MU News Bureau

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Too Many Lawyers? UM Curator Nomination Is Caught In Debate

By DALE SINGER & RAY HOWZE

In recent weeks, the Missouri Senate has considered the nomination of four lawyers to be members of the University Missouri Board of Curators, but only three of them won confirmation.

The fourth, Mary Nelson of St. Louis, was rejected by a committee vote. State Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, said that if she joined the board, that would mean that eight of nine curators – all but David Steward of St. Louis – would be lawyers. He said that would be too many members from one profession.

Noting that the university has schools of business, agriculture, journalism and medicine as well as law, Schaefer said he wants to see more professions represented on the governing board of the four-campus system.

“At a minimum I’d like to see somebody on there with a medical background,” he said in an interview in Jefferson City. “I’d like to see someone on there with an agricultural background.

“Eight lawyers out of nine total curators? At some point, there needs to be a broader professional diversity of professional backgrounds on there.”

And, he added, because Nelson works as general counsel for St. Louis Community College, she would face a possible conflict of interest.

Nelson said in an email that she had no comment at this time on her nomination. A spokesman for Gov. Jay Nixon, who has named all current members of the board, would not say whether Nelson’s name would be resubmitted for consideration or withdrawn.

Nixon spokesman Scott Holste said in a statement:

“The governor is pleased that the Senate has approved three of his nominees — David Steelman, Maurice Graham and Phil Snowden — with overwhelming bipartisan support. Each of them, along with nominee Mary Nelson, are outstanding Missourians with longtime connections to the University of Missouri and long records of public service to the people of this state.”
Steelman of Rolla and Snowden of Kansas City, are both lawyers and former members of the General Assembly; Graham of Clayton is a past president of the Missouri Bar. All three earned their law degrees at the University of Missouri.

Steelman took his seat on the board earlier this year. Snowden and Graham were confirmed by the Senate last week as the curators were meeting in Columbia.

But Nelson’s nomination was rejected by a Senate committee last week. One reason cited was the possible conflict posted by her job as general counsel for St. Louis Community College.

Schaefer, who noted that he voted against all three lawyers’ nominations because of their profession, said that the curators consider questions of strategy in higher education that could put them in competition with the community college.

“The question that some people raised on that,” he said, “was who is her responsibility to? Her employer, who is the community college? Or the University of Missouri, as a curator?”

State Sen. Jamilah Nasheed, D-St. Louis, who sponsored Nelson’s nomination as a curator in the Senate, said she did not agree about the potential for a conflict of interest.

“I thought she would be a great fit for the Board of Curators,” Nasheed said, adding: “I didn’t see a conflict. None whatsoever.”

Besides her current job as general counsel of St. Louis Community College, Nelson has served in many capacities on public and private bodies over more than 30 years. Among those posts, she was president of the St. Louis Board of Police Commissioners, a member of the reapportionment and redistricting commission for the Missouri House and a member of the board of trustees of the MU Law School Foundation.

If Nelson were to join the board, she would be the second African-American member, joining Steward, and the third woman. Asked if race played a role in the rejection of her nomination when three other lawyers, all white men, won confirmation, Nasheed said:

“Some people can point to that as an issue. I’m not going to speculate if it was racially motivated or not.”

Nasheed said she hopes Nixon sends her name back to the Senate, and she hopes that other curators or officials of St. Louis Community College submit opinions that no conflict of interest would exist for her to serve in both positions.

“I think that would make things a little different,” she said.

On his theme of too many lawyers, Schaefer noted that with Nelson’s membership, not only would all but one of the curators be lawyers, but “they’re not all disinterested lawyers. They’re lawyers who have had close connections to the governor.”
“So I think the first issue is why so many lawyers, which is the first red flag. Why eight out of nine curators as lawyers? In and of itself, I think it’s a lack of diversity of professional background. That raises a red flag. But when you dig one step deeper... they are all lawyers who generally have some unique and discrete connection to the governor, whether that be campaign contributions or that be former employees or former staffers. I think that begs the question even more than why so many lawyers.”

Schaefer, who has declared his candidacy for attorney general in next year’s election, has expressed his concern about Nixon and the curators before. He has introduced a bill in the Senate, SB110 that reads in its entirety:

“This act prohibits any member of the University of Missouri Board of Curators from voting to appoint to, hire, or employ in any way in any position in the university any person who appointed him or her to the board. Any such vote taken by a curator will be null and void. Any curator who violates this prohibition will immediately forfeit his or her curator position.”

It is seen as an effort to block any possibility that Nixon could become president or general counsel of the university system after he leaves the governor’s office when his current term is over.

*St. Louis Public Radio is a unit of the University of Missouri-St. Louis.*

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**COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN**

**Stephens College, MU rank among top 50 best fashion institutes worldwide**

By Danielle Zoellner

February 9, 2015 | 7:21 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — The fashion schools at Stephens College and MU are among the top 50 fashion institutes in the world, according to a December 2014 ranking by the independent fashion news website Fashionista.
Stephens ranked 48th while MU followed right behind at 49th. Notable schools such as the Fashion Institute in New York are on the list, but Columbia had more schools than the likes of Chicago and Milan, both places considered to be fashion capitals.

The ranking was based on criteria such as tuition, famous and successfully placed graduates, quality of teachers and practical training.

What has made both Stephens and MU stand out? Monica McMurry, dean of the School of Fashion and Design at Stephens, thinks the school ranked because its classes have a real-world setup.

The school offers four fashion majors; three intertwine so students can work in multiple fields.

Britta Belle is a junior fashion design and product development major at Stephens.

“Stephens takes a 360-degree approach to fashion design,” Belle said. “We learn everything from illustration to the actual designing of the clothing.”

Each faculty member at Stephens has hands-on experience in the field, Jessica Wawiorka, a sophomore fashion design and product development major, said.

“With the smaller class sizes, we get one-on-one experience,” Wawiorka said.

Stephens is working on becoming a member of the Council of Fashion Designers of America, of which only 18 schools are members. McMurry said schools have to be invited to participate in the series of scholarships and contests for designers only. She anticipates Stephens will learn over the summer whether it made the cut.

“We feel like we are on par with the other schools involved,” McMurry said.

Stephens also offers its students an opportunity to be involved in a professional fashion show. The marketing and fashion communication majors produce the show, while the designers make the clothing.

"Critics and professional people from the industry will come in and take a professional look at everyone’s work before the show," Wawiorka said. "This is a process called jury."
This allows the students to make connections with people in the industry and career experience, Wawiorka said. The school puts on the fashion show every April.

MU takes more of a business approach, as opposed to the fashion design emphasis at Stephens.

“We take a global perspective from fiber all the way out to the retail and consumer level,” said Pamela Norum, interim department chair at the school. The textile and apparel management department is one of the largest programs at MU and has a good retention rate, Norum said.

There are two sides to the program: product development, and merchandising and marketing.

“The program ... allows me to be on the design side and still have a business minor built into it,” said Kathleen Kowalsky, a junior textile apparel and management major with an emphasis in product development.

Kowalsky is involved in the sustainability side of fashion, a passion of both hers and the entire textile and apparel management program. Fashions can be more sustainable by incorporating strategies such as reducing dye or cutting down on the transportation of clothing and materials around the world.

Sustainability has become a key area of emphasis built into every class in the school. There is an understanding that not all students will go into companies that focus on sustainability, but MU wants it to be part of its students mindsets.

“Students can effect change and be aware of how it came about,” Norum said.

Both Stephens and MU have placed students with companies such as Dillard’s, Target, Nordstrom and with designer labels, helping them to create broad alumni networks.

*Supervising editor is Scott Swafford.*
It's a strange paradox.

At a time when Americans overwhelmingly say it's important to receive a college education, their faith in the economic value of the investment is slipping, new research shows.

A survey of more than 2,000 adults – 900 of whom were college graduates – released Tuesday by education technology company Greenwood Hall, shows more than half of graduates say those leaving college with a degree now will see a lower return on their education investment than those 10 to 15 years ago. Simply put, while the cost of college continues to rise and the economy is slowly coming out of the Great Recession, today's graduates might not get as much bang for

Older and wealthier college graduates generally were more likely to say a college degree offers lower returns now. Younger, poorer and minority graduates – the majority of whom still said returns would be lower – were slightly more likely to say today's graduates would see higher returns.

"A big part of it is perception," says John Hall, CEO of Greenwood Hall. "At the same time, I think there is absolutely some reality to it in that you have a high number of students that graduate and aren't in positions that they really need a degree for in the first place."

Family background can make a big difference in how students perceive the value of an education, Hall says. Many minority students, for example, are also first-generation college students and might have a different outlook on the worth of a college degree than a white student who is a third- or fourth-generation college student. Media reports about the high cost of college, the burden of student loan debt and the diminishing accessibility of higher education, while true, also drive the perception that a college degree might not hold the same economic value today as it did in the past.

That's not to say, though, that getting a college degree won't lead to a better life, says Bill Destler, president of the Rochester Institute of Technology, a private, nonprofit university in New York that has made return on investment a focus of its 10-year strategic plan.
"The idea that there’s not a significant return on investment I think is wrong," Destler says. "If you look at the relative earnings over anyone’s lifetime, again you can make the case quite easily that even if you have to take on some debt, you’ll make it up in your lifetime."

Research has shown college graduates on average make $1 million more in their lifetimes than those without a college education. The current unemployment rate for college graduates (2.7 percent) is also about half the rate for the general population (5.7 percent), which has caused some to question whether the country is running out of college-educated workers.

Measuring the value of a college degree also has become a national agenda item. President Barack Obama has repeatedly called on colleges to do more to keep costs down, and has tasked the Department of Education with developing a plan to rate colleges on quality, access and affordability. Meanwhile, stories of students burdened by high loan payments and unable to find work constantly grab headlines.

Because data on student-level outcomes, including earnings and job placement, are limited and the federal government can't track that data, third parties – such as PayScale.com – have begun surveying and ranking colleges and universities based on the long-term economic value of different degrees.

**But focusing solely on monetary outcomes like future salaries might not be the best way to measure the true value of a college degree, says Nicholas Prewett, director of student financial aid at the University of Missouri.**

"What you can’t measure in the return on investment numbers is the quality of life or job satisfaction," Prewett says.

A 2012 report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found people who earn a college degree on average live nine years longer than those who don't graduate from high school and have lower rates of chronic diseases and poverty. Likewise, the Great Jobs and Great Lives Gallup-Purdue Index report, released in May, found the type of college that students attend and in some cases even the majors they choose have very little to do with their overall success and well-being later in life. What matters more, the index found, is feeling supported and making emotional connections during school.

"If you focus solely on the monetary piece, those are things you can’t take in," Prewett says. "If you focus on what the true return on investment is for an individual, you get a little different outcome."

Still, the graduates surveyed by Greenwood Hall said the primary reason today's graduates will see a lower return on investment is student loan debt, followed by lower salaries, poor career placement resources, colleges not being engaged in students’ long-term success and problems getting the courses needed to graduate. Many students, Hall says, simply feel unprepared to enter the workforce.
At the same time, while colleges are generally aware of the public concern about a degree's worth, officials often espouse a "not in my backyard" approach, Hall says.

"Most schools individually feel that they're doing a great job in providing value and a return on investment and think that's an issue that maybe is something that affects another type of school," Hall says. "We have a tendency of not looking within as much as we need to."

To best ensure students find gainful employment upon graduating, the Rochester Institute of Technology uses a cooperative education program that each year pairs more than 3,000 students with work assignments at thousands of companies, Destler says.

The program bolsters students' employability, Destler says, because potential employers know the students have real work experience.

While part of the problem certainly centers around the economic reality students face after leaving college, Hall says the country's education system also might be failing students on the front end in terms of financial literacy. A report released in July by the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, for example, found 15-year-old students in the U.S. performed below average when tested on financial literacy – in line with peers from Latvia, Russia, and France, but far behind those in Shanghai, Belgium and Estonia. More than 1 in 6 American students couldn't reach the baseline level of proficiency on a recent international financial literacy exam, the report found.

Some say many students blindly take on debt without knowing if they'll actually be able to pay it back later on. Indeed, more than half of the roughly $1 trillion in U.S. student loan debt was not being repaid, according to a 2013 analysis from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

"The reality is a lot of students in K-12 are basically just encouraged to go to college and get a postsecondary education," Hall says. "We really handle this like a one-size-fits-all type of situation where the goal is to just go to college and get a degree versus thinking about the investment of a college, what you're investing in and what that return might be and how to really maximize that return at the beginning."
Bills would protect religious rights for students


JEFFERSON CITY, MO -- Bills in the Missouri House and Senate would ensure the religious rights of students at public universities and schools.

Some lawmakers want to stop students from discriminating against religious student organizations.

Springfield Representative Elijah Haahr introduced a bill called The Student Freedom of Association Act. Haahr wants to make sure public university administrators, like those at the University of Missouri, cannot stop students from having religious activities. His bill would also prevent discrimination against religious student organizations. The proposal would allow groups to include or exclude people based on their religious beliefs.

Haahr said, “In college campuses around the country, what we’ve seen is policies that say these student groups have to accept members that don’t necessarily agree with their sincerely held religious beliefs. If student groups protest against that, the groups are derecognized and kicked off campus. What we’re trying to do is protect their religious viewpoints and their freedom of association.”

Nine witnesses testified their support for The Student Freedom of Association Act during a hearing by the House Committee on Higher Education. No one testified against the bill.

Haahr said, “This bill is designed to protect minority viewpoints on campus. A group that cannot protect its membership is always at risk of being taken over by a larger group with different viewpoints.”

Haahr wants his bill on the House floor for debate by the end of February or early March.

Columbia Republican Senator Kurt Schaefer has proposed a similar bill.

J-school approves ‘flexible credits’ for graduation
As college degrees become more expensive and careers in journalism more skill-intensive, the MU School of Journalism has decided to tweak its graduation requirements.

School of Journalism faculty voted recently to lower required credits for a Bachelor of Journalism from 123 to 120, and to allow up to four additional journalism classes to count for the Bachelor of Journalism degree.

“The majority of faculty feel that the flexible credits will be of great benefit to students,” said Lynda Kraxberger, School of Journalism associate dean. “Although a few felt that if you give journalism students more electives, there would be less attention paid to the liberal arts.”

Kraxberger said she and journalism senior academic advisor Pete Ozias had been discussing the changes with journalism faculty for over a year.

Ozias said that since journalism students often have little room for elective hours, many must make hard decisions regarding what they want to study and what may benefit their future career.

“I think when students get to the last year, their senior year, they have a big sense of urgency,” Ozias said. “As they plan what they’re going to do when they graduate, many want to polish off a few more skills that they think will help them get jobs. This change will allow them more flexibility to do that.”

No dates have been set for the changes, but Kraxberger anticipates the flexible credits rule going into effect for students graduating in December 2015.

“However, if they talk to their advisors now, seniors graduating in May 2015 may be able to use this,” she said.

Lowering the amount of credits required will have the most impact on students who are financially strapped, Kraxberger said.

“Many students graduate with more credits than are required,” she said. “But there are about 10 to 20 percent of our students who are financially strapped and worried about money, and so by lowering the amount of credits required, we’re lowering the cost for them to graduate.”

The admissions office estimates a cost of tuition of $274 per credit hour for in-state students for the spring 2015 semester. If a journalism student graduates with 120 credits, he or she will spend $32,380 over four years on tuition alone. This number does not take into account the journalism fee of $74 per credit hour, other fees and the cost of books, software and a new MacBook Pro.

As curriculum and graduation requirements become more complex, Ozias and Kraxberger stressed the role of the advising office.

“It can be very hard to keep track of rules and changes,” Ozias said. “That’s why it’s so important that students see their advisors and communicate with them.”
But Kraxberger emphasized that the core requirements of the School of Journalism will remain the same.

"Digital skills are being sought by employers and we’re trying to give our students as many skills as possible, but for me the most important, at the baseline, is critical thinking," she said. "If you don’t have critical thinking skills, you won’t be able to take advantage of any of our classes. In other words, you might be able to take a photograph, but you wouldn’t necessarily know whether that photograph is relevant to your story. We’ll continue to teach critical thinking, no matter what else changes."

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Invasive Asian carp may soon be on the menu at MU dining halls

By Natalie Helms

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COLUMBIA — The texture of Asian carp reminded MU junior Abigail Auner of ground beef.

"I'm very impressed," said Auner, who was eating a plate of carp in a pasta sauce. "I wouldn't assume it's fish."

She and other MU students had been invited to taste Asian carp dishes and share their reactions Tuesday at the Sabai Culinary Development Kitchen in Johnston Hall.

Students' opinions were gathered through word of mouth and one-on-one interactions with Eric Cartwright, executive chef of MU Campus Dining Services. Results are helping MU culinary staff decide whether to serve carp in campus dining halls.

The taste test was also an opportunity for students to enter the kitchen and watch Cartwright prepare experimental dishes — Italian fish stew, pasta puttanesca with seafood, bacon and jalapeno chowder.

"It's a very versatile product," Cartwright said. "It's economical, and it has potential."
He and his sous-chefs discovered carp is unlike other fish because it becomes crumbly when cooked. The chefs tried to make burgers and fish cakes, but they found it was so lean they had to add binding agents to keep it together.

The idea of using carp in the culinary industry originated from Mark Morgan, an MU professor in the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism.

Morgan has been working to find a market for the nuisance fish, which is plaguing the Missouri, the Mississippi and other river systems. He believes MU will be the first university in the nation to serve Asian carp to students.

Dishes are expected to be offered at Kate & Emma’s or Pomodoro, two food vendors in the MU Student Center, with the potential to serve similar meals at other campus dining locations.

In October, a taste test was held at Moser’s Discount Foods, during which customers tried Morgan’s Asian carp chili. Moser’s was the first store in Missouri to sell the carp to retail customers, according to previous Missourian reporting.

The Business Loop 70 West location offers three forms of the fish: boneless ground, fillets with some bones and fish heads.

Ron Baucom, Moser’s meat manager, said sales have been above average. The store is working with its corporate offices to get the fish products placed at its Rangeline Road location in early spring.

So far, however, Morgan has had limited success in persuading Mexican and Chinese restaurants in Columbia to incorporate Asian carp in their menus.

Many Americans find it difficult to eat carp because of its bones, one reason culinary tests have concentrated on using flaked fish. But Morgan believes the public can be sold.

"If we can do it, other people can eat it, too," he said.

Cartwright said he was pleased with the turnout on Tuesday of about 40 who tried the free samples over an hour and a half. He said he heard almost no negative feedback.
Students are honest about their likes and dislikes, Cartwright said, acknowledging that unfamiliarity with Asian carp could determine whether students would accept it as a dish on the menu.

Serving Asian carp in the dining halls is primarily about making students aware of the impact the fish is having on rivers from New Orleans to the Great Lakes.

"It's a culinary solution to an environmental problem," Cartwright said.

A small effort in mid-Missouri to eat silver Asian carp will not have a significant impact on the Asian carp population, Morgan said. "But doing something is better than doing nothing," he added. The fish multiply so quickly it is difficult for researchers to obtain an accurate measure of the Asian carp population.

Morgan teamed up with filmmaker Mark Olson to create a YouTube series called "Silver Carp Solutions: Catching, Cooking, and Consuming," which aims to help viewers understand the issues and provide possible solutions to carp problems.

The series was featured at the Wild & Scenic Film Festival hosted by Missouri River Relief last Sunday at the Blue Note. Another taste of Morgan's chili was provided at the event.

Duane Chapman, a research fish biologist with the U.S. Geological Survey, said entrepreneurs around the country are trying to develop markets for the fish.

Chapman started working with Asian carp soon after he learned about the environmental problems the fish are causing. His research projects study, for example, the life history of the carp to determine how far upriver they spawn and what rivers are potential habitats.

Chapman said a long-term strategy needs to be developed to make sure that infrastructure in the business of harvesting doesn't prevent efforts to decrease Asian carp numbers.

"Harvest is the only control method right now we can deploy," he said.

Supervising editor is John Schneller.
Vet-school professor reaches continued success with Lameness Locator

Kevin Keegan, an MU professor, equine surgeon, researcher and business owner, works from a small room with a single desk, two chairs, a computer and a filing cabinet.

The fluorescent-lit room was once a closet, until Keegan needed to be near his treadmill-equipped testing room. A window was put in, and sophisticated cables for motion analysis now line the walls and ceiling. Hand-made sensors litter his desk, and family pictures mingle with old textbooks and papers.

Much of Keegan’s life is pieced together. However, like his closet-turned-office, it doesn’t matter what it looks like, so much as who and what make it full and possible.

Keegan teaches equine surgery at MU and heads the faculty startup company Equinosis LLC. With the help of MU faculty and engineering connections, he developed the Lameness Locator for an objective method to assess horse lameness. Keegan has devoted over a decade of his life to the research.

The Lameness Locator works by using three sensors placed on the horse, which measure acceleration and movement patterns and send data to Bluetooth-enabled software in real time.

Lameness is the most important medical problem in horses, Keegan said. He estimates around 70 percent of complications are related to lameness.

Horses have different patterns of movement, known as gaits, for each of their four motions: walking, trotting, cantering and galloping. Lameness is an abnormal stance or gait caused by either structural or functional disorders such as trauma or infection, according to the Merck Veterinary Manual.

Early lameness detection consisted of looking at a horse in motion and guessing which one is the affected leg.

“I noticed when I was a very young veterinarian that agreement, even between experts, whether the horse was lame or not and which leg was affected was not consistent,” Keegan said. “That always bothered me.”
Growing up as a city boy from St. Louis, Keegan knew nothing about horses and was afraid of them for a time. After graduating in 1983 from MU with a doctorate in veterinary medicine, he started in a mixed practice working with all types of animals.

“I did not like the small animal unit,” Keegan said. “The smell of dog poop in the morning and all the barking drove me crazy. But then we did a little bit of equine work, and I liked that and started to get along with those people better.”

It was the people he found in the equine community that brought Keegan so deep into the field, and he describes his moving up as flukes brought on by good connections.

In his first year of private practice, he found a small office with two experienced veterinarians who agreed to take him on. A later surgery residency at the University of Illinois eventually brought Keegan back to his alma mater; a colleague from Illinois was a surgeon at MU and needed another hand for a short period.

A week before this phone call, his private practice had burned to the ground. He agreed to the brief position — and stayed much longer.

“I am an alum of the University of Missouri, and I’m never going to leave,” Keegan said.

Shortly after his job acquisition, an endowment for research equipment came in from regular Equine Clinic client Nancy Walton Laurie, niece of Walmart founder Sam Walton. It was time to start solving the problem that began pestering Keegan long ago.

During his residency, Keegan took classes in engineering, as opposed to a common veterinarian resident’s choice to take, for example, advanced cardiology. He takes pride in his “good math background,” motioning up to tattered engineering textbooks on his shelves.

Keegan still required some technical assistance to achieve his research dreams. Thus a collaboration began with Dr. Frank Pai, C.W. LaPierre Endowed Professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering.

Pai would become crucial to the Lameness Locator research. Pai had only been at the university for a year when Keegan approached him in 1998 with his request. He needed help with signal data processing for his designs to determine lameness locations.

“The work with him was actually very useful for my later research,” Pai said. “I look at the horse and think: structure. It was a very interesting development. I solved their problem first and then I used those measures to solve my own structure vibration and damage inspection problem.”

Pai entered Keegan’s research scene in its infancy, when the plan was to run a horse on a treadmill surrounded by many high-speed cameras to capture all movements.
He developed the original algorithm for the data processing and continues to help the company advance its technology as a co-inventor.

This camera and treadmill method worked decently but was not very practical, Keegan said. It took a lot of time, as horses had to be taught how to run on a treadmill, something that cost more money and resources.

Joanne Kramer, assistant teaching professor of equine surgery, researched with Keegan during her residency at this point in the process.

“He used to always tell me that we were going to get down to two markers on the horse and get the data in the same amount of time we do regular lameness evaluations,” Kramer said. “I never thought it would happen. It’s a good example of how much of a visionary he is.”

Once again, the vision required means, and the means came through another networking partnership. A past professor caught Keegan in passing and suggested he present his papers at the Rocky Mountain Bioengineering Symposium.

A Japanese engineer, Yoshiharu Yanezawa, attended the conference and approached Keegan after his presentation.

“The language barrier was high, so we started sketching on napkins,” Keegan said. “He was an electronics expert, and he thought we could do the same thing we were doing on the treadmill, but with body sensors and over ground.”

Developments began but the inventors lacked financial support. When Keegan could not receive research grants for an already developing product, he created the Equinosis company to vie for National Science Foundation small-business grants.

“The administration here at MU was very supportive,” Keegan said. “In order to get the NSF funds, I had to be paid by my company, which means I had to take sabbatical leave. Thankfully, the department allowed me to do that.”

Equinosis began business in 2007 and sold its first commercial product in 2009. Keegan said he felt anxiety over starting a business at the height of the economic crash in 2008. He said he remembers where he was watching TV when the first thoughts of alarm came.

“For the first four years, we barely made enough money to just stay alive,” Keegan said.

But stay alive and ultimately prosper, they did. The Lameness Locator undergoes continuous progress and is now in its fourth generation of sensor evolutions.

Everything for the product is made at Avatar Engineering in Kansas, and no software development has been sent abroad for cheaper labor.
“It’s amazing,” Pai said. “Nobody believes me when they see the horse has four legs and we only put three sensors on it and can then tell you which leg is lame. That is why we have a company and why this is one of the university's most successful stories.”

Most of Equinosis’ clients are veterinary schools. The company has sold systems in over half the veterinary schools in North America and has users on all continents of the world, barring Antarctica.

“The key is to get in with the younger generation and get them all trained in how to use the equipment,” Keegan said.

MU is also a large believer in the technology. The Equine Clinic uses the Lameness Locator every day to evaluate lamenesses, and it has helped them do a better job of evaluating lameness and whether treatment has been effective, Kramer said.

Several investors agreed with the Clinic’s assessment of the Lameness Locator and have financially supported Keegan and his team. Partners of Equinosis include Centennial Investors here in Columbia, Anthony Allan & Quinn in St. Louis and the Life Science Business Incubator at Monsanto Place at MU.

Keegan said he owes everything to MU for their support from the beginning. The university paid the patenting expenses up front and owns the research technology.

Equinosis has also most recently been awarded a secondary phase grant from the National Science Foundation, which Pai said not many achieve.

“It means they think this is a successful business,” he said.

The journey continues as Equinosis seeks to improve and provide more forms of evaluation. According to Keegan, there are about 200 systems sold and in use, but his goal is to reach 3,000.

They are looking at a new set of problems, as well. A recent sensor model is being developed to fit a horse’s foot so one can measure which foot is touching on the ground more lightly and is therefore most likely lame.

Keegan has been toiling over this one issue for well over a decade, but he said he finds joy and energy in the work. Even with the arrival of competition EquiGait, which uses a similar sensor technology, Keegan said their competitors are still way behind.

Forbes

More Political Spending Leads To Better Representation
Not all campaign dollars are created equal. This key fact explains the biggest political puzzle from the years since *Citizens United*: Why hasn’t the influence of the wealthy kept pace with their spending?

Over the last five years, Supreme Court rulings in cases such as the aforementioned *Citizens United v. FEC* and *McCutcheon v. FEC* have led to increased spending on political advertising and campaigns. Some pundits predicted that elections would be “bought” as a result; others that the decisions would increase corruption or lead to laws that favor the wealthy.

However, it is 2015 and those outcomes have not come to pass. In fact, the candidates that stand to benefit most in the long run from the rulings are not the best fundraisers, but rather political outsiders who lack connections to traditional sources of support like the business community or party leadership. Why? Because one of the major effects of campaign spending is to boost something incumbents already have a lot of: name recognition.

It may seem basic, but name recognition is absolutely crucial to a candidate’s chances for victory. That’s why yard signs, which typically only state a candidate’s name and the office he’s seeking, are still such an important part of campaigns. Incumbents get free media coverage from their official duties, creating name recognition worth hundreds of thousands or millions of dollars. They also have ties to party leaders and existing relationships with past campaign supporters, making it easier to raise money in small amounts.

The result is that incumbents are far less reliant on campaign spending generally, and on large contributions specifically, than challengers and new candidates are. Laws that make it harder to raise and spend on politics protect incumbents from competition.

Consider contribution limits from the challenger’s perspective. To have a chance at victory, they need to get their message to a broad base of voters, which costs a lot of money. However, to raise a lot of money, they first need to get their message to a broad base of voters because they can only raise a small amount from each one.

It’s a huge catch-22 that worsens representation. After all, why worry about pleasing your constituents when your seat is safe? Too many incumbents rarely, if ever, face a serious challenge. Congress has an approval rating below 20%, yet typically upwards of 90% of incumbents get re-elected. It’s good work if you can get it.

The problem is almost nobody can. Fortunately, by making it easier to raise and spend money advocating for candidates, *Citizens United* and *McCutcheon* began to reduce the unfair advantages of incumbency that plague our political system. Thanks to *Citizens United*, supporters can join together to urge fellow citizens to support their preferred candidate. And thanks to *McCutcheon*, donors are no longer constricted by rules that force them to choose between giving to party leaders and risky challengers—now they can do both.

These new avenues of support create new paths to victory, which gives a greater number of candidates a realistic shot at winning office. Of course, critics may respond: Is an increase in the
number of viable candidates really a good thing if those candidates are reliant on wealthy individuals? Here is where political science research comes into play.

Harvard Professor Stephen Ansolabe here writes that, “[i]n three out of four [studies], campaign contributions had no statistically significant effects on legislation….” Other scholars have noted that large donors tend to hold more moderate views than smaller donors, and that Congress has grown more polarized in recent years, again suggesting that large donors are not calling the shots on Capitol Hill.

The relationship between campaign money and policy influence isn’t nearly as strong as most assume, and the oft-asserted link between money and corruption also falls apart under scrutiny. University of Missouri’s Jeff Milvo conducted a study of state campaign finance laws over 20 years and found no link between regulation and corruption.

Citizens United and McCutcheon have been unfairly characterized as victories for the rich and steps towards corruption. The evidence doesn’t support that. More money in politics means more viable candidates, which means more choices for voters and more incentive for politicians to keep their constituents happy.

Pride, Prejudice, Prostitutes and Pickles: Scholars Unearth Two Letters Relating to Jane Austen

Newly discovered Jane Austen artifacts can always be counted on to cause a stir, as when a scholar claimed several years ago to have found a previously unknown pencil portrait of the Divine Miss Jane.

Now, a team of researchers has unearthed a more subtle Austen discovery: two previously unpublished letters by Jane’s brother Charles, which they believe shed a suggestive and unexpectedly saucy light on the ways her literary reputation was kept alive in the decades after her death in 1817.

The brief letters, written in 1828 and published this month in the journal Modern Philology, seemingly have little to do with the author of “Pride and Prejudice.” In the first letter, Charles Austen, a naval officer then in Barbados, informs an acquaintance, the diplomat, travel writer and artist Sir Robert Ker Porter, that he is enclosing two jars of pickles, while also promising to
carry some “Bottles of Cayenne” to Porter’s sister Jane on his next trip to England. In the second letter, written to Jane Porter, Charles expresses relief that a tin of goods has reached her, and promises to pay a visit in person soon.

The Porters were no ordinary family. Jane Porter and her sister, Anna Maria, were celebrated novelists known to admire Jane Austen, whose popularity had ebbed following her death. The letters, Devoney Looser of Arizona State University and Ruth Knezevich of the University of Missouri argue in a paper published along with the texts, establish “previously unrecognized” connections between Charles Austen and the literary Porters. Considered together with other documents, the scholars argue, the letters demonstrate Charles’s “apparent willingness” to pursue a friendship with the Porter sisters, presumably for the sake of advancing his sister’s reputation.

And what about those pickles? Ms. Looser and Ms. Knezevich argue that they may not have been pickles at all. In his first letter, Charles describes trying to procure them first from one “Miss Betsey Austin,” but then turning to “Miss Hannah Lewis” when Austin (no relation to the Austens) “proved false.” Austin and Lewis were prominent freewomen of mixed race who ran rival lodgings in Barbados. Charles frequently mentions them in his unpublished journals from the period, sometimes describing visits he made to each in the course of a single day.

Austin and Lewis “almost certainly sold more than pickles and rooms,” Ms. Looser and Ms. Knezevich write in their paper, titled “Jane Austen’s Afterlife, West Indian Madams and the Literary Porter Family.” The pickles themselves may well “imply a ribald joke” that might not have been so distant from Charles Austen and Sir Robert’s more high-minded bookish talk.

In an email, Ms. Looser, who in addition to more traditional scholarly pursuits has skated in the roller derby as Stone Cold Jane Austen, summed up the point tartly.

“These letters show that well-traveled Englishmen could discuss famous author-sisters and West Indian madams almost in the same breath,” she wrote. “It ought to make us wonder whether Charles Austen’s support of his sister’s literary career had an impact on his interactions with women who ran businesses of a very different kind.”

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

UPDATE: UMKC chancellor apologizes over false data

By The Associated Press
February 10, 2015 | 4:43 p.m. CST

NO MU MENTION
KANSAS CITY, Missouri—The chancellor of the University of Missouri-Kansas City is apologizing after the Princeton Review last week stripped the college of its rankings for falsifying data.

Chancellor Leo Morton said Monday on KCUR-FM's program "Up to Date" that he's taking the issue seriously. He also has apologized to students, staff, alumni and the city in a letter to the school's campus.

The Princeton Review announced last Monday it was pulling the school's top 25 ranking for graduate and undergraduate entrepreneurship programs for 2014, The Kansas City Star reported. The group later announced it also would remove the rankings for the Henry W. Bloch School of Management for 2011, 2012 and 2013 at the university's request.

The university was stripped of its rankings after Gov. Jay Nixon requested an audit of the school's data because of a Kansas City Star article that called the management school's pursuit of higher rankings for the Regnier Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation into question.

"This is very serious to me because this is not what we are about, and I want everyone to know that we are addressing it in a very serious way," Morton said on the radio program.

The audit found the college's business school knowingly submitted false data when applying for rankings and awards from national organizations. Morton said that he had questioned the validity of a separate business school ranking when UMKC was placed ahead of elite schools such as Harvard, Yale and MIT but was assured the ranking focused on a "very narrow" research area. The chancellor also said that the ranking had been "validated" by a retired business professor.

In regards to the Princeton Review ranking, Morton said the submission of false data could be traced to one administrator. According to the audit, the administrator felt pressured by his boss to submit bad data.
Doubts about the labor-market returns of bachelor’s degrees, while never serious, can be put to rest.

Last month’s federal jobs report showed a rock-bottom unemployment rate of 2.8 percent for workers who hold at least a four-year degree. The overall unemployment rate is 5.7 percent.

But even that welcome economic news comes with wrinkles. A prominent financial analyst last week signaled an alarm that employers soon may face a shortage of job-seeking college graduates. And the employment report was a reminder of continuing about “upcredentialing” by employers, who are imposing new degree requirements on jobs.

“Presumably, these educated workers are the most productive in our information economy,” wrote Guy LeBas, a financial analyst with Janney Montgomery Scott, in a report Bloomberg Business and other media outlets cited. “At some point in the coming year, we’re going to risk running out of new, productive people to employ.” Anthony P. Carnevale concurred with LeBas. As director of the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce and a top expert on the labor-market returns of degrees, Carnevale has long railed against arguments about the payoff from college being overrated.

“We’re headed for full employment” of bachelor’s-degree-holding workers, he said. It’s a challenge decades in the making. Carnevale cites research that has found colleges lagging badly in producing talent. Since 1983, the job market has outpaced higher education with a cumulative total of 11 million positions for workers with “usable knowledge,” which he defines as “degrees with labor-market value.”

These days, demand for positions in the knowledge economy grows by 3 percent each year, Carnevale said, while higher education meets only 1 percent of that growth.
That’s where employers step in. Carnevale’s center last week released a report that broke down the $1.1 trillion colleges, government agencies and employers spend each year on higher education and job training in the United States. Employers chip in the most, the report found, spending $590 billion annually to train workers.

Of that amount, $413 billion paid for informal, on-the-job training. Colleges spent $407 billion on formal training, while employers spent $177 billion. However, the academy’s rate of spending has outpaced that of employers, increasing by 82 percent since 1994 compared to 26 percent.

The report, dubbed “College Is Just the Beginning,” also found that four-year-college graduates receive the most of the formal, employer-sponsored job training. Bachelor’s degree holders account for 58 percent of employers’ annual spending on formal training.

That fact, while somewhat counterintuitive, is because four-year-college graduates tend to get jobs that are specialized, complex and change over time, Carnevale said, particularly in STEM fields.

“Wherever the earnings are the strongest, that’s where the training occurs,” he said. “The more educated the workforce, the more training in the job.”

Workers with an associate degree or some college credit but no degree received 25 percent of formal employer training. Those with a high school credential or less received 17 percent.

‘Credential Creep’
The report’s findings strongly suggest that a bachelor’s degree often is required as a starting point for a job that requires more training -- and one that pays well. So dropping out to go work for a tech company isn’t a safe bet for most students.

“Formal employer-provided training typically complements, rather than substitutes for, a traditional college education,” the report said.

The new federal jobs report in some ways bolsters the findings from a study released last fall by Burning Glass Technologies, a Boston-based employment firm that analyzes job advertisements. That research found that employers are more likely to replace workers who do not have bachelor’s degrees with those who do.

One reason for this, according to Burning Glass, is that many “middle skills” jobs are becoming more technological and complex. Architectural drafters, for example, these days are expected to be “junior engineers,” the report found.

But employers also appear to be screening applicants by requiring bachelor’s degrees for positions that do not require nor are likely to require the kind of training one would get from a B.A. or B.S., according to the report, citing certain human resources and clerical jobs as examples.

This sort of credential creep is alarming to some economists, such as Richard Vedder, who directs the Center for College Affordability and Productivity and teaches economics at Ohio University. Vedder has written that an oversupply of bachelor’s degrees creates
its own demand.

**Wage Gains**
The virtually nonexistent unemployment rate for bachelor’s holders poses a test to higher education, Carnevale said, beyond just trying to keep up with employer demand. That’s because the “wage premium” for workers with a four-year degree relative to those who hold only a high-school credential, while large, has stagnated in recent years. As employers run out of graduates to hire, however, the wage premium should climb again. That outcome would be further proof of the value of a four-year degree.

Full-time workers with a bachelor’s degree or more who are between the ages of 25 and 32 have median annual earnings of $45,500, according to a report the Pew Research Center released last year. Two-year-degree holders or those with some college credits and no degree earn $30,000 while high school graduates earn $28,000. Another study, which the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco released last year, tracked the fluctuating earnings premium for a four-year degree.

The premium was at its lowest in 1980, when bachelor’s degree holders earned 43 percent more, on average, than workers with just a high school credential. In 2011, however, it was 61 percent, or $20,050 per year.

Carnevale predicted that gap would widen because of the high demand for bachelor’s degree holders. But it will take about two years for those effects to show, he said.

LeBas agreed that earnings gains of highly educated employees will outpace others. “Wage pressures among skilled workers will almost certainly rise further in the coming year,” he wrote.