair bond package, legislators must rewrite the law before the bonds can be issued.

The only project currently underway is the Lafferre Hall expansion and renovation on the University of Missouri-Columbia campus. Parson’s resolutions set aside another $56.5 million for UM system projects, including $12.5 million to replace the elevator and cooling system, install a fire suppression system and add a stairwell to Stewart Hall on the Columbia campus.

Colleges and universities have agreed on the individual projects and the distribution of funds, Parson told the committee.

The agitation for money to pay for new buildings and major renovations will not end with approval of the current list, said Paul Wagner, executive director of the Council of Public Higher Education.

“We’ve got lots more behind them,” he said. “The needs are outweighed by the resources available here.”

February: Briefly in the News
$20 million

Blinkx, an Internet media company that connects consumers and brands through premium content online, has acquired Columbia-based AdKarma as of Dec. 19, 2014. Blinkx and AdKarma entered into an agreement for an initial consideration of $15 million in cash and an additional $5 million in cash or stock, payable in one year.

AdKarma, a video supply side platform, ranked as one of Inc. 500’s fastest-growing businesses, nationwide, in 2014.

According to a press release from Blinkx, the acquisition of AdKarma will not only “enable Blinkx to further expand its footprint within the programmatic advertising ecosystem” but will also provide financial contributions. AdKarma’s gross revenue in 2013 was $13.3 million, an increase of 102 percent over 2012, and its gross profit grew by 118 percent from 2012, to $2.4 million in 2013.

Nonprofits unite

The Boone County Council on Aging merged with Services for Independent Living at the end of last year. The new organization will function under the name Services for Independent Living. The merger, which took place Month Day, is meant to increase the scope and accessibility of services provided by the two organizations.

“I believe this merger is key to the long-term success of BCCA’s model and our clients,” says Boone County Council on Aging Executive Director Jessica Macy. The Boone County Council on Aging will continue to offer its volunteer and case management services under the new merger.

Teenage dreams

The Callaway Bank has launched a lending program for high school-aged entrepreneurs. The Youth Entrepreneur Program, or YEP, will offer low-interest loans of up to $1,000 for students starting a business.

“Students today aren’t limited by the same obstacles they were even 20 years ago,” says Kim Barnes, president and CEO. “Technology lets them build a business with much more flexibility.”

The program will also assist students with preparing a budget, a business plan and presenting a loan request. Although a parent or guardian must co-apply for the loan, The Callaway Bank press release states the program will help students learn financial responsibility and accountability.

$3.1 million

University of Missouri Children’s Hospital now has a larger neonatal intensive care unit to provide critical care to more premature and critically ill newborns.
The hospital completed a $3.1 million renovation of the NICU this month. The expansion adds 10 beds to the unit, which brings the total number of specialty beds to 48.

The NICU now includes 20 single-patient rooms, two lactation areas (giving new mothers private space for breastfeeding), a family-infant room where families can stay overnight with their newborns to simulate how it might be once the newborn is at home and away from constant medical care, a portable digital X-ray machine and developer and a new blood gas laboratory.

Construction and new equipment in the NICU were funded through a number of donations, including a $1 million pledge from MizzouThon, the largest student-run philanthropy at MU. The NICU has been renamed the MizzouThon Neonatal Intensive Care Unit in recognition of the group’s pledge.

February: Movers and Shakers

Boone County National Bank

Boone County National Bank announced several promotions at the end of 2014. Dawn Shellabarger has been promoted to vice president of commercial lending from assistant vice president of commercial lending, a position she held since 2009. Additionally, Hilary Babcock has been promoted to a residential underwriter III; Jeffrey McLaren, customer service representative I; and Arlene Higgins, customer service representative II.

Jennifer Megee

Megee has been promoted to executive vice president and director of retail banking and deposit services for Providence Bank. In her new role, Megee will be responsible for deposit services and will lead retail operations for all 13 banking centers, as well as manage product and business development, consumer lending and affinity programs. Megee has been with Providence Bank since 2009.

Kim Whorton

Whorton, trust officer and relationship manager for Landmark Bank in Columbia, has been awarded the Certified Trust and Financial Adviser, or CTFA, designation from the Institute of Certified Bankers. The CTFA designation recognizes individuals who demonstrate excellence in the field of wealth management and trust. ICB is a subsidiary of the American Bankers Association.
Randy E. White

Effective Feb. 1, Randy E. White will replace retiring fire chief Charles P. Witt Jr. White is a 16-year veteran of the Columbia Fire Department and has served as deputy chief for more than three years. He will earn an annual salary of $120,000 and will receive a car allowance and other authorized employee benefits.

Scott Dalrymple

Columbia College President Scott Dalrymple has been appointed to the board of directors for the Missouri Innovation Center. MIC is a nonprofit that assists with technology commercialization in mid-Missouri. During his three-year term, Dalrymple will represent Columbia College, which began offering a major and minor in entrepreneurship in the fall of 2014.

Columbia Convention and Visitors Bureau

The Columbia Convention and Visitors Bureau has promoted Megan McConachie to marketing and communications manager and Rachel Grant to public information specialist. McConachie will be responsible for planning and executing the CVB’s marketing budget, media and public relations and communications planning and overseeing the CVB’s online strategy. Grant will be responsible for the CVB’s website content, social media profiles, e-newsletters and other communication projects.

Cynthia Louden

Columbia College has hired Louden as director of academic assessment. In the newly created position, Louden will assist in the improvement of curriculum across all of the college’s venues and programs, as well as coordinate academic assessment activities collegewide, advise faculty and staff on improving assessment practices and oversee using technology for assessment.

University of Missouri

The American Association for the Advancement of Science has recognized four University of Missouri scientists: Henry C. “Hank” Foley was recognized for contributions to emerging technologies; Silvia Jurisson, for cancer research; K. Krishna Sharma, for ophthalmology research; and Jerry Atwood, for chemistry research. The four are among 401 new fellows elected by their peers.

Garnett S. Stokes

MU has appointed Stokes as provost and executive vice chancellor for academic affairs. Stokes, whose appointment is effective Feb. 2, was formerly the provost and executive vice chancellor for academic affairs at Florida State University, where she focused on several initiatives to elevate the university to a top-25 public research university.

Jessica Mahon
Mahon is now the director of employment services at Alternative Community Training. She will oversee both ACT Career Services and ACT Works. She began working at ACT in 2008 as a community liaison manager and then worked as program manager for the Community Employment Program prior to her recent promotion.