Alden talks about his tenure, years of growth at MU athletic program


COLUMBIA, Mo. - Since University of Missouri Athletic Director Mike Alden's tenure began about 17 years ago, the program has grown and changed in ways many never could have imagined.

Alden took MU Athletics from a program with about $13 million in revenue to a more than $80 million a year powerhouse.

Alden said the growth from $13.7 million to $84 million in revenue has been an amazing accomplishment for the University, and the addition of state-of-the-art facilities at nearly every sports venue is the most visible impact of that money.

ABC 17 asked Alden about some of the biggest changes he's seen since he arrived.

"I think financially and the work that our donors have done and the type of scholarship fund has been great," said Alden.

Since his arrival, there has been about a $233 million building boom for MU athletics facilities.

Alden has overseen about $265 million in private gifts for Tiger Athletics, and in fall 2014, Mizzou's Memorial Stadium opened a new east side tower as one of the most visible benefits of joining the SEC.

Alden said a pivotal point in his career was three years ago when MU left the Big 12 behind and joined the SEC.

"The distribution that occurs in the SEC is all equally distributed. That in itself has really helped raise it. But now, going forward, this is more than you want, but I'm going to tell you, the opportunities that we see as continued revenue growth are beyond the SEC Network. We've got to sell more season tickets in men's football and men's basketball, we know that but all of our sports."
$247 million is the impact on local economy; a staggering number for a city the size of Columbia. Alden said the SEC has had a hand in that number as well, because of the number of fans who travel in for games.

ABC 17 also asked what other benefits the SEC has had on the program.

"Not only our student athletes, of course, and what we're trying to do in our academic center, but our facilities growth. We've been able to apply toward that. Our scholarship fund has continued to grow and our endowment was not nearly what it is. I think we were at $25 million for an endowment when I got here, and we've been able to expand our reserve to I think it was only about $500,000. It was about $500,000 in a savings account, that's not much for a program but we only had a budget of $13.7 million.

Alden said that reserve is now much larger and the program as a whole is much better off than when he arrived. He said the program is also able to contribute about $2 million per year to other initiatives outside athletics at the university.
"This is one of the best athletic departments in the country, one of the best athletic director jobs in America," Alden said.

He said the decision to step down was strictly his, based on his faith and passion for teaching.

"There's nothing about my health, there's nothing about my family, nothing about our finances, there's nothing about anything out there," Alden said. "So the timing couldn't be better, to be able to take that baton, pass that to somebody else, and take our leader, Dr. Loftin and all the great things he's doing, all the tools in his toolbelt to be able to go out and recruit our next leader."

Loftin and Middleton praised the job Alden has done as athletic director.

"I was most impressed by Mike's integrity," Middleton said. "Mike had a real commitment to doing the right thing the right way."

Loftin said, "There are very, very few Division I AD's with his length of tenure at one institution. His long-term service here at Mizzou is exceptional and has been impactful. This man has transformed athletics at the University of Missouri by any measure."

Alden became emotional when discussing his family history, holding back tears as he described how his brother never left him after the two were split up in a custody case, and called him his hero.

"I had the opportunity to grow up with a lot of different people," Alden said. "But my brother, John, never left me, ever."

Alden then discussed the different successes and mistakes during his run as athletic director.

"We had a lot of challenges within our athletic program," Alden said. "Our finances really were not in real good shape, guys. We were kind of close to the bottom of the Big 12 at that time. We had a lot of work to do and we needed to really improve in a lot of other areas, in particular competitiveness. We needed to make sure we were across the board a more competitive program."

He said, "Have we made some mistakes along the way? Absolutely we have. Have we stumbled along the way? Absolutely we have. And have we had challenges? There's no doubt about that. But I believe, and I think we believe that each and every one of those challenges, each and every one of those stumbles, or each and every one of those mistakes, that we learned from that. We learned from that and we grew from that."

Alden referenced Missouri's success in academics and top status as an academic football program in the Southeastern Conference. He said the future is bright for the athletic program.

"I think that the future really holds opportunities ahead of us to give us a chance to not only compete for SEC championships in all of our sports, but to compete for national championships," Alden said.
Alden said he had been thinking about stepping down for a while.

"It's probably been going on for a couple of years," Alden said. "I think I zeroed in a little bit more on it back in probably late spring, maybe early summer."

Alden still has seven months to go, but said Loftin gave him the option of his resignation being effective at any time, if ever. He said the time frame was impacted by the recruiting process for a replacement.

"The ideal time to do that for athletic directors in our profession generally is February, March, April, maybe May of the year," Alden said.

As far as replacing Alden goes, Loftin said he will conduct the search, but also is considering hiring a search firm.

"We will do the search right," Loftin said. "It will be a careful process, but not terribly lengthy."

Loftin outlined what he is looking for in hiring another athletic director.

"My goal is to make sure we have stability and we continue our upper trajectory," Loftin said. "This place is doing very well. We don't want to lose the momentum we have right now."

After Alden's resignation goes into effect on Aug. 31, he will be a part of the College of Education as an instructor in the Positive Coaching Program.

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**End of an era**

by Tom Loeffler

Mike Alden didn't make many friends early in his career as Missouri's athletic director.

Having a legend like Norm Stewart "retire" will do that.

Alden also had other bumps in the road with the men's basketball program, such as:
* Quin Snyder
* Ricky Clemons
* Frank Haith

Two coaches, one player, three stooges.

Alden hasn't had much success with the women's basketball program, either.

That's the bad news for Alden. But other than basketball, Alden has done nothing but good things --- and some great things --- for the school's athletic programs at Missouri.

When he announced Thursday that he was stepping down as athletic director after 17 years, effective Aug. 31, it was not only a surprise, but it also marked the end of an era.

"After several months of reflection, I've decided it is time for a change, both for me and for the University that I so dearly love," Alden wrote in a "Letter to the Mizzou Family."

"We are proud of what we have accomplished over the past 17 years, which is a lifetime for an athletics administrator. I am most proud of our tremendous coaches, staff and student athletes, and how they represent our University with academic integrity, social responsibility and competitive excellence."

Alden --- who will stay at the school as an instructor in the College of Education --- made a positive impact on most sports, from gymnastics to football and nearly everything in between.

His biggest hire, of course, was in college's biggest money-maker --- Gary Pinkel, who has not only stabilized the football program during his 14 years, he's taken it to national relevance with 10 bowl appearances and back-to-back SEC East championships.

Alden was the driving force Missouri's move from the Big 12 to the SEC in 2011. He also helped transform the school's athletic facilities, be it renovations or building new venues, and boosted the financial coffers to an all-time high.

"Over 17 years of service to the University of Missouri, Mike has transformed our athletics program into one of the nation's best, with world-class student-athletes, coaches, staff, facilities, affiliations and financial resources," Missouri Chancellor Richard Loftin said in a statement.

"Though I am saddened that Mike will no longer be a member of our leadership team ... Mike will always be a part of our family."

The search for Alden's successor will begin immediately.

"I look forward to continuing to working with all of you in the coming months," Alden said, "and assisting with the transition."
Alden has worked in athletic administration at the Division I level since 1985. He served as assistant athletic director for administration at Arizona State University from 1985-92, and as associate athletic director for development at the University of New Mexico from 1992-96.

In the early 1980s, Alden was offensive line coach and recruiting coordinator (1982-84) at the University of Evansville. He moved on to the University of Pennsylvania (1984-85) and was offensive line coach and strength coach for Penn’s 1984 Ivy League championship team.

His 17-year tenure as Missouri’s athletic director is tied for the second-longest in school history, trailing only the 27-year service of Don Faurot.

Reaction to Alden's decision started immediately. New basketball coach Kim Anderson --- who's hoping to stabilize a basketball program that was bankrupt of both its talent and soul by Haith --- was one of the first.

"Many thanks to Mike Alden for giving me this opportunity," Anderson said on Twitter. "Congrats on being able to pursue his passion and best wishes to his family."

Missouri softball coach Ehren Earleywine, a graduate of Jefferson City High School, offered this:

"Mike loves this place," Earleywine said to Blake Toppmeyer of the Columbia Daily Tribune. "He's kind of a sampling of what this state has been about. I like that, I always respected that.

"Regardless of how you saw the guy or what your opinion of him was, he left the place better than he got it. That's all you can ask."

Missouri athletic director Mike Alden, who has been publicly guarded throughout his 17-
year tenure at the helm of the Tigers’ athletic department, struggled to fight back tears several times Friday as he discussed his impending retirement.

**During a news conference at the Reynolds Alumni Center one day after he announced, Alden got choked up when he mentioned his executive assistant, Sandy Matthew, and again later when discussing his childhood — a departure from his usual public persona.**

Alden, 56, whose retirement takes effect Aug. 31, will transition to a teaching position in MU’s College of Education. He’ll be an instructor in the Positive Coaching Program, for which he’s been a guest lecturer, and also teach some classes on higher education leadership.

Missouri chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said the move was Alden’s decision to make.

Alden insisted that stepping down was his choice and it wasn’t related to his health, anything with his family or finances or anything else. He said he had been contemplating retirement with his wife, Rockie, for a few years, but “zeroed in on it a little more back in late spring, maybe early summer.”

“This is a perfect time,” Alden said. “We love the University of Missouri. We love the state of Missouri. Our family has been so blessed by this institution ... (but) if you truly want to be selfless, if you truly want to be a servant leader, if you truly want to let other people be the drum major, and you really believe that in your core, then you want to take that baton and you want to hand it to someone else.”

Loftin said he “didn’t really try to talk” Alden out of retirement.

“I respect Mike’s decision,” Loftin said. “It’s his decision to make. ... he made it very clear this was a firm, deliberate decision he and Rockie had come to together. I couldn’t dissuade him from that. I respected that decision, but my heart sank a bit, because we’re doing so well.”

Alden oversaw the most prosperous chapter in Missouri athletics history — an era defined by unparalleled revenue growth, four conference football title game appearances
and a successful transition from the Big 12 to the Southeastern Conference, but also marked by a handful of high-profile controversies.

While never mentioning any specifically, Alden acknowledged on Friday several missteps during his tenure.

“Have we made some mistakes along the way? Absolutely, we have,” he said. “Have we stumbled along the way? Absolutely, we have. And have we had challenges? There’s no doubt about that.

“But I believe, and I think we believe, that each and every one of those challenges, each and every one of those stumbles, each and every one of those mistakes that we learned from that. Our program learned from that, and we grew from that.”

Alden was criticized for his handling of several sexual assault allegations against Missouri athletes.

When former tailback Derrick Washington was investigated by MU Police for allegedly raping a female student in her dorm room in October 2008, the university didn’t launch an independent investigation as required by federal law. Alden said in August, after an ESPN report, that he knew of the allegation at the time but was unaware of Title IX-mandated reporting procedures for sexual assaults. Washington was not charged in that case and was not disciplined by the athletic department.

Washington wasn’t dismissed from the team until September 2010, after he was charged with felony sexual assault in a different case in which he was ultimately convicted and sentenced to prison.

Basketball player Mike Dixon Jr., who started the 2012-13 season under indefinite suspension for an undisclosed violation of team rules, left the team on Nov. 30, 2012, after two allegations of sexual assault against him were made public. Dixon was not charged in either case.

Perhaps most troubling was Missouri’s inaction when swimmer Sasha Menu Courey alleged that she was raped by football players in 2010. She committed suicide in 2011.
An investigation by the university prompted sweeping changes to the way MU handles sexual assault allegations.

“There’s always things you’re going to go back and look at and recognize either you have mistakes or you could have done things better ...” Alden said. “But as you look at that, in these types of jobs, there are always going to be those types of issues or crisis type management.

“You’re regretful that things happen, but what you hope is that, if they happen, and you know inevitably something’s going to happen, how you’re able to approach that and learn from it and go forward. Those are the things that I really choose to focus on.”

Alden said he believes the timing was perfect to hand the baton off to a successor, who will be chosen by Loftin as part of a national search.

“This is one of the best athletic departments in the country,” Alden said, “one of the best athletic director jobs in America.”

Under Alden, Missouri ranks second in the 14-team SEC in the NCAA’s Academic Progress Rate. He also said facilities growth, campus integration and fundraising have improved along with on-field competitiveness. Of course, the crown jewel of Alden’s legacy might be the Tigers’ move to the SEC, where the football team has won back-to-back Eastern Division championships.

“It has been an amazing impact, not only on this athletic program, but frankly on this university and the state of Missouri,” Alden said.

When Alden arrived at Missouri, the school had a $13.7 million athletic budget, one of the lowest in the Big 12, but it has grown to more than $83 million, according to the figures obtained by The Star. More money is expected in 2015, when the SEC Network begins to add revenue to the department.

Alden’s tenure includes the building of Mizzou Arena and an ongoing overhaul of Memorial Stadium. MU also recently upgraded its golf, tennis and baseball facilities and has plans in the works for a new softball stadium.
“He’s leaving at the top of his game,” Loftin said. “This university has never been in a better position in terms of athletics than it’s in today.”

Alden didn’t rule out the possibility of returning to athletics administration someday, but he said it wouldn’t be as the SEC commissioner. Mike Slive announced in October that he would retire July 31.

On balance, the good outweighed the bad during Alden’s tenure, which included a messy divorce with men’s basketball coach Norm Stewart in 1999 and the ill-fated tenure of Stewart’s successor, Quin Snyder.

Snyder’s time at MU was marked by the Ricky Clemons fiasco, which ended with NCAA sanctions and included a slew of embarrassing jailhouse tapes that were made public in December 2003.

Alden’s handling of both Clemons and Snyder, especially Snyder’s eventual resignation in February 2006, were heavily criticized. The Board of Curators met to discuss Alden’s future on the morning Mike Anderson was introduced as Snyder’s replacement.

Anderson led MU to an Elite Eight in 2009, matching Snyder’s trip in 2002, before leaving in 2011 for Arkansas. Alden hired Frank Haith as Anderson’s replacement despite a developing booster scandal at the University of Miami. Haith eventually was suspended five games in 2013 for NCAA rules violations with the Hurricanes.

When Haith left for Tulsa last spring, that brought Alden full circle, hiring Kim Anderson, a former player and assistant under Stewart who was dismissed from the MU coaching staff after Snyder arrived.

“Not that everything was fun and roses all the time, but it’s very unusual for an athletic director to stay at one place for that many years ... ” MU football coach Gary Pinkel said. “He is so well-respected nationally, he is so well-respected in the SEC for his accomplishments and what a first-class man he is.”

Certainly, the football program is in better shape than when Alden arrived, a reflection of his willingness to stick with Pinkel through some lean early seasons. Pinkel had losing
records in three of his first four years, then reached a school-record seven consecutive bowl games and won two Big 12 North and SEC East titles.

“When I accepted the job, I said, ‘I need somebody that, when things get tough, I need somebody to be able to stand next to me and give me an opportunity to build the program’ and it happened,” Pinkel said. “It happened a couple times in his first five years, so I’ll be indebted to him forever.

“Without that strength and that leadership, guess what, they’d still be flipping coaches here and the program wouldn’t be near what it’s like.”

Read more here: http://www.kansascity.com/sports/college/sec/university-of-missouri/article8622500.html#storylink=cpy

Loftin looks for athletic, academic balance in next MU athletic director

BY TOD PALMER
01/31/2015 6:25 PM

The search is on for Missouri’s next athletic director after Mike Alden announced plans Thursday to step down Aug. 31.

Alden has been the Tigers’ athletic director since 1998 and helped raise the athletic department’s national profile substantially during his tenure, including guiding the transition from the Big 12 to the Southeastern Conference.

Maintaining the momentum Alden helped foster will be critical for his eventual replacement.

“The program Mike has shaped for 17 years here is incredible ...” MU chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said at a news conference Friday at the
Reynolds Alumni Center. “Where do you find this kind of success both academically and athletically combined? It’s very, very rare.

“We don’t want to lose that, so that’s the most important thing going forward. We have achieved so much. We can achieve even more, so the critical issue here is finding a leader who gets that and understands that balance.”

Loftin said he will spearhead the nationwide search for Alden’s successor.

“We will do the search right,” Loftin said. “It will be a careful process, but not terribly lengthy.”

The last time Loftin hired an athletic director was during his tenure at Texas A&M, when he lured Eric Hyman from South Carolina in 2012 in what was widely considered a home-run hire.

Loftin said that search took about six weeks. He wouldn’t commit to such a swift timeline again, but he made it clear that he wants to identify MU’s next athletic director soon.

“The longer we delay in identifying a new leader here, the more uncertainty we create and the more difficulty we create for the programs,” Loftin said. “My goal is to make sure we have stability and we continue our upward trajectory. This place is doing very well, and we don’t want to lose the momentum we have right now.”

Loftin has used a search firm to aid in filling previous vacancies, but he said Friday he has not made a decision about using a search firm in this instance.

Three former Alden assistants who are currently Division I athletic directors — Virginia Tech’s Whit Babcock, Mississippi’s Ross Bjork and Southern Illinois’ Mario Moccia — seemingly would make logical candidates.

Babcock, 44, took the Hokies’ top athletics job last January after two years in the same position at Cincinnati. He spent five years on Alden’s staff as executive associate athletic director beginning in 2007.
Bjork, 42, a Dodge City, Kan., native and Emporia State graduate, has been the Rebels’ athletic director since 2012. He spent six years at MU, most of that time under Alden, working as athletic development officer during 1997-2001 and assistant athletic director for development during 2001-03.

Moccia, 47, has been with the Salukis since 2006. Before that, he was Missouri’s senior associate athletic director for seven years.

If Loftin has a short list of candidates in mind, he chose not to tip his hand.

“I have no predetermined outcome in terms of who it might be,” Loftin said. “We have no person in mind, no name in mind right this second.”

Loftin said the ideal candidate will have extensive experience working with coaches, but also will be a good communicator with a savvy business mind.

“People who grasp the power of media, grasp how we monetize this whole operation here, that has to be there as well …” Loftin said. “We have an $85 million-a-year budget roughly here at Mizzou. You’ve got to be a good manager. You’re a CEO of a pretty good-sized program. You’ve got to pick good people then support them to be able to do their jobs well. There’s a variety of things you do as an A.D.”

Alden said he would avail himself to Loftin if asked.

“If I could be of any assistance to Dr. Loftin at all, of course I would be, but certainly he’s the man,” Alden said. “He has done this before. He’s a great leader, and I don’t think he really needs any help.”

Similarly, Tigers football coach Gary Pinkel indicated that he’d be willing to offer input but didn’t necessarily expect to be consulted in the decision-making process.

“Chancellor Loftin is very, very good at what he does,” Pinkel said. “If he would ask me about anything, I certainly would give an opinion, but I have all the confidence in the world that he’ll do a great job. Mike Alden has turned this into a great job, so I think we’ll get somebody really good in here.”
As Alden prepares to leave, revenue and fund raising are at all-time highs.

Pinkel has stabilized the football program and molded it into a contender in the mighty SEC.

Former Norm Stewart disciple Kim Anderson is nine months into rebuilding the Tigers’ men’s basketball program.

Memorial Stadium has received a facelift each of the last two seasons with plans to build a south end-zone complex in the planning stages.

There also are plans for a new softball stadium, which go before the MU System Board of Curators later this week, in addition to recent facilities upgrades for tennis, golf and baseball.

“You can’t replace Mike Alden, but we’ll find a leader for our program that is of great character, fits the criteria that we want as a person to have at Mizzou,” Loftin said.

Read more here: http://www.kansascity.com/sports/college/sec/university-of-missouri/article8860049.html#storylink=cpy

Who's Mizzou's next choice for AD?

By Dave Matter
COLUMBIA, Mo. • Now that departing Mizzou athletics director Mike Alden has answered why he’s stepping down, it’s time for the next question.

Who’s next?

MU chancellor R. Bowen Loftin has already launched a national search for his new AD and hopes to have the process completed “reasonably fast,” he said Friday. When he hired Eric Hyman from South Carolina to Texas A&M back in 2012, Loftin used the Atlanta-based firm Parker Executive Search, which has handled many athletic director and head coaching searches for Division I schools, including several from the SEC. Arkansas, Georgia, LSU and Mississippi State have all hired the same firm.

Based on the list of criteria Loftin explained Friday — he made an emphasis on CEO types who can “grasp the power of the media” — and some feedback over the weekend from people in the industry, here’s an early look at some possible candidates who could land on Loftin’s radar.

Mack Rhoades, Houston

Loftin and his search committee considered Rhoades, 48, for the Texas A&M AD job back in 2012. Rhoades came to UH in 2009 after serving as Akron’s AD. At both schools he built new football stadiums. So he knows the arts of fundraising and facilities. He also spent seven years at UTEP, where he worked under AD and former Mizzou football coach Bob Stull. Rhoades is known for high energy and does not meddle with his coaches. Well respected among his peers in the AD business.

Salary: $537,600 (USA Today)

Jason Cook, Texas A&M

The Aggies senior associate AD for external operations is an obvious candidate because of his connections to Loftin. Cook, 41, was Loftin’s right-hand man in College Station during A&M’s transition into the SEC. Under his current title, he’s in charge of marketing, communications, event management and broadcast initiatives. He lacks experience as a school’s head athletics honcho, but he’s a rising star in the industry. If Mizzou doesn’t hire him someone else in the power conferences will.

Salary: Unavailable

Ross Bjork, Ole Miss

Bjork, 44, worked at Mizzou before Alden arrived then climbed the ranks under Mizzou’s AD. He later moved on to staffs at UCLA and Miami before getting his first AD job at Western Kentucky. Under Bjork’s watch the last two years, Ole Miss has worked to overhaul its facilities, starting with the Manning Center, a football indoor practice building. Next season, the Rebels open a new basketball arena. Bjork inherited the head
coaches in both of his high-profile teams — football’s Hugh Freeze and basketball’s Andy Kennedy — but has made head-coaching hires in track, women’s basketball, volleyball and softball. Bjork is tight with Ole Miss icon and booster Archie Manning, who likely won’t let his AD leave Oxford without making a plush counteroffer.

**Salary:** $400,000 (USA Today)

### Whit Babcock, Virginia Tech

Another Alden protege, Babcock, 44, came to MU in 2007 and spent five years as second in command. A former college baseball player at James Madison, Babcock worked at Auburn — SEC experience — and West Virginia before joining Alden’s senior staff. He left MU for his first AD gig at Cincinnati then took over at Virginia Tech last January. At UC, Babcock lured football coach Tommy Tuberville away from Texas Tech. After two months on the job in Blacksburg, he scored a major coup, landing Marquette basketball coach Buzz Williams. Babcock is widely respected in the industry.

**Salary:** $470,000 (Daily Press)

### Mario Moccia, New Mexico State

Here’s another former Mizzou senior staffer who cut his teeth alongside Alden at New Mexico and Southwest Texas State then came to Mizzou with his boss and served as Alden’s top lieutenant for seven years. As AD at Southern Illinois-Carbondale, Moccia, 47, overhauled the Salukis’ facilities thanks to a massive fundraising campaign, while 11 Saluki teams captured conference championships under his watch. Moccia just recently left SIU for New Mexico State, his alma mater.

**Salary:** $240,000 (Las Cruces News)

### Chris Del Conte, TCU

This would require a swing for the fences. Since coming to Fort Worth in 2009, Del Conte has overseen $250 million worth of facility upgrades and helped maneuver TCU’s move into the Big 12. His name gets attached to every high-profile AD opening — for good reason. He’s considered an elite fundraiser and his teams have thrived on the field: In five years on campus, TCU has won league titles in nine sports.

**Salary:** $695,769 (USA Today)

### Kirby Hocutt, Texas Tech

Hocutt, 42, is highly regarded in the Big 12. He came to Lubbock after three years as Miami’s AD and held the same position at Ohio University. A former Kansas State linebacker, Hocutt worked under Joe Castiglione in Oklahoma’s athletics department and was a major force in OU’s fundraising efforts. Here’s the catch with Hocutt: In 2011, Hocutt left Miami shortly before the Nevin Shapiro saga struck the program there. Hocutt denied granting the since-imprisoned booster special privileges at Miami. He was cleared in the Miami mess, but his name association with Shapiro might be enough to scare off another school affected by Shapiro’s shenanigans. At Texas Tech, he missed on hiring basketball coach Billy Gillispie and the jury’s still out on his football hire, former Texas Tech QB Kliff Kingsbury. At Miami, Hocutt hired current football coach Al Golden.
Salary: $595,900 (USA Today)

**Scott Barnes, Utah State**
Not a household name, but neither was Alden when he came to Mizzou in 1998. Barnes, 52, has across-the-board high marks at Utah State, where the on-field success has been strong in the Mountain West. Academics are excellent. Facility improvements have been nonstop. Barnes has major-conference experience at the University of Washington. In 2009, Barnes hired football coach Gary Anderson, who parlayed his success in Logan to the top job at Wisconsin. Barnes has served on the NCAA Tournament committee and currently holds the committee chairman position.
Salary: $350,108

**Doug Gillin, Missouri**
Gillin, 45, has served as Alden’s deputy AD since 2012. He’s never been an athletic director but he has vast experience in the worlds of branding and marketing. He spent 12 years at IMG College, the country's leading collegiate multimedia, marketing and licensing/brand management company. He’ll run his own athletics department sooner than later.
Salary: $200,000

**Brian Wickstrom, Louisiana-Monroe**
Another branch off the Alden tree, Wickstrom, 45, is in his second season at ULM after serving as AD at UC-Riverside. At Mizzou, he ran the athletics department’s capital campaign project. Wickstrom was recently named one of the top 10 fundraising ADs in Division I by CollegeAD.org — along with Alden and Bjork.
Salary: Unavailable

**John Currie, Kansas State**
Currie, 43, has SEC roots as a former assistant AD at Tennessee. He took over at K-State in 2009. The Wildcats’ 2012-13 was especially strong under Currie’s leadership as K-State became just the fourth power conference school since 1998 to win league titles in football, men's basketball and baseball in the same year. K-State has done well financially under Currie’s watch, working with a budget surplus in each of the last five years with the budget growing by more than $20 million.
Salary: $537,500
Loftin faced with task of replacing Alden

By David Morrison

Saturday, January 31, 2015 at 12:00 am

Missouri Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin has been through this before, recently in fact.

Texas A&M Athletic Director Bill Byrne announced his retirement in May 2012, leaving Loftin — then the Aggies’ chancellor — to come up with a replacement that would lead Texas A&M into its first year in the Southeastern Conference, a move Loftin played no small part in helping orchestrate.

Loftin said it took six weeks for him to lure Eric Hyman from South Carolina.

He wouldn’t promise that exact time frame in his search for a replacement for Mike Alden, who announced Thursday that he is stepping down after 17 years leading Missouri’s athletic department, effective Aug. 31.

But Loftin is certain he doesn’t want the hunt to drag on.

“The longer we delay identifying a new leader here, the more uncertainty we create in the program,” Loftin said Friday. “My goal is to make sure we have stability. This place is doing very well. We don’t want to lose what we have right now. We’ll do the process right. We’ll do it deliberately, and it will be done in a reasonably fast way, which is typical.

“These are not searches that take forever.”

Loftin didn’t deal in many specifics about the nascent process of finding Alden’s successor.

He said he wasn’t yet sure whether he’d be using a search firm, as he did with the Atlanta-based Parker Executive Search when he hired Hyman at Texas A&M.

In that case, Loftin said, he provided the firm with what he was looking for in an athletic director and the firm spoke to about 40 people on Loftin’s behalf and brought him back four candidates.

Loftin said he’d “likely” go a similar route this time.

“The advantages are, first of all, confidentiality,” Loftin said. “These search firms, if you pick the right one, have reputations. They’re based, essentially, on being confidential about a search. They also have access. They have all the cell phone numbers of all the people out there that could be probable candidates for this job.”
Alden has already been a sounding board about the type of candidate needed to run Missouri’s athletic department, Loftin said, and he doesn’t anticipate needing much more guidance from Alden as it progresses.

Alden said it was his choice to announce the resignation in January, to give Loftin the whole spring to seek his replacement. He signed a two-year extension in 2012 that had him under contract at the university through the 2019 school year.

“I’ve really been toying around with this for a couple of years,” said Alden, who plans to transition into a teaching role in Missouri’s College of Education. “It’s been something on our mind about when it’s going to be a good time for us to try to transition to something else, where are we at with regards to the program, how are we going to continue to develop that? I think I zeroed in a little bit more on it in late spring, early summer, talked to a couple of people that I’m really close to that gave me some feedback and advice, and we kind of wrapped it up.

Loftin “gave me the option of whatever time to be able to do that. That was something I chose because, really, I thought it worked best for Mizzou.”

Loftin laid out a list of attributes he’d like to see from the candidate that takes the reins.

He wants someone with “deep experience” in athletics, someone that can deal with coaches and athletes on a daily basis and give them a sense of support.

Loftin also wants someone who understands the media climate of the day, how to seize opportunities to grow the revenue pool that ballooned to about $70 million a year more than it was when Alden took over in 1998.

He said previous experience as an athletic director at a “Power 5” conference program would be important, but not essential.

“We have an $85 million a year budget here. You’ve got to be a good manager,” Loftin said. “You’re a CEO of a pretty good-sized program.”

Football Coach Gary Pinkel, by far the highest-paid athletic department employee, wouldn’t mind seeing some more of the stability he felt under Alden.

Alden hired Pinkel about 30 months after he took over at Missouri.

“That’s the only reason I came here, because I felt we had a guy to do that, because what they did before was they just fired everybody after about four or five years. When you do that, you inherit what I inherited, which was a lot of problems,” Pinkel said. “Mike stuck with me, and that’s one of the things that I talked to him about when I accepted the job.

“I said that when things get tough, I need someone that’s going to be able to stand next to me and give me an opportunity to build the program. And that had happened. It happened a couple times in his first five years, so I’ll be indebted to him forever.
“Without that strength and that leadership, guess what? They’d still be flipping coaches here, and the program wouldn’t be near what it’s like.”

With his new role on campus, Alden should be around to see at least the early stages of his successor’s career at Missouri. Loftin said it could be an awkward situation, depending on the person.

While he ruled out a run at replacing outgoing SEC Commissioner Mike Slive, Alden said he didn’t know whether he would seek another athletics job in the future.

For now, his focus is on teaching. The second-longest-tenured athletic director in Missouri history behind only Don Faurot is not sure how he’ll deal with stepping away.

“It’s kind of like a child. It’s almost like you’ve been raising this unit for 17 years, and now you’re going to turn that over to someone,” Alden said. “Am I a little concerned about that? I am. I think it’ll be tough, because I’ve been doing it for quite some time and I love it.

“I’m wired this way. All I have is an on-off switch. I don’t have one of those dials on the wall where you can dial the ceiling fan down. My ceiling fan only goes at one speed.”

He’s also mindful of something his father-in-law told him.

“He always reminded me, ‘Don’t ever stay too late at the party,’ ” Alden said. “‘Don’t ever be the last guy to leave the party.’ ”

Bernie: Alden dramatically transformed Mizzou

January 30, 2015 11:30 am  •  By Bernie Miklasz
Good morning from Phoenix ...

Mike Alden has decided to leave his post after a 17-year term as the director of athletics at Mizzou. I'll leave the more comprehensive analysis of Alden's legacy to others. For me, it's pretty simple:

1. The hiring football coach Gary Pinkel.

2. Navigating Mizzou into the SEC.

3. The substantial increase in revenues for the sports department.

4. The impressive modernization of the MU sports facilities.

5. The strengthening of the MU brand nationally.

And of course, the one big negative: the decline of the men's basketball program.

Alden wasn't perfect, as he'd be the first to tell you. MU hoops has lost prestige, and fans, during his watch. Alden was the AD when MU legend Norm Stewart retired, and stability has been a problem ever since. Alden has made four coaching hires: Quin Snyder, Mike Anderson, Frank Haith and Kim Anderson. There have been some positive seasons and even a couple of exciting NCAA Tournament runs over that time, but today the Mizzou program is in a total rebuild mode under Kim Anderson. Alden is largely accountable for Missouri's slide.

But I really believe that the positives are pretty powerful _ and that easily makes up for Alden's one big strikeout.

College football drives revenue, and expands a program's national brand. Alden's hiring of Pinkel before the 2001 season was a move that transformed MU football, turned on the revenue flow, shifted the paradigm of the entire athletic department, and put the Tigers in position to jump to the SEC to ensure a remarkably lucrative future in the SEC.

These are landmark accomplishments, and their magnitude overrides the mistakes or misjudgments made under Alden's watch.

In the 17 seasons before Alden brought in Pinkel, Mizzou football had only two winning seasons, played in two bowl games, and averaged 3.7 wins per season.
Under Pinkel Mizzou is 113-66 and has competed in 10 bowl games. Since 2007 the Tigers are tied for ninth nationally in wins (76), have twice finished in the top five in the final college football rankings, and have posted five seasons of 10+ victories.

Pinkel made Mizzou football worthy of the SEC. And after a rough first season (2012), Pinkel has led the Tigers to consecutive SEC East titles.

Mizzou football is now at a place that must have seemed unimaginable to MU loyalists who suffered on those Saturday drives home during the Woody Widenhofer and Bob Stull years.

With a revived MU football program as the catalyst, Alden launched an aggressive campaigns to dramatically increase fundraising. He's utilized the money to build or upgrade the campus sports venues. The overall growth has been tremendous. Stunning, really. And it all began with Alden hiring Pinkel ... and keeping Pinkel happy and in place in CoMo.

Nitpick him if you must, but Alden had the vision to understand that the future of college sports would become increasingly centered around football and money. And football and money go hand in hand.

Having an established and prominent football presence would ensure Mizzou a coveted spot after destabilization brought on by conference realignment. Mizzou not only kept a good seat in a power conference but moved up to the highest level of the sport in joining the SEC. The money is pouring in.

Alden had Mizzou positioned just right.

And MU's future is brighter than it's ever been.

That's the Alden legacy.

And hopefully the basketball program will get up to speed soon.

Thanks for reading ...

-Bernie

**More stories about Alden’s resignation and Mizzou legacy:**

*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*
Jan. 30, 2015 - **Alden discusses timing for decision to step down**

*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*
Jan. 31, 2015 – **Gordon: Alden did a lot, but there's still much to do**

St. Louis Post-Dispatch
Jan. 30, 2015 - Alden leaving job on his own terms
http://www.stltoday.com/sports/college/mizzou/alden-is-leaving-job-on-his-own-terms/article_125a8cdc-4637-528d-ac70-8082ff555c5c.html

St. Louis Post-Dispatch
Jan. 30, 2015 – Strauss: To disregard Alden’s influence is to deny history
http://www.stltoday.com/sports/columns/joe-strauss/strauss-to-disregard-alden-s-influence-is-to-denial-history/article_14eb3294-aac1-5be8-bdd0-5d250a90e862.html

St. Louis Post-Dispatch
Jan. 30, 2015 – Gordon: Mizzou prospered under Alden despite controversies

Columbia Daily Tribune
Jan. 31, 2015 – Mike Alden
http://www.columbiatribune.com/opinion/the_tribunes_view/mike-alden/article_85694925-dc2d-5e09-ab95-477e84c2a5ad.html

Columbia Missourian
Jan. 31, 2015 - Mark Selig: Alden’s legacy highlighted by growth, but missteps should be more than just footnotes

Columbia Missourian
Jan. 30, 2015 – After reconstructing MU athletics department, Mike Alden announces resignation
Missouri’s race to the bottom has a powerful new enemy.

His name is Tim Wolfe and he is the president of the University of Missouri.

Over the past two years, frustrated with the failure of the state’s top political leaders to make education at all levels the priority it should be, Mr. Wolfe has taken his message directly to the people of the state.

In 18 stops in cities and small towns from Palmyra to Poplar Bluff, from California to Chillicothe, he has laid out the stark facts to school superintendents, to voters, to parents, to business leaders.
Missouri can’t cut its way to prosperity. It can’t win economically if it continues to be near the bottom of state rankings in all the things that matter (44th in higher education funding, for instance), and near the top in measures of poverty, hunger and poor health outcomes.

“If we don’t change, we will be in a race to the bottom and we will win the race. It is not what Missourians deserve,” Mr. Wolfe told the Post-Dispatch editorial board on Thursday. “The categories we are number one in are the categories we don’t want to be number one in.”

Mr. Wolfe’s frustration is palpable.

A Missouri native and University of Missouri-Columbia graduate, he came back to his home state in 2012 to lead the four campuses of the state’s land-grant institution after a successful career in the technology business. He found a state wallowing in mediocrity led by a Republican Legislature fixated on making taxes in a low-tax state even lower, and a Democratic governor unwilling to lay out a vision for the future.

Simply hanging their political hats on “record” education funding while other states pass Missouri by isn’t good enough, Mr. Wolfe said. Bragging about keeping tuition hikes low misses the larger point.

“What do we want to be known for?” he asks.

The answer is the same one Gov. Jay Nixon trots out each year in his State of the State speech, but always fails to follow through on: finding money in the budget to inch Missouri up from the bottom.

“Better states, better organizations, recognize opportunities and establish a sense of urgency for change,” Mr. Wolfe said. “We are trying to change the conversation … if we can just have this unifying cry that education is going to determine the future competitiveness of the state of Missouri, if we can do that, then maybe we can start to move the needle.”

Mr. Wolfe calls his tour the Show Me Value Tour, to highlight the value that voters, parents and communities can gain when they invest in education.

At least part of that investment, Mr. Wolfe believes, should come from an increase in Missouri’s lowest-in-the-nation tobacco tax. He supported the 2012 tobacco tax increase that would have raised about $300 million for education. That tax, without support from the governor and many other top state leaders (Attorney General Chris Koster was a notable exception), failed narrowly.

Mr. Wolfe believes raising the 17-cents-a-pack tobacco tax should be put on the ballot again in 2016. He believes the results could be different. He’s challenging the state’s top politicians to lay out a vision for Missouri’s education future. He’s taking his message of the value of education directly to voters and local community leaders. He believes that the Legislature spends too much time listening to “one man” — a clear reference to anti-tax crusader Rex Sinquefield. He thinks lawmakers will reject Mr. Sinquefield’s misguided vision when voters statewide finally take a stand for investing in Missouri’s next generation, its best economic development tool.
This sort of leadership is refreshing. It’s needed in a state whose politicians ignore the mileposts that Missouri has passed on its race to the bottom.

• No. 1 in hunger.
• Child poverty on the rise.
• Lowest-paid state employees.
• 40th in state funding for K-12 schools.
• 44th in state funding for higher education.
• Job growth lagging the nation.

For decades now, Missouri’s politicians have believed in two economic fairy tales: That lower taxes will create prosperity through economic growth, and that corporate giveaways in the form of tax credits will pay for themselves many times over.

Between 1970 and 2006, Missouri was, on average, the 47th lowest tax state in the nation. But today’s lawmakers want to cut taxes even further, while saying with straight faces that they care deeply about education funding.

Mr. Wolfe is tired of elected officials failing to tell voters the truth, so he’s taking his message directly to the people.

What does Missouri want to be known for? Low taxes and mediocrity? Or a willingness to invest in its people?

Perhaps voters will get a chance to answer that question next year. The future depends on getting the answer right.

MU hotline calls allege whistleblower retaliation, other misconduct

By Ashley Jost

Sunday, February 1, 2015 at 12:00 am

The University of Missouri System’s ethics and compliance hotline brought in about as many calls in 2014 as the past two years combined with the majority of the calls coming from employees of University of Missouri Health Care.
Unlike the bulk of the complaints regarding billing concerns and possible patient privacy violations, a handful of complaints toward the last half of the year alleged misconduct on the part of physicians and department chairs.

The allegations describe a department chair engaging in ethnic origin discrimination and retaliation against whistleblowers, with retaliatory actions being used in a few other complaints.

“All allegation that MU Healthcare employees were pressured to cover up information by senior administration during the fraudulent activity investigation that occurred in the past,” one hotline complaint from Oct. 31 reads. The string of reports related to physician and administrator behavior came between August and October.

There is no way of knowing who, specifically, was involved in these cases. All of the related cases are still open for investigation.

The hotline yielded 74 calls in 2013, which was up from 39 in 2012, according to previous Tribune reporting. In 2014, more than 60 of the 110 calls were related to MU Health. That ratio is similar to the last two years.

Mary Jenkins, MU Health and MU School of Medicine spokeswoman, said that the hotline phone number continues to receive significant promotion through the hospital intranet and other internal publicity.

Similar to last year, Jenkins said no specific facts related to individual complaints are available “to protect personnel privacy.”

In July of last year, Faculty Council created a “fact-finding committee” to look into multiple concerns brought forward by faculty from the MU School of Medicine, including issues with ability to get research done, interactions with superiors and use of faculty input.

Members of the committee did not respond to requests about whether the issues they are looking at have shown similar problems as those outlined in the ethics hotline allegations. Members also did not say where they are in the “fact-finding” process, which is the specific definition of the committee’s charge.

There is no way to differentiate between whether physicians and leaders in MU Health mentioned in the allegations include faculty and their leaders with clinical appointments. Jenkins said of the 587 faculty in the School of Medicine, 467 are in clinical departments, including doctoral researchers.

When asked if administrators are looking into whether any cultural issues exist between the hotline complaints and the fact-finding committee, Mitch Wasden, University Hospital chief executive officer, said “absolutely.”

“We take all of those very seriously,” Wasden said. “We have a very high bar for leadership.”
It has been a few years now since the hospital — and in turn the School of Medicine as the two continue to meld into one entity — implemented the “Culture of Yes.” This culture is an initiative to promote care, delivery, innovation and service, pillars of what happens at the hospital. Since implementation more than two years ago, Wasden said administrators have transitioned to making sure employees can recite the “culture of yes” by making sure they know the eight behaviors that go along with it.

These behaviors include the “10/5 rule,” where employees visually acknowledge anyone they are within 10 feet of, and verbally acknowledge someone within five feet. There also is the “big impact with a small wake” behavior, where if a leader does something that makes a big positive impact but in the wake of that offends people on their team, “that’s considered a miss because the wake was too big,” Wasden said.

“We have taken these values and behaviors and said, ‘Now we’re going to make those part of performance evaluations starting this year,’ ” he said. There are rewards for those who are acting on the values in the Culture of Yes, like gift cards and movie tickets.

Wasden said in many cases with the hotline complaints, they are investigated and show that a person is upset but nothing was done wrong. But not every time. When the allegation “is dead on,” he said administrators look to find out whether leaders need more coaching or what can be done to remediate the issue.

Among the other complaints in which investigations are still open is an allegation from Dec. 8 “that an MU dean misused university funds for personal gain.” The complaint document doesn’t indicate what college the dean is from.

When the UM System receives a complaint, it’s forwarded to the appropriate campus hotline representative who determines the appropriate investigator depending on what the complaint is, according to an email from MU spokeswoman Mary Jo Banken. For example, faculty or academic issues are fielded by the provost’s office, and the campus chief financial officer would deal with budget concerns.
University of Missouri Health Care and its partner Nueterra, a health care management firm based in Leawood, Kan., plan to build a 10-bed surgical hospital in Columbia near Highway 63 and Discovery Parkway.

Plans submitted for approval to state health regulators call for a 51,300-square-foot, single-story building that will house two operating rooms.

St. Louis-based BJC HealthCare has not said whether it would oppose the project, which would be situated about five miles from Boone Hospital Center, BJC’s 397-bed hospital in Columbia.

“At this time, BJC does not have a position to share,” said June Fowler, BJC spokeswoman.

In the past, however, BJC has opposed projects that propose to offer only specific services, and especially those with a focus on surgeries.

For example, in 2012 BJC opposed plans of Dr. George Paletta Jr., the former Cardinals team doctor, to build a surgical center/physician office that received approval from the city of Chesterfield to keep patients for up to 72 hours at the center. The project has yet to be built and no plans to develop the center ever came in, according to Aimee Nassif, planning and development services director for the city of Chesterfield.

BJC officials believed that Paletta’s facility needed to be licensed as a hospital to keep patients overnight, and that would have required gaining a certificate of need through the state’s Missouri Health Facilities Review Committee.

While this 10-bed project is seeking a certificate of need, it will primarily focus on surgeries, said Amy Leiker, spokeswoman for Nueterra. The proposed hospital will have an emergency room, Leiker added.

It’s an expansion of services for Nueterra and University of Missouri Health Care, which together, through a joint venture, bought Callaway County Community Hospital in December 2014. The 37-bed hospital is in Fulton, Mo., about 25 miles from Columbia.

University of Missouri Health Care also operates a 361-bed hospital in Columbia.

Rising tuition at public colleges, funding cuts leave students deeper in debt

January 31, 2015 6:54 am  •  By DANIELLE DOUGLAS-GABRIEL  •  Washington Post
Michael Bayne has done everything you're supposed to do to avoid taking on too much debt for college. He lives off-campus to save money on housing. He's always working at least one job — sometimes two. And he enrolled at an in-state public school, Arizona State University.

But it's not nearly enough. The $2,500 in grants Bayne received this semester covered less than half of his tuition at ASU. A decade ago, the same amount of aid would have been enough to pay his entire bill.

"My parents don't have money to help me, so to help pay for tuition, pay for books, pay for everything, I work a full-time job," he said. "And I still have $17,000 in student loans."

It used to be that students such as Bayne could attend a public university and graduate with little to no debt. Then came the recession, when state governments slashed funding of higher education and families began paying higher tuition bills.

Now, even as the economy recovers and taxpayer revenue is pouring back in, states have not restored their funding, and tuition keeps rising, leaving parents and students scrambling to cover costs.

Total student debt now surpasses $1 trillion and is growing by the day. For the first time ever, according to a recent study, families are shouldering more of the cost of public university tuition than state governments.

No state has cut its higher education funding more since the recession than Arizona, which slashed per-student spending by 48 percent since 2008, from $6,387 per student to $3,305 per student, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a think tank. All but two states in the country — Alaska and North Dakota — are spending less per student than they did before the downturn.

In Virginia, funding has been cut by nearly 25 percent; in Maryland, by 12 percent; and in the District of Columbia, 5.4 percent.

Tuition at public universities, meanwhile, has risen. The cost of Arizona's four-year public colleges has increased more than 80 percent, to $10,065 from $5,572.

By comparison, tuition in the District of Columbia has climbed 71 percent since the recession, while it has gone up 32 percent in Virginia. Maryland schools raised tuition by only 3 percent during that time, but several imposed an additional mid-year increase of 2 percent for the spring semester that started this week. Annual published tuition at four-year public colleges has risen by $1,936, or 28 percent, since the 2007-08 school year, after adjusting for inflation.

"The recession taught legislators that families will bear the cost of higher tuition, so that sent a signal to the state that it is possible to transfer the buck," said Sara Goldrick-Rab, a professor of education policy at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. "Now there is little incentive to reinvest."
States across the country are wrestling with decisions over whether to raise taxes or cut programs to replenish funding for colleges. And it's not easy in some cases to find the money for higher education.

Arizona is facing a $1.5 billion deficit. And local law prohibits policymakers from touching the budgets of many state programs, but not higher education.

This month, Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey announced $75 million in further cuts to higher education in his budget proposal. That represents about 10 percent of the funding that the state provides the universities.

"Governor Ducey believes higher education is an investment, both for the state and for individuals, and he will continue working closely with the regents and the presidents to ensure Arizona universities remain successful," said Daniel Scarpinato, a spokesman for the governor's office.

Arizona once had one of the most affordable university systems in the country. Its three schools — Arizona State University, the University of Arizona and Northern Arizona University — received $1 billion a year from the state's general fund, which kept in-state tuition below the national average.

Then came the housing bust, and state revenue plummeted. Arizona cut tens of millions of dollars to support its universities. Administrators eliminated more than 2,100 positions and 182 colleges, schools, programs or departments.

The same story played out across the country.

At the same time, full-time enrollment at state schools increased 10 percent, as students sought degrees to help them in a dismal job market.

But many states were setting aside less money for grants and scholarships.

Xavier Walker, a political science major, entered the University of Arizona with $15,000 in academic scholarships, $3,000 of which came from the school. But by his junior year, Walker, 20, still amassed $14,000 in student debt. The scholarship covered only a portion of tuition and not any living expenses.

Walker holds down one job at the YMCA and another at Dillard's department store, scheduling all of his classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays. He routinely searches the school's scholarship database but has yet to find any aid that would let him cut back on work.

Federal Pell grants for low-income students now cover just over a third of college costs.

Cymone Ragland, 27, figured she could keep the cost of college down by attending Maricopa Community College before heading off to Northern Arizona University. The Pell grant she received was enough to cover tuition at Maricopa. Between her 35-hour-a-week job at Discover Card and her parents’ help, Ragland had little trouble paying for books and other expenses.
Things changed when she arrived at NAU, where her $1,000 Pell award barely put a dent in the $9,700 tuition. Ragland graduated in December with a bachelor's degree in business administration and $35,000 in student loans.

"My dad was always against me taking loans, but I told him, 'It's different now than when you were in school.' I don't really have a choice. I just don't," Ragland said. "It became overwhelming knowing that I was getting further into debt, but I really wanted to finish."

Public universities have had some success in pressuring state legislatures to increase funding as the economy recovers.

Arizona has restored $90 million for its universities in recent years. Tuition has leveled off.

But there is no telling whether tuition hikes can be avoided in the face of another round of budget cuts.

"As dollars were available over the past couple of years, our legislature has recommitted funding. However, since then the state budget position has darkened," said Eileen Klein, president of the Arizona board of regents.

She said that before the recession, 65 percent of the universities' funding came from the state. Now it's down to 25 percent.

"We don't know when or if the funding levels will return to pre-recessionary levels, so we've been thinking about how can we create new funding models that recognizes this era of diminished commitment from the state coffers," Klein said.

With states withdrawing funding, universities have searched for alternative sources of money or tried to break away from the public system. The University of Virginia, for instance, began discussing the possibility of cutting ties with the state government in 2013 for more freedom to raise tuition and accept out-of-state students, who pay two or three times the tuition charged to locals.

ASU President Michael Crow has struck a number of deals with foundations and companies.

"We're operating on a new model, where we desire public investment, we move forward faster with more public investment, but we're moving forward nonetheless," Crow said.

The broader Arizona strategy has been to enroll more out-of-state students.

Critics say this hurts low-income residents because many schools offer merit-based aid to attract non-residents, rather than directing that money to the neediest students.

In the meantime, students such as Bayne continue to fall behind. By his sophomore year at ASU, his grades started to slip while he worked a part-time job on campus and another one at a security firm. The balancing act ultimately led him to fall far enough behind that he had to stay at school a fifth year — taking on more debt.
"Trying to balance full-time work and a full-time course load, I just wasn't ready for it," Bayne said.

February 2, 2015

Should Colleges Be Forced to Swiftly Report Rapes to the Police?

By Katherine Mangan

NO MU MENTION

Two former football players are convicted of raping an unconscious student at Vanderbilt University while their friends record the assaults on their cellphones. A star swimmer at Stanford University is charged with raping another intoxicated, passed-out woman and is banned from the campus.

The headlines, coming one day apart last week, were striking not only because of the boost they gave sexual-assault victims who contend their complaints go nowhere.

They were also notable because both campuses had worked closely with local law-enforcement officials rather than simply settling the matters in house.

Given the explosiveness of the two cases, that’s not surprising, but it’s unclear whether the police would have joined in so quickly if cellphone videos, in the Vanderbilt case, and witness accounts, at Stanford, hadn’t been available.

Sexual-assault cases usually rely heavily on one student’s word over another’s. They commonly involve alcohol-fueled encounters between two people who are impaired, but not unconscious, and not all cases involve force. Few of those cases end up being prosecuted.

But the issue of when to alert outside law enforcement and when to handle complaints internally is timely, as lawmakers in at least two states are debating bills that would require reporting by colleges. Supporters say that colleges are ill suited to handle potentially criminal acts and that they have incentives to keep such matters quiet. But critics, including some women’s advocacy groups, say the reporting requirement might make some victims afraid to come forward.

Among the questions being raised on campuses and in statehouses:
Should colleges be compelled to report all sexual assaults to the local police?

What if the victim doesn’t want to file charges? Do public-safety concerns ever outweigh privacy issues?

Will mandatory reporting cause some victims to stay silent?

Are colleges equipped to offer a process that’s fair to both the accuser and the accused?

Surveillance Video Spurs Investigation

The Vanderbilt case involved an assault that took place in 2013 but that came to light two months later, when campus workers were combing a surveillance video and came across footage of an apparently unconscious woman being carried into a dormitory.

It culminated in rape convictions on Tuesday against two former football players, Cory Batey and Brandon Vandenburg. Two other former players are awaiting trial.

Vanderbilt officials notified the Nashville police as soon as they saw the video, according to a statement the university’s chancellor, Nicholas S. Zeppos, posted on the university’s website on Thursday.

"We have worked closely with the Davidson County district attorney’s office ever since," he wrote. "Not for a second did anyone consider sweeping the incident under the rug or according special treatment to our student-athletes."

One day after that news broke came the Stanford case. A former standout Stanford swimmer, Brock Allen Turner, was charged with five felony counts, including raping an unconscious person. Two graduate students on bikes came across him on top of an apparently unconscious woman outside, on the grounds of the campus, according to prosecutors.

The 19-year-old student ran, but the men chased him and held him down until the police arrived, officials said of the January 18 incident. Mr. Turner voluntarily withdrew from Stanford last week and has been banned from the campus.

Stanford’s department of public safety investigated and, within a few days, filled in prosecutors.

Local newspapers reported that Mr. Turner had admitted fondling the woman, who was not a Stanford student, after meeting her at a campus party where both were drinking heavily, but that he had denied raping her.

Unlike the Stanford case, where bystanders immediately intervened to stop the alleged assault, a number of Vanderbilt students witnessed the attack there and didn’t report it, the video indicates.

Of course, the Stanford incident happened just months after the White House announced a nationwide effort to encourage men to step in to prevent sexual assaults, and the message was fresh on the minds of many.
Still, the Vanderbilt chancellor said he was "deeply troubled that some students who knew or should have known about the incident that led to this week’s convictions failed to take any positive action."

Vanderbilt is one of more than 90 colleges nationwide that are under investigation by the Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights for their handling of sexual-harassment and sexual-assault cases.

Colleges risk losing all of their federal money if they’re found to have violated Title IX, the federal civil-rights law banning gender discrimination in education. Many are now moving more aggressively to investigate and adjudicate complaints. That has prompted some to complain that the pendulum has swung too far and that innocent men are being branded as rapists.

Giving accused students a fair shake is one reason some favor turning such matters over to the local police. Cracking down on crime is another.

'A Blunt Instrument'

A bill making its way through the Virginia legislature would require any faculty member, administrator, or full-time staff member at a public college to notify law-enforcement officials within 24 hours if he or she "obtains information alleging that a criminal sexual assault has occurred." Failing to do so would be a Class 1 misdemeanor. Crisis counselors and members of the clergy would be exempt.

The bill’s Republican sponsor, Sen. Richard H. Black, said that when colleges handle complaints internally, serious crimes can be swept under the rug, allowing serial rapists to strike again. A case in point, mandatory-reporting advocates say: A man linked to the killing of a Virginia Tech student in 2009 has been charged in the abduction and killing of a University of Virginia student. He had also been accused of a string of other assaults.

Rhode Island lawmakers have also introduced legislation that would require colleges to immediately notify law-enforcement authorities of sexual-assault reports.

Mandatory-reporting requirements trouble victims’ rights groups like the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, a statewide advocacy group. Reporting should be required, they believe, only in cases of suspected felony-level assault.

In the vast majority of cases, "we believe survivors should have the right to decide whether or not to report the assault to police," said Kate McCord, a spokeswoman for the group. Some women just want the men they’ve accused of attacking them moved to another dormitory or expelled, victims' rights advocates say.

"Mandatory-reporting requirements are a blunt instrument that shouldn’t be applied in cases that require a more nuanced approach," Ms. McCord said. "They assume that the criminal-justice system is helpful to victims and serves justice, but that isn’t always true."

That point was made in an emotional appeal last month by a 2013 University of Virginia graduate. She told a state Senate subcommittee that she would not have reported to campus authorities that she’d
been raped if that would have prompted them to turn the matter over to the police, who, she contended, often lack the sensitivity that campus officials have in dealing with traumatized victims.

Victims’ wishes should always be a paramount concern when deciding whether to handle rape cases internally or to notify outside authorities, said Steven J. Healy, a co-founder and managing partner of Margolis Healy, which advises colleges on campus-safety issues.

"I reject any law that would force the disclosure of a victim’s identity when they don’t want it disclosed," said Mr. Healy, a former public-safety director at Princeton University. "Sexual-assault survivors first and foremost have to regain control of their lives," and forcing them to disclose information can retraumatize them and "take away that control," he said.

"Colleges often have to balance concerns for safety with the wishes of the victims, but at the end of the day, I feel victims must be able to decide whether to go to police or pursue justice through internal proceedings," Mr. Healy said.

While victims' rights advocates say they have a responsibility to point out to rape victims the challenges they might face if they report their attacks to the police, some law-enforcement officials say the longer they wait to report an attack, the harder it will be to investigate. Both points were made during a roundtable discussion in June that was organized by U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill, Democrat of Missouri.

Some Virginia colleges also have qualms about mandatory reporting.

"Our worst fear is that some survivors of sexual violence will not come forward if they believe they will be forced into a legal process they don’t want to take part in," Brian Whitson, a spokesman for the College of William and Mary, said in a written statement. "In addition, it would be incredibly difficult to pursue a criminal case when the witness does not wish to testify."

UVa's president, Teresa A. Sullivan, echoed that sentiment in an interview that appeared on Sunday in The Daily Progress, a newspaper in Charlottesville, Va. "Our objective is to find a way that mandatory reporting does not take any agency away from the victim," Ms. Sullivan said. "There may be ways to do that, and we’re exploring what those might be."

Bill offering Medicaid to veterans and families generates new current in debate
Ryan Gill has big plans.

**In the long-term, the University of Missouri senior hopes to enter law school and, when finished, work representing veterans.** In the short-term, Gill hopes to persuade state lawmakers to do something for veterans and their families that they won’t do for the public at large — expand Medicaid eligibility.

The main groups who would benefit from a bill proposed by Sen. Ryan Silvey, R-Kansas City, Gill said, are students and veterans struggling to find their place after life in the military. Department of Veterans Affairs benefits are good for the veterans able to use them, he said, but don’t cover dependents and suffer from bureaucratic inertia.

“If we don’t cover these individuals while they are young, or the ones that have fallen down to get them back on their feet, what a squandered opportunity we have lost to contribute something to our economy, especially the young veterans,” said Gill, president of the Mizzou Student Veterans Association and a board member of Welcome Home Inc., a homeless shelter for veterans.

Gill is a native of Portageville in southeast Missouri and a six-year veteran of the Missouri Army National Guard. On Monday, Gill was in Jefferson City with former U.S. Sen. Kit Bond and other student veterans to organize support for Silvey’s bill with the Missouri Association of Veterans Organizations.

Bond also lobbies lawmakers for a general expansion of Medicaid eligibility under the 2010 Affordable Care Act on behalf of the Missouri Chamber of Commerce. The Republican-dominated legislature has resisted all overtures from Democratic Gov. Jay Nixon and business groups like the chamber to expand eligibility for Medicaid under the 2010 federal law also known Obamacare. The political battle over the federal law has dominated debate, with some Republicans such as Silvey futilely proposing plans to overhaul the program and expand coverage as a compromise.

The expansion plan for veterans — which mirrors the eligibility limits of the ACA — is not designed primarily to undercut opposition to general expansion, Bond said. “I am convinced it would be a good program and where it goes from there we can’t say.”

The 2010 law provides federal funding through 2017 to expand coverage to 138 percent of the federal poverty guideline, $16,104 this year for a single person and $32,913 for a family of four. After 2017, the state pays a small share, capped at 10 percent after 2023.

Missouri pays about 39 percent of the $8.5 billion cost of the current Medicaid program for about 870,000 people. Adults who do not qualify based on age or disability are not eligible for coverage unless they have children. The income limit for those who have children is about 18 percent of the poverty guideline.

Full expansion would add about 300,000 people. Silvey estimates his bill would add as many as 22,000 to the rolls. The state would pay its current share for their coverage.
The issue for veterans and their families arose last year after he was stymied on a general Medicaid plan, Silvey said. “So my thought was if I can’t solve the whole problem, maybe I can solve a piece of the problem,” he said.

Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, is an opponent of Medicaid expansion. He said he is skeptical of Silvey’s proposal and believes it could create a gap in coverage that the courts would not accept.

“I think there is a high probability of a lawsuit filed and a court basically interprets that to mean that the state of Missouri passed a statute to increase it up to 138 percent, and because under Title IX it is an entitlement, they don’t get to pick and choose who gets it.”

Debate on Silvey’s bill should look at the long-term benefits, not the politics of Obamacare, Gill said. He sees his own future in jeopardy if he suffers a costly accident or unforeseen illness before finishing school.

He will graduate with an agriculture degree in May and, if all goes as planned, enter law school in the fall. His five years of VA coverage based on deployments will end by his third year of law school.

“I am going to be 30 years old when I am an attorney,” Gill said. “I feel I am so far behind the 8-ball as it is because of my service. If something happened that I had to drop out of even undergrad to get a job to pay my medical bills, I don’t know that I would come back.”

Low-income veterans are eligible for VA coverage beyond the post-deployment period, said Stephen Gaither, spokesman for Truman Memorial Veterans’ Hospital. The VA has eight priority groups for care, with income eligibility ranked fifth. Veterans eligible for Medicaid are automatically included in the fifth priority group.

Gill said he has no complaints about his VA coverage. Veterans with limited means for traveling can have difficulty using the VA, he said. Veterans can also have special health issues and a greater need for mental health and substance abuse treatment.

“We still have 22 veterans a day committing suicide,” he said. “The active duty force is 1 percent of the population and ... an estimated one-third of all homeless people are veterans, the biggest portion of them combat veterans.”

Veterans generally must go to a VA facility to receive treatment, Gaither said. Last year, Congress included an exception for patients who must travel more than 40 miles or wait longer than 30 days for an appointment. That provided options, Gaither said, but only for veterans and not for their families.

“That is the most important part of that legislation,” he said. “VA health care benefits are for veterans and not VA health care beneficiaries’ dependents.”
City of Columbia to hold educational forum on plastic bag ordinance

By Jack Witthaus

Sunday, February 1, 2015 at 12:00 am

Columbia could become the first city in Missouri to ban single-use plastic bags.

On Tuesday, the city will host a forum from 7-9 p.m. to talk about a proposal to ban single-use plastic bags from grocery stores, pharmacies and convenience stores. According to a news release, the event is slated to take place in the City Hall council chamber, 701 E. Broadway, as an educational forum.

Members of the Energy and Environment Commission, the Sierra Club, the Missouri River Relief, University of Missouri Curators’ Professor Frederick vom Saal and city staff will be at the presentation, according to a press release.

The city’s Environment and Energy Commission voted in December to recommend the council pass a bag ban that would encourage stores to reward customers for bringing their own bags and waive bag fees for low-income residents who receive government assistance.

Restaurants would be exempt from the ban, and grocery stores could still provide plastic bags to wrap produce and fresh meat.

Some people are not so convinced about banning single-use plastic bags. Phil Rozenski, director of marketing and sustainability at Novolex, calls the ordinance “feel-good legislation.” Novolex manufactures plastic and paper bags and recycles plastic bags.

According to studies Rozenski provided, EPA data shows that plastic shopping bags make up only one-half of 1 percent of the U.S. municipal waste stream. Rozenski said that cigarette butts are actually the biggest litter item.

Rozenski also questioned how much money the ordinance would cost shoppers in Columbia. According to a report from the Energy and Environment Commission, shoppers in Columbia who don’t bring their own reusable bags could pay 10 cents for paper bags.
Rozenski said plastic bags can be recycled at major stores like Hy-Vee, Target and Walmart. He said most consumers reuse plastic bags anyway as trash cans or scoopers for dog waste.

Rozenski also said that the makeup of Novolex’s plastic bags isn’t toxic. He said 94 percent of Novolex’s plastic bags are made up of polyethylene and the rest of the bag is made up of calcium and colorant. If plastic bags were toxic, then why are restaurants exempt from the plastic bag ban?, Rozenski asked.

Vom Saal, a professor at MU who does research on chemicals in plastics, said Rozenski is partially right. Polyethylene is not necessarily toxic but can be when ultraviolet light breaks the plastic down into smaller particles. Harmful chemicals can attach to smaller plastic particles, and organisms in the lower part of the food chain can absorb the harmful chemicals. As affected organisms become consumed through the food chain, these harmful chemicals can be “biomagnified” into larger organisms like humans.

“This” ordinance “is one small step we can make to improve the environment and the health of all organisms,” vom Saal said.

Vom Saal said it would be easy to do away with plastic bags. He said he sees Columbia as a progressive city that could help affect change of plastic bag use in other cities.

In 2014, California became the first state to enact a ban on plastic bags, following the lead of local communities; more than 100 California municipalities had already passed bans.

According to Californians Against Waste, a not-for-profit group that advocates for bag bans, 58 cities in states outside California will have laws in effect as of April.

The future of the plastic bag ordinance has yet to be decided. Sixth Ward Councilwoman Barbara Hoppe asked for the legislation to be brought before the council for the first reading during its Feb. 16 meeting, which would put a vote for final passage of the bill on the March 2 agenda unless the matter were tabled.
COLUMBIA — Benton Berigan was in high school when he smoked marijuana at a friend's house for the first time.

Berigan was exposed to marijuana during his first few years in high school. He knew people smoked it, but he never gave into peer pressure because of the dangerous perception he had of the drug.

That fear eventually turned into curiosity. He already had smoked cigarettes and tried alcohol, but neither did anything for him. He decided he wanted to try marijuana, too.

Berigan said smoking marijuana made him feel less intoxicated than drinking. The experience left him feeling betrayed by society and authority figures. When he was younger, police in the DARE program and health teachers cautioned that marijuana was a gateway to other dangerous drugs.

But smoking marijuana seemed harmless to Berigan. "What else are authority figures not telling me?" he wondered.

**That curiosity led him to pursue a career in science and eventually to become president of the MU chapter of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, a position he's held for the past two years.**

Majoring in biology and psychology, Berigan is in his third year at MU and fifth year of college. He graduated with the highest honors from St. Louis Community College-Meramec in May 2012 and transferred to MU in the fall of 2012. He hopes to earn a doctorate and to attend medical school so he can practice neurology and conduct research. He's already doing undergraduate research on respiratory neurons.

"I want to know what the world is and how the world functions," Berigan said. "I question authority and want to discover the truth for myself."

Berigan is clean-cut with buzzed brown hair, big green eyes, a gentle demeanor and a kind voice. He's active in Mizzou Alternative Breaks, which sends students around the country on service projects. He greets people with a firm handshake, an enthusiastic smile and direct eye contact.

Berigan said he continuously seeks different perspectives because he loves to learn. He said that along with his own experience with marijuana, a 2012 NORML conference in Los Angeles enlightened him.
"There were over a thousand people — patients, doctors, scientists, political figures," Berigan said. "This wasn't just students or stoners but well-educated, influential people trying to reform laws."

Berigan joined MU NORML as vice president and treasurer during his first year at MU. There were only about five people in the group at that time. A few months later, he attended the conference in Los Angeles and returned motivated to make a difference. He became president of the group in 2013. Today, there are more than 50 student members.

Under Berigan's leadership, MU NORML hosts speakers, plans fundraisers and participates in events such as highway cleanups. It holds regular bake sales. During a bake sale in the spring of 2014, he said, an MU police officer circled their kiosk. Berigan said it was clear someone had called the police under the assumption their baked goods were infused with cannabis.

"The whole point is that we're out there trying to make people come up and talk to us and try to engage, and say, 'No, that isn't what we do,'" Berigan said. "We abide by every policy, every law. We're not trying to break laws or tell people to break laws. We're trying to reform the laws so they're not breaking any."

The bake sale incident proved to Berigan that a stigma remains around marijuana use and that it needs to change. He doesn't want people to assume that those who support the legalization of pot are a bunch of drug dealers, so he's begun pushing harder to change public policy and to educate the public.

Berigan began attending Columbia City Council meetings and contacting council members in 2014. He also met Dan Viets, the Missouri coordinator for NORML and a member of the national NORML board.

Viets is one of the most powerful voices in the marijuana legalization movement nationwide and is leading a petition effort to force a public vote in 2016 proposing legalization of the drug in Missouri.

Berigan and Viets clicked right away. Viets sometimes speaks at MU NORML events, and the two of them travel to conferences across the United States. They also work together in Show-Me Cannabis, the group lobbying for legalization of marijuana in the state. They play volleyball at Viets' house a few times a month.
With Viets’ guidance, Berigan became involved in last year's debate about whether to decriminalize the cultivation of up to two marijuana plants in Columbia. He and other NORML members walked into the Oct. 20 council meeting thinking the proposed ordinance had a good chance of passing.

But after three hours of debate, the proposed ordinance died on a 4-3 vote. Then-First Ward Councilwoman Ginny Chadwick was among those who voted against it, which disappointed supporters because she said during her campaign that she favored the idea.

Chadwick said at the time that she changed her mind due to confusion the ordinance would create because it conflicted with state laws and because the ordinance was opposed by the Columbia-Boone County Board of Health and the Substance Abuse Advisory Commission.

"It was really disheartening to all of us to have been lied to by someone we thought we could depend on," MU NORML member Brian Kuhn said.

After the vote, Berigan and other cannabis activists became involved in the petition effort to recall Chadwick. The petition succeeded, but the recall election became unnecessary when Chadwick resigned.

Viets said Berigan is dependable and smart, someone who’s focused on seeing real change in the community and who knows that starting small is good strategy. He does have one concern about Berigan, though.

"He studies too much," Viets said with a hearty laugh.

Around campus, Berigan said he's known as "the guy from the marijuana club." Friends and colleagues, though, know him in a different light.

Kuhn was acquainted with Berigan during high school, but they became best friends during their freshman year at St. Louis Community College-Meramec. On Kuhn's birthday that year, Berigan gave him a lift after a bunch of his other friends bailed on their plans to celebrate.

The two of them celebrated at a local bar and talked for hours. That’s when Kuhn realized how much they had in common. They were both biology majors, had similar
political opinions and a similar outlook on life. They both transferred to MU about the same time and work together in NORML.

"After that night, we instantly clicked," Kuhn said. "Now, at MU, I see him on an hourly basis because his house is basically 25 seconds from mine."

Raymond Tiu met Berigan last spring on a Mizzou Alternative Breaks service where they rebuilt houses on the Cheyenne River Sioux reservation in South Dakota. He described Berigan as selfless. Tiu and Berigan will lead a group of 10 MU students back to the reservation during this year's spring break.

"Benton never says no," Tiu said. "He wants to please everyone. He’s the guy in the room anyone can talk to, and he never has judgment."

Obama's push for free community college stirs debate

By Koran Addo

President Barack Obama isn’t likely to see Congressional approval of his plan to extend free community college to millions of Americans, but the $60 billion proposal has certainly stirred up debate.

Many wonder whether extending universal access to two-year schools is just too expensive, while others worry such a program might crowd out more worthwhile education goals.

And in Missouri, some question how such a plan might affect a similar – albeit smaller – existing program in place for the last 20 years.

The state’s so-called Missouri A+ Schools scholarship program has shown that encouraging broader community college access is one thing, but delivering it can be an expensive proposition.

“Missouri has stepped up with the A+ program,” said Dennis Michaelis, interim chancellor of St. Louis Community College, of the program which helps thousands of students attend two-year schools tuition-free.
“But the number of students allowed into it has grown, while funding has not kept pace.”

The concept of free community college had been making the rounds of education policy circles long before Obama announced it as a priority last month.

The thinking is that the free learning could draw millions to higher education campuses who hadn’t previously considered going to college.

The idea also has gained traction in response to the growing cost of enrolling in college. Nationwide, student loan debt recently passed the $1 trillion mark, surpassing total credit card debt for the first time.

But free community college is a tough sell, if for no other reason than the cost. The Obama administration estimates it would cost about $60 billion over 10 years, with the federal government covering 75 percent of the costs and the states paying the rest.

Among the critics is Republican House Speaker John Boehner, who immediately criticized the president for knowing “full well there’s no blank space in the taxpayers’ checkbook” to pay for the program and mocked him with a Taylor Swift-inspired blog post.

With the Republican majority controlling the U.S. House and Senate, Obama’s plan has been called dead-on-arrival. Yet, state and local programs have not been hopeless politically. Last year, the Democratic stronghold of Chicago, as well as Republican-controlled Tennessee, established community college scholarship programs for high school graduates.

Michaelis said he welcomes the debate Obama has started.

“I’m absolutely excited that the president has brought community colleges to national attention,” he said. “This is a good sign for our country.”

A NATURAL PROGRESSION

In the early 1900s, making it to the eighth-grade was considered a good education, Michaelis said. By the 1950s, the expectation was that a person needed a high school diploma to get ahead.

Michaelis said treating an associate’s degree from a community college as the new millennium necessity for people looking to live middle-class lifestyles is a natural progression.

“It just makes sense,” he said. “One of the goals we should have as a nation is that everyone should have some degree of postsecondary education. Society calls for more than just a high school education.”

Even if the idea of free community college one day becomes politically popular at the national level, it’s unclear how it might work in Missouri.
Obama’s plan, if adopted in all 50 states, would extend community college access to more than 9 million students, potentially saving them $3,800 each on average in tuition. Schools would be required to offer programs in which credits can be fully transferred to public four-year colleges and universities, or to other certificate programs.

The free tuition would be available to students who maintain a 2.5 grade point average and are enrolled in at least half of a full-time college schedule.

Meanwhile, Missouri has the A+ Schools program meant to cover college tuition and general fees for qualifying students.

Similar to Obama’s plan, A+ scholarships require students to maintain a 2.5 GPA. Missouri’s program, however, also requires students to have a 95 percent high school attendance record and engage in 50 hours of unpaid mentoring and tutoring of other students during high school.

While Missouri’s plan appears to be stricter than the preliminary proposal Obama has outlined, the state’s program falls far short of offering universal access to community college.

Statewide, Missouri had more than 105,000 full- and part-time community college students in 2013. The A+ scholarships, meanwhile, are currently being used by an estimated 14,000 full-time students.

Even at that scale, the program has been on shaky financial footing lately.

Thousands of community college students got letters last summer warning them their A+ scholarships could come up four credit hours short for the current semester because of inadequate state funding. In the end, the situation turned out not to be so dire. A+ recipients only had to pay for one credit hour out-of-pocket.

**TAKING AWAY RESOURCES**

Leroy Wade, deputy commissioner with the state Department of Higher Education, said Missouri’s A+ program was never intended as a means to offer free community college to all students.

Rather, it was as much about encouraging students to make good decisions in high school and engaging them in their communities.

Whether Missouri would be better served moving toward a broader program like the one Obama envisions remains to be seen, he said.

Another conversation is whether Obama’s plan is tailored to deliver the greatest benefit to the people who need it most.

There’s concern nationally that the plan is too rigid, said Mamie Voight, director of policy research for the Institute for Higher Education Policy.
“If you provide free community college for all, including the students who can afford to go, then you’re taking away resources that could provide a greater benefit to low-income students,” she said.

By focusing a greater share of the resources toward low-income students, the proposal could go beyond paying for tuition and cover room and board also, she said.

Voight also said it’s worth considering if Obama’s proposal would be more effective if it gave students more choices – the opportunity to have two years of free tuition whether at a community college or a four-year university.

“Students should have that option,” she said. “Let them find what is the best fit for them. It would give them the best chance of success.”

Don Fitz, a part-time psychology instructor at St. Louis Community College at Forest Park, said getting more students in the door should be the overall goal.

He said community colleges are adept at matching students with career paths that suit their skills.

“I’ve seen students who struggled. And now they are working in nursing, dental hygiene, funeral home services and anesthesiology,” he said. “They are really doing things our society needs. And a lot of people can’t get into these programs because they don’t have the money for college.”

February 2, 2015 by Charles Huckabee

Review ‘Validates’ a Controversial Ranking, Missouri University Says

The University of Missouri at Kansas City says in a news release that an independent audit and review have validated an academic journal’s ranking of its Henry W. Bloch School of Management as first in the world in innovation-management research. The Kansas City Star, however, reports that the audit also confirms many details of a newspaper investigation last
year that described “a pattern of exaggerations, misstatements, and cherry-picking data” by officials of the Bloch School in pursuit of top rankings.

The audit, by the international accounting firm PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, was commissioned by the University of Missouri system’s Board of Curators at the request of Gov. Jay Nixon in response to the newspaper’s report. The Board of Curators released a report on the auditor’s findings on Friday. The curators also released an analysis of the auditors’ findings by Robert D. Hisrich, a professor emeritus of entrepreneurship at the Thunderbird School of Global Management, in Arizona, whom the board hired to review and comment on the audit report.

The audit focuses in part on data submitted by Bloch School officials to Princeton Review, a test-preparation-services company that publishes rankings of universities and academic programs. Princeton Review, which is not affiliated with Princeton University, has ranked the Bloch School’s graduate and undergraduate entrepreneurship programs in its top 25 every year since 2011.

The auditors also examined interactions among Bloch School officials and the authors of a 2012 article in the *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, “Perspective: Ranking of the World’s Top Innovation Management Scholars and Universities.” The journal article ranked the Kansas City institution’s entrepreneurship program as No. 1 worldwide.

Among the audit’s findings are that an official at the Bloch School had, under pressure from his boss, submitted flawed or false data to Princeton Review, and that another Bloch official had participated in the editing of the journal article. The audit does not challenge whether the article’s or the company’s rankings were deserved.

Mr. Hisrich, in his review, acknowledged that information provided to Princeton Review “was inaccurate in three subject-matter areas” but added, “I cannot conclude that the inaccurate information made a material difference in UMKC’s rankings.” Regarding the journal article, he concluded that the methodology the authors used and the circumstances surrounding the article’s publication “were consistent with generally acceptable professional practices.”

Leo E. Morton, chancellor of the University of Missouri at Kansas City, said he was “pleased to have the Bloch School’s No. 1 ranking in innovation-management research validated,” but asserted that he also took seriously the findings about flawed data submitted to Princeton Review. “We have already implemented changes and will continue to seek ways to improve our data collection,” Mr. Morton said.
Fibbing for Rankings

February 2, 2015

By Scott Jaschik

NO MU MENTION

The University of Missouri at Kansas City gave the Princeton Review false information designed to inflate the rankings of its business school, which was under pressure from its major donor to keep the ratings up, according to an outside audit released Friday.

The audit -- by PricewaterhouseCoopers -- described the process by which business school officials came up with creative reasons to provide data that many at the school believed to be false, and that the audit found to be false. In one case, for example, the university created a wish list of clubs that it might support to promote entrepreneurial students. The university then reported that its wish list was reality and that it had all of those clubs, which in fact did not exist.

Another part of the audit found that an article published in The Journal of Product Innovation Management -- an article that ranked the university's business school as the top institution in the world in the field of innovation management -- did not violate professional norms. However, the audit also found that the journal was unaware when accepting the article that it was written by scholars with ties to the university.

UMKC issued a news release Friday that reads: "Independent review upholds No. 1 research ranking."

But the audit also confirmed many of the findings of an August article in The Kansas City Star that found "a pattern of exaggerations and misstatements" by the business school. At the time, the university disputed the Star's report, but Missouri governor Jay Nixon requested an investigation, and that request led to the report issued Friday.

'By All Means Necessary'
PricewaterhouseCoopers officials had access to senior UMKC officials (including some who left positions they had held in the period covered by the audit) and to relevant e-mail messages. The e-mail revealed a focus on finding ways to do well in the rankings in order to keep happy the business school's largest donor (of $32 million), for whom the school, the Henry W. Bloch School of Management, is named.

An e-mail from the then dean to colleagues said, for example: “Henry Bloch gets very upset when our rankings go down. We must do everything we can to increase it when we can by all means necessary.”

The audit then describes some of the things UMKC did to rank high in the Princeton Review's evaluation of business schools' (undergraduate and graduate) entrepreneurial programs.

For example, in answering a question about how many students are enrolled in an entrepreneurship program, the university started counting anyone who was taking a class in entrepreneurship. Not surprisingly, the numbers jumped. For example, UMKC reported that undergraduate enrollment in entrepreneurship programs increased in a year (the year in which the university changed how it was filling out the form) from 99 to 438. A dean told the auditors that he knew that figure "isn't right."

Another change UMKC made helped it inflate answers on another Princeton Review question: about what percentage of students launch a business while enrolled. The university, the audit found, started using primarily data from its e-scholar program (a certificate program for entrepreneurs in which they must develop a business plan). The e-scholar program students are not degree students or enrolled in the university, but officials said they believed it was legitimate to use this group for reporting, even though the Princeton Review ranks degree programs. Since all of the e-scholar students must create business plans, the proportion of undergraduates reported as launching a business increased from 44 percent to 100 percent from 2010 to 2011.

And then there was the question on clubs. The Princeton Review asks: “How many officially recognized clubs/organizations do you offer that are specifically for entrepreneurship students?”

The answers in 2009 were three each for undergraduates and graduate students, and in 2010 were four each. In 2011 the figure jumped to 29 for graduate students and 28 for undergraduates.

Here's how the number of clubs "grew," according to the audit. A business school official asked a colleague to put together a wish list of clubs that might show an entrepreneurial focus at the university. A second official "then instructed a UMKC graduate student to populate these clubs onto the university's webpage." UMKC "used the clubs' existence on the university's webpage as the only proof the club existed." Officials believe "these additional 20-plus clubs never actually existed at UMKC." Since the Star article, the number of clubs being reported is down to five each for graduate students and undergrads.

The PricewaterhouseCoopers report says the Princeton Review does not review the accuracy of information submitted to it by colleges and universities and so did not do any independent analysis of UMKC data. The audit also said it was not clear that any of the false information would affect the business school's overall ranking.
But on Sunday night, Robert Franek, senior vice president and publisher of the Princeton Review, said in an email to Inside Higher Ed that Princeton Review would be removing UMKC from the lists of best colleges and business schools for entrepreneurial programs.

“At The Princeton Review, for the past 34 years we have provided accurate and timely information to students and parents to help them make decisions about colleges and graduate schools. We were extremely disappointed to learn that the University of Missouri-Kansas City falsified data about the school per a report from PricewaterhouseCoopers on January 30. As a result of this new information, we are removing the University of Missouri-Kansas City from our 2014 ranking lists of the best college and business school entrepreneurial programs,” said a statement Franek released. "Schools earn a spot on our entrepreneurship ranking through school-reported data. Every school signs an affidavit to ensure their information is accurate. We take these affidavits and this news very seriously.”

Questions on a Journal Article

Another major part of the audit was a look at the journal article published in The Journal of Product Innovation Management.

On this question, the audit found that the article was based on data analysis and that no shortcomings could be found in it. But the article has been questioned from the time it was published. The original Star article quoted a professor (anonymously, because he feared speaking out) as saying that “We all knew that this was bullshit. We knew that UMKC was not better than MIT and Stanford.”

While the audit didn't question the article's findings, it did note concerns about it. The authors who asserted that UMKC was tops in the world in innovative management did not disclose to the journal that they were both visiting scholars at the university and knew some of the players. Because the article was based on data (number of articles written in journals of various influence, etc.), the journal's editor said that the article's findings still stood. However, he said he wished he had known about the authors' ties to the institution they praised.

The authors are two scholars from China. They gave a letter to the auditor in which they said that there was no need to identify their UMKC connections because the "double-blind" peer review process -- in which they don't know who reviews their work, and the reviewers don't know the author -- prevented conflict of interest. The audit, however, found that at the journal in question "papers are solely reviewed by the editor and not subject to the typical double-blind review of other research papers."

While UMKC issued a statement saying that the audit affirmed the top ranking for its business school, the statement also said that the business school "has already made changes to the way the data was collected and reported this year." Further, the business school "has appointed a special faculty committee to oversee the processes involved in any rankings submissions going forward."
Law firm honors memory of beloved associate

January 31, 2015 11:45 pm  •  By Doug Moore

As each year passes, fewer people working at the Armstrong Teasdale law firm recall Michael Tramble.

It’s been more than 16 years since he worked there, long before the firm moved to Clayton from downtown St. Louis.

But this month, his name will be mentioned over and over again as the firm begins its annual campaign to raise money for the Michael C. Tramble Scholarship Fund.

Pledge cards will be distributed. Employees will be encouraged to enter the chili cook-off and the dessert auction to grow a fund that stands at just less than $160,000. Since 2004, the fund has provided financial assistance to nine law school students at the University of Missouri, Tramble’s alma mater.

Preference is given to minority students. Additional consideration is given to an applicant who also is a veteran.

Tramble, an African-American who served in the Navy, came to Armstrong Teasdale in 1994, working as a summer associate. He was hired as a full-time associate on Aug. 28, 1996.

“He was a large man who always had this big smile on his face. He just lit up a room,” said Rick Engel, who was Tramble’s mentor at the firm. After just a few minutes in a room with Tramble, it became clear, Engel said: “Yeah, I want to hang with that guy.”

Engel and Tramble became close friends, as did their wives.

So on a Tuesday morning, in July 1998, when police asked someone from the firm to please come to Tramble’s home near Ballwin, Engel went. Employees were already concerned. Tramble had not shown up for work on Monday.

Engel and Richard Scherrer, the firm’s managing partner at the time, spoke little on the 30-minute drive from downtown. They were both preparing for the worst.

“The detective pulled us aside and asked us what we knew about the occupants of the house,” recalled Engel, a partner with the firm. “I said there was Mike, his wife, Roz, and two children. I also told him I was aware that Roz’s ex had issues with the family.”
The detective replied: “There are five bodies in the house.”

Police soon pieced together the story. Reginald Sublet Sr., a former police officer from Dallas, drove to the home and killed the Tramble family and himself.

The dead included Michael Tramble, 32; his wife, Rosalind, 34; Michael “Tre” Tramble III, 1; and Reginald “Reggie” Sublet Jr., 12.

The bodies were found in the home’s two-car garage, where a vehicle had been left running. Police said all five died from carbon monoxide poisoning. Michael and Rosalind Tramble had been bound; Rosalind also had been beaten.

Rosalind and Sublet Sr., 34, had been in a custody dispute over Reggie. Sublet had written to his son a few days before the murders to say he planned to come to Missouri to take the boy to Dallas. He also wrote that he blamed Rosalind for his nearly six-month jail sentence for not paying almost $20,000 in child support. While in jail, Sublet was fired from the Dallas Police Department.

Michael Tramble’s parents, both evangelical pastors, spoke to reporters outside a memorial service arranged by Armstrong Teasdale. More than 600 people filled St. Francis Xavier (College) Church on St. Louis University’s midtown campus.

Michael Tramble Sr., who like his son, served in the Navy, said he had tried once to talk to Sublet about the custody fight. In the end, the elder Tramble said, Sublet “made up his mind he would have the last word.”

CHANGING LIVES

The law firm wanted to make sure the last word went to the promising young associate whose life was cut short.

“When something bad like that happens, you try to figure out what the absolute right thing to do is, and there is no answer to that,” Scherrer said in a video he made for the scholarship campaign, posted on the firm’s intranet. Still, the firm members agreed they had to do something, ultimately settling on offering scholarships to minorities.

“He was so proud of his school, the University of Missouri law school, so if we can help someone else at the school, it’s a good way to remember him,” said Hillary Schumaker, a partner at Armstrong Teasdale who has headed the scholarship fund campaign the past two years.

Antonio Stanfield, 26, is one of two Mizzou law students to receive a Tramble scholarship this year. Stanfield’s $4,000 is in addition to smaller amounts he received his first two years from the fund.
“It’s really good to know I’m receiving a scholarship named for someone who exhibited so much promise,” Stanfield said. “For us, as recipients, it places the onus on us that we make sure we’re not just practicing law, but really making a difference.”

And, of course, the scholarships make law school more affordable and student loans lower, he said.

Stanfield, like Tramble, entered law school later than most students. After graduating in 2010 from Fisk University in Nashville with a degree in Spanish, “I really thought the world was at my disposal,” he said.

But he returned home to Atlanta with no long-term job prospects, working as a cook at a fried chicken restaurant and loading and unloading baggage for Delta.

The jobs taught Stanfield patience and humility, tools he says he is carrying into a profession where he can make money and help others out of predicaments.

At Armstrong Teasdale, secretary Pam Sanders reigns as the winner of the dessert auction. Her cake resembling a bucket of fried chicken won best presentation and brought in the highest bid last year.

She, like many co-workers, did not know Tramble. She started at the firm about a year after his death. But she has become one of the biggest cheerleaders for the scholarship fund.

She received a scholarship to attend Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, covering tuition, room and board. But Sanders dropped out after her junior year because the funds did not cover expenses such as books. She became frustrated that she had no money. She began working, spending about 30 years as support staff at law firms. She never finished college.

If a scholarship fund like the one named after Tramble had been available to offer the financial boost she needed at the time, “I probably wouldn’t be sitting here,” she said.

“I like that this continues to help a kid who needs it, and we don’t want it to stop,” Sanders said.

Engel still gets choked up talking about Tramble. He loves to share stories about the man he mentored. In its infancy, the scholarship campaign was held in summer, around the anniversary of Tramble’s death. Now the fundraising happens during Black History Month.

With the goal being to help minorities become successful, “there is no better time than Black History Month to put emphasis on the campaign,” Engel said.

“I know this is something Mike would find exceptional. He’s changing lives with this.”