Missouri cannot remain competitive without supporting higher education

As pointed out in the editorial "Make the Missouri Promise happen" (March 15), higher education has been underfunded for many years in Missouri. For the last 10 years, Missouri has ranked among the bottom six states in its support for higher education.

Nationally, the average amount of per capita state funding for higher education is $7,072. In Missouri it is $4,975 — 30 percent less. We are dead last among all our neighboring states in per student funding. Missouri students get less than half the support than do students in Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Mississippi!

During the past five years, tuition at public universities has increased nationally at over 25 percent. At the University of Missouri, it has been only 9.5 percent. After years of "doing more with less," we cannot remain competitive if this continues. At some point, substantial tuition increases will become necessary just to provide a basic education for Missouri residents at our state universities. And then, fewer will be able to attend. We are in a race to the bottom in higher education.

Everyone used to make fun of Mississippi as the state with the most poorly educated students. Pretty soon, that joke will be on Missouri.

If we want to keep our best students in Missouri and attract new businesses to Missouri, we must have more support for higher education.

W. Dudley McCarter  •  Creve Coeur

Fox News Channel (US Cable) “Fox and Friends” TV Show

March 17, 2015
'American Sniper' causes controversy on Mizzou's campus


COLUMBIA, Mo. - The movie 'American Sniper' is now bringing controversy to the University of Missouri.

School officials are looking into disparaging comments directed at students for speaking out about their beliefs.

Some feel the movie should not be shown, claiming the story is racist.

The former president of the Muslim Student Organization, Farah El-Jayyousi, is the one who has spoken publicly about not wanting 'American Sniper' to be shown on campus.

It is the student government's film committee that picked the movie as one of the weekly films shown.

School officials told ABC 17 News regardless of the controversy the movie will still play on campus.

'American Sniper' depicts the life of Chris Kyle. Kyle is the deadliest marksman in U.S. military history with 160 confirmed kills.
"I don't really feel like it's controversial because it's a true story, and I feel like they did what they could to depict the story as true as possible," said one MU student.

While students are speaking out to ABC 17 News on campus Tuesday others took to the student newspaper, The Maneater.

El-Jayyousi wrote this to the editor, "The fact that this film is being shown, the fact that I have to explain why this film is not only problematic but harmful makes me feel even more unsafe. Showing this film will create an even more hostile environment for me and other Arab, Muslim, South Asian and people of color on this campus."

ABC 17 News reached out to El-Jayyousi on Tuesday but have not heard back.

On Twitter, a student tweeted Chancellor Loftin about a disparaging comment that was made regarding El-Jayyousi’s letter.

Loftin released this statement saying, "This behavior is deeply disappointing to me and to all true Tigers. I have asked the vice chancellor for Student Affairs to provide support for students affected by these social media posts and to determine whether MU’s Code of Student Conduct has been violated."

So while disciplinary action may be in the works against those making comments on social media, some students on campus said they see both sides.

The movie though will be screened on April 17 and 18.

However, now a forum will be held after to facilitate racial discussions.

"Having a forum afterwards so we can talk about certain issues that are brought up by this movie is good, I don't think it should be silenced," said Ceiera Savage, and MU student.

Several student organization did remain silent on Wednesday.

The Muslim Student Organization said they don't want to make a comment about this situation.

We are still waiting to hear back from the Missouri Student's Association.

From 5:30 until 7 p.m., Loftin and the vice chancellor will have an open forum in Keller Auditorium to discuss race relations at Mizzou.
MU students discuss race relations with chancellor

Watch story: http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=28038&zone=5&categories=5

COLUMBIA - Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin hosted a race relations forum on the MU campus Tuesday evening.

Students as well as faculty and staff were invited to address race relations and how they relate to the university experience outside of the classroom. Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin and Vice Chancellor Cathy Scroggs hosted the event and asked to hear the student perspective on issues of race, diversity, and safety.

Missouri Students Association President Payton Head also spoke, reinforcing the idea that MU students need to become more culturally sensitive and aware.

Several students also raised questions and concerns regarding mandatory diversity training for faculty and eventually all students, lack of diversity within the chancellor's administration as well as teaching faculty, and the general mentality on campus regarding minority students.

The chancellor addressed many of the concerns with encouragement but asked for patience.

"No change of this nature is going to be quick," he said. "I can't change a human heart."

Loftin said the university has several plans in place to reverse the trend of cultural ignorance on campus. He mentioned improvements in Summer Welcome training for the fall as well as regularly scheduled meetings with faculty and students to discuss racial issues, of which this forum was a part.

Some demands from students included mandatory diversity training for all university staff, compulsory courses relating to diversity and race relations, and a greater effort by the chancellor to be more transparent in his administration's efforts to fix these issues.
"Many people tell me, 'There is no problem, I'm not a racist, there is no problem,'" Loftin said. "If you start with that premise, there is no solution."

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU students express frustration with slow progress toward inclusiveness

Tuesday, March 17, 2015 | 11:35 p.m. CDT; updated 6:24 a.m. CDT, Wednesday, March 18, 2015
BY TIMOSHANAE WELLMAKER

COLUMBIA — Jonathan Butler wasn't alone in his frustration Tuesday evening.

"I don't feel safe. I don't feel safe at night. My friends don't feel safe, and that shouldn't be the case," Butler, an MU graduate student, said.

In 2009, Butler found a notorious racial slur spray-painted on his dormitory door as an undergraduate student at MU, and he still feels the fresh oppression heaped upon him each day.

But his experience was like many expressed in the third of a series of listening sessions about race hosted by MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin.

A simmering array of questions and comments challenged the level of diversity at MU and questioned administrative efforts to create a more inclusive atmosphere on campus. Students, faculty and staff drew upon varying levels of frustration, anger and pain in their personal accounts at MU and elsewhere.

Butler and others expressed their frustrations with forums themselves. They said the people who need to change their behavior aren't interested in talking about race relations.
"It can't just be in these forums," Butler said. "It's the people who aren't in this room who aren't getting this information."
"Really all the white people should be over at this meeting because we didn't make this mess," said Traci Wilson-Kleekamp, a mentor and tutor in the Missouri athletics department. "Your predominantly white institution doesn't seem to give a damn."

Loftin said his concern was making sure that the people who needed to adjust did so, but he also said forums were a decent start.

In an interview after the forum, Loftin said the most emotional moment for him was when Keisha Avery, a multiracial junior studying engineering, told of her experience with racism at MU.

Avery said she shared an interesting fact about herself in class and another student said, "Wow, that really is an interesting fact for a black girl."

"What can you do to make me feel comfortable?" Avery pleaded with Loftin in a shaky voice.

Loftin encouraged her to stay in the engineering program, get her bachelor's degree and consider getting her graduate degrees at MU. He told her to become an example for other women.

"We have to have more faculty like you," Loftin said. "We have to have more like you in the classroom."

Loftin said he is working with university leadership to create the campus that students so badly want. He's taken the UM System Board of Curators to the lower level of the MU Student Center, where the Women's Center, Multicultural Center and LGBTQ Center are found, to introduce them to the epicenter of MU's social justice movements.

At the beginning of the forum, Loftin said he has also acted to address vulgar social media posts and an email to MU student Farah El-Jayyousi after she wrote a letter to The Maneater protesting the Missouri Students Association's screening of "American Sniper" in April.

Loftin asked Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Cathy Scroggs to determine whether the statements were a violation of MU’s Code of Student Conduct and noted that harassment is an act punishable by law in Missouri at the forum Tuesday night.
The university has also opened an investigation of threats to the MU Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center posted on Yik Yak, an anonymous messaging app, in December. Loftin said IP addresses have been obtained and the investigation is ongoing. "I do believe it will get better," Loftin said at one point.

But students remain frustrated with a perceived lack of action on the part of campus leadership.

"One Mizzou is a joke," said Nicholas Ramos, an MU senior and a member of Lambda Theta Phi, referring to a student-led diversity initiative. "It just hurts to see something I love reject me so much."

Loftin said the next forum will be held April 29.

*Supervising editor is Austin Huguelet.*
University of Oklahoma President David Boren attended a pre-dawn rally Monday organized by students. He lambasted the fraternity members as "disgraceful" and called their behavior "reprehensible." He said the university was looking into a range of punishment, including expulsion.

"This is not who we are," Boren said at a midday news conference. "I'd be glad if they left. I might even pay the bus fare for them."

Since the video went viral on YouTube — garnering hundred of thousands of views — both the school and the national Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity responded almost immediately by cutting ties with the chapter.

In Columbia, the president of the Missouri Alpha Chapter of the national fraternity issued a strong statement:

"The National Office of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity has shut down the chapter at the University of Oklahoma, and we are in full support of this decision being taken following the release of such an appalling video," MU colony President Garrett Knox wrote.

"We are also in full agreement with the decision made by the University of Oklahoma administration to remove these individuals from the campus immediately," Knox continued. "Racism and discrimination has no place in this world, period. In no way do the actions of those few reflect, by any means, the values and beliefs of the men of the Missouri Alpha Colony of Sigma Alpha Epsilon, here at the University of Missouri, or those of our national organization as a whole.

"The Missouri Alpha colony looks for men who can best exemplify the standards, beliefs, and values that coincide with our creed, 'The True Gentleman,' in their everyday actions, regardless of their race, religion or sexual preference. We are extremely embarrassed and saddened that individuals who wear our fraternity letters, dare to call us brothers, and claim to be true gentlemen would behave in such an abhorrent manner."

The MU Panhellenic Association, which has representatives from all the sororities on campus, discussed the video and how it pertains to the MU Greek community during its regularly scheduled delegation meeting. Greek women expressed some concerns about racial and religious problems they've witnessed on campus.
Some complained about fraternities using Confederate flags as decorations and about instances in which women have been denied entrance to fraternity parties because of their race.

MU Panhellenic Association President Allison Fitts encouraged the delegates to start conversations about diversity in each of their sorority chapters.

The Panhellenic Association held a roundtable last week with non-Greek women and members of the MU Interfraternity Council to discuss cultural issues in Greek life.

"We don’t want to act unless we know the root of the problem," Carolyn Welter, vice president of public relations for the Panhellenic Association, said. "We are getting input from the community."

The group also plans to hold another roundtable discussion later this month to keep the conversation going.

MU Interfraternity Council President Jason Blincow said he emailed an article about the Oklahoma fraternity's chant to all MU fraternity presidents to start a conversation among their chapters.

*The Interfraternity Council's executive board discussed race relations on campus and among Greek organizations during its regular meeting on Wednesday. It issued a statement saying the Greek community has several educational programs that are intended to ensure that MU chapters are "uniquely educated on inclusivity and diversity."

"We are proud of our school's maturity and understanding of the importance of diversity and confident that this event at OU does not reflect our fraternities' or Mizzou's culture as a whole," the statement said.

The Sigma Alpha Epsilon national fraternity's headquarters issued a statement on Twitter apologizing for the Oklahoma members' actions, saying, "This type of racist behavior will not be tolerated and is not consistent with the values and morals of our fraternity."

The fraternity's national president, Brad Cohen, also weighed in on the Twitter message. "I was not only shocked and disappointed but disgusted with the outright display of racism displayed in the video," Cohen said.
The national fraternity closed the Oklahoma Kappa chapter, suspended all its members and was considering removing them from the organization permanently.

Boren said members have until midnight Tuesday to remove their belongings from the fraternity house. He said the fraternity was "not totally forthcoming," and he was still trying to find out who was on the bus so the school could consider disciplinary actions.

He said the university's legal staff is exploring whether the students who initiated and encouraged the chant may have violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, which prohibits racial discrimination.

"We are also going to look at any individual perpetrators, particularly those that we think took a lead in this kind of activity," Boren said.

White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest said the efforts by the university and the national fraternity to repudiate the racist comments were "an appropriate step."

It's unclear who recorded the video, when it was recorded and who initially posted it online. Boren suggested it was likely taken by another student who didn't agree with what was being chanted.

OU Unheard, a black student group on campus, posted a link to the video after someone anonymously called it to the group's attention Sunday afternoon, communications director Alexis Hall said Monday.

"We immediately needed to share that with the OU student body," said Hall, a junior. "For students to say they're going to lynch an entire group of people ... It's disgusting."

The video appears to have been taken on a charter bus, with at least one of the chanting young men wearing a tuxedo.

Telephone and email messages left Monday with several current members of the fraternity seeking comment on the video were not returned. Other members declined to comment.

"I was shocked they were just doing it openly on the bus, like they were proud of it," said Jared Scarborough, an OU junior in construction science. "From the chant you could tell they had done it before. It wasn't a first-time thing. And it was everybody. And the fist-pumping."
North Mesquite High School football star Jean Delance, a top offensive lineman prospect, told a Texas radio station he withdrew his commitment to OU after he learned about the video. He said he spoke Sunday night with coach Bob Stoops, but wasn't told about the incident.

"I'm very disappointed in the coaches not letting me know. 'Hey Jean, this is going on. Be aware. I don't want you to be shocked tomorrow when you wake up,'" Delance told Dallas/Fort Worth station KRLD. "But that was just heart-breaking right there."

The Oklahoma football team decided to protest rather than practice on Monday. At the team's indoor practice facility, Stoops led the way as players, joined by athletic director Joe Castiglione, walked arm-in-arm, wearing black.

An OU police cruiser was parked Monday outside the fraternity house, a sprawling two-story, sand-colored brick building on a street lined with Greek houses just west of the center of campus. The Greek letters were removed from the side of the house Monday afternoon.

OU, located in the southern Oklahoma City suburb of Norman, has about 27,000 students, about 5 percent of whom are black. The Greek system is largely segregated.

Boren was emphatic in his repudiation of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon chapter in a Twitter statement issued Monday morning.

“You should not have the privilege of calling yourself 'Sooners,'" Boren said. "Real Sooners are not racist. Real Sooners are not bigots. Real Sooners believe in equal opportunity.”

*The Associated Press and Missourian reporter Danielle Zoellner contributed to this report.*

**COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN**

After years of struggle, African-American journalist Lucile Bluford may get her day in Missouri
JEFFERSON CITY — Presidential hopeful Jesse Jackson was more than two hours late to his own 1984 campaign event at Kansas City’s Municipal Auditorium.

The anxiety of the roughly 3,200 people in the crowd was palpable. Many were wondering if the prominent civil rights leader and Baptist minister was going to make it to the "heart of America" at all.

It was the voice of an experienced African-American journalist, who was the editor and publisher at Kansas City's black newspaper, the Kansas City Call, which expressed the sentiment to Jackson.

"Why are you so late?" Lucile Bluford greeted him upon his arrival. The 73-year-old then scolded Jackson and told him he should have notified the Call about his speech earlier and the paper could have helped with turnout.

"She just lit Jesse Jackson up," said Donna Stewart, the current president and publisher of the Kansas City Call. "She didn't care about it being Jesse Jackson running for president. She lit him up."

Bluford, who by her death in 2003 had worked at the Call for about 70 years, was a tough reporter who commanded respect from everyone, said Assistant Minority Floor Leader Rep. Gail McCann Beatty, D-Kansas City.

McCann Beatty is pushing a resolution to make July 1, the journalist’s birthday, "Lucile Bluford Day" in Missouri. The resolution was passed out of committee in February but has yet to be taken up on the House floor.

The representative also is gathering signatures to include Bluford in the Hall of Famous Missourians.

"You could watch her work and tell she was a force to be reckoned with," McCann Beatty said.
Bluford's goal was always to do "the right thing," not only for the Call, but also for the African-American community, Stewart said. Through extensive coverage of the civil rights movement and other key moments in black history, Bluford fought to end discrimination against African Americans in all aspects of public life.

She established herself as "the consciousness" of Kansas City, Stewart said.

**In 1939, Bluford challenged Missouri's Jim Crow laws by repeatedly applying for enrollment at MU, then the state's "white" school. After getting rejected, she teamed up with the NAACP and sued the university, which admitted Bluford was qualified for enrollment but was rejected because of her race.**

Bluford lost her case.

**In a letter to university officials, she said MU's efforts to keep her outside its programs would not thwart her career, according to records stored at the State Historical Society of Missouri.**

And they didn't. At the time of her application, Bluford was already the Call's managing editor, and she later became publisher and president. During her life, she was showered with awards for her journalism and recognized for her activism, even by the people who once rejected her.

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When Bluford walked from her house in a small African-American enclave in an otherwise white neighborhood to her elementary school, she had to pass the "white" school.

That bothered her a bit, she said.

The issue was not about race, but that she had to walk farther to get to class. Segregation was an accepted fact of life in Kansas City, Bluford said in an oral history interview conducted by Fern Ingersoll for the Washington Press Club Foundation.

Bluford graduated from high school in 1928 and enrolled in the University of Kansas after a failed attempt to persuade her father to allow her to attend Howard
University, a historically black college. She knew she would be rejected at MU, she said in the oral history interview.

The state of Missouri paid for Bluford’s tuition at Kansas, according to court documents. Missouri’s laws at the time required the state to pay for black students’ education in other states if the careers they were seeking weren’t available at Lincoln University, the school Missouri designated for African-Americans.

Bluford said she was the only African-American student in Kansas' journalism program. This didn't seem to be an issue for her, she told Ingersoll. She said she "got along just fine." Unlike her white counterparts, Bluford couldn't live on campus because black students couldn't room in the dormitories.

Black students also weren't allowed in some of the campus dining facilities. The football team kept African-Americans out. Black students were exempt from Kansas' graduation requirement of taking swimming classes because they weren't allowed in the school's pool.

In her college years, Bluford said she became "worked up about segregation" and fought to dismantle Kansas' discriminatory practices.

In education and in public life, law and tradition dictated the separation of blacks and whites.

Bluford told Ingersoll about a time she went with her friend Anna Jean McCampbell to a movie theater in Lawrence that relegated black patrons to the balconies.

McCampbell was so light skinned she could pass for white, Bluford said in the oral history interview. Taking advantage of her skin tone, McCampbell bought tickets for her and Bluford for the theater's "white section." Bluford and she then walked directly to the main floor of the theater and sat down in the middle. The theater's ushers saw Bluford and McCampbell sneak into the main floor, but they couldn't spot them once the lights turned off and the film started.

So the ushers turned the lights on for a moment so they could find Bluford and McCampbell. They told them to move. The two women pretended they didn’t know what was happening and stayed in their seats.
"You won that day," Ingersoll told Bluford.

"It was fun to me," she replied.

Bluford spent her college summers filling in for reporters on vacation at the Call. When she joined the publication full time in 1932, she focused on covering civic and community meetings.

The Call "helped the African American community win several local battles for civil rights," according to the Kansas City Public Library website, one of whose branches now bears Bluford's name.

Stewart said most white-owned newspapers only covered African-Americans when the topics related to crime. The Call focused less on institutions such as the city council and the school board, Bluford said in her oral history interview.

"I guess we were too busy fighting discrimination," Bluford told Ingersoll. "... They weren't too interested in the black community, and I guess we weren't too interested in them."

By 1938, Bluford had risen through the ranks to managing editor. In December, the U.S. Supreme Court came to a decision that would have given Lloyd Gaines, an African-American and graduate from Lincoln University seeking admittance to MU’s law school, permission to enroll.

The nation’s high court ruled that the Missouri law that paid for black students’ out-of-state tuition — which helped Bluford fund her education — didn’t satisfy the Constitution’s equal protections requirements. Missouri had to provide equal education at another school within the state or allow Gaines to study at the MU School of Law.

Gaines wasn’t set to enroll until fall of 1939. To test the system, Bluford decided to apply for MU’s graduate journalism program for the spring term. In January 1939, Bluford sent a letter to the University of Missouri, the state’s designated white school, asking to be admitted.

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Shortly after applying, Bluford found herself walking into MU’s Jesse Hall to register for classes. Her transcripts had been accepted, and she was told to come to Columbia to enroll in the university.

Standing with Bluford at the registrar’s line were people of diverse ethnic backgrounds, but no other African-Americans, according to previous Missourian reporting.

As she waited, a young man tapped her shoulder, she said in her oral history interview. "Miss Bluford?" he said.

"Yeah," she said.

"Mr. Canada would like to see you in his office."

The young man referred to S.W. Canada, MU’s registrar. He told Bluford she couldn’t enroll although she had already been admitted.

"I asked him why not — the Supreme Court said I could be there," Bluford told the Missourian in 1993. "Canada said the Lloyd Gaines case isn't finally decided and he hadn't heard yet what was supposed to happen. Now, you know that's crazy, but that's what he said."

Transcripts from Lincoln University were a tell-tale of black students' race. Bluford’s transcripts came from Kansas. Since she had applied by mail, university authorities didn’t know that she was "of the colored race," Canada told Bluford in a letter sent after her first rejection.

In March 1939, Gaines, who had set the precedent for Bluford’s attempt to enter the school, disappeared, according to the MU School of Law website.

Bluford defied Missouri’s "separate but equal" doctrine once more when she applied to MU in September 1939. Again, she was turned down, and "the sole reason" was that she was black, "it being undisputed that she is otherwise eligible," according to court documents stored in the State Historical Society of Missouri.

The NAACP sued Canada to compel him to admit Bluford, according to previous Missourian reporting. The man at the head of Bluford’s legal fight was Charles Houston,
a prominent NAACP lawyer who had successfully represented Gaines in his case against Canada.

MU’s lawyers argued that Bluford wasn’t "acting in good faith," because she was part of a "conspiracy" to "destroy the law and the policy of the State of Missouri" as it related to educational segregation, according to court documents.

Although Bluford’s legal team couldn't admit it at the time, MU’s lawyers were right — the NAACP was trying to end the state's educational segregation, Bluford told the Missourian in 1993.

Houston, who was later dubbed "the man who killed Jim Crow," had engineered a strategy to strike down "separate but equal" laws by exposing the inequality of educational opportunities for African Americans, according to the NAACP website.

"We were just trying to break down the dual educational system," Bluford said in 1993.

“That’s exactly what we were trying to do."

Bluford lost her lawsuit, as well as an appeal to the Missouri Supreme Court in 1941.

The state’s highest court, which intended "to maintain Missouri’s policy of segregation," ruled against Bluford because she had never "demanded" a journalism program from Lincoln University, according to court documents.

Defeated in court, Bluford didn't quit her attempts to enter the Missouri School of Journalism. As late as April 1942, more than three years after Bluford's first application, Canada received telegrams and letters from Bluford about her desire to enroll, according to State Historical Society of Missouri documents.

"I have been waiting now for two years and a half for the state of Missouri where I am a citizen and taxpayer to provide me with the graduate training in journalism to which I am entitled and for which I am qualified," Bluford wrote. "I beg of you in the name of justice and democracy not to be a party to any further delay."

In February 1942, Lincoln University established a journalism program, according to the institution’s website. In a court hearing, it was determined that Lincoln's program wasn't equal to MU’s because it only offered undergraduate classes.
This meant MU had to admit Bluford, according to previous Missourian reporting. At that time, however, MU’s graduate journalism program was shut down temporarily because of World War II. The university argued the war had depleted the program of teachers and students.

"Do you believe that?" Bluford told the Missourian in 1993. "They had no choice but to let me in, and that shows you how desperate they were. I applied so many times, wasn’t it silly?"

In one of Bluford's last letters to Canada, she said that if Lincoln didn't have a graduate school by the time MU re-established its program, she would attempt to enter the university again.

"You may consider this a standing application," she wrote then.

Although she attempted to enter MU for six consecutive semesters, Bluford was never admitted.

And MU wouldn’t open its doors to black students until the fall of 1950.

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For Bluford, who never married, "her husband and her children was the Call," said Stewart, the Call’s publisher.

The iconic reporter made her mark by covering issues concerning black equality, Stewart said. Bluford covered the March on Washington in 1963, and many other events centered on African-Americans.

Because of her long career — which spanned from the early 1930s until her death into 2003 — Bluford "probably had more authority than anyone" in covering the civil rights movement in Kansas City and in Missouri, said Brian Burnes, who has worked as reporter for the Kansas City Star since 1978.

To Burnes, one of the best measures of Bluford’s prominence is the fact that many journalists wanted to write her "unique and fascinating story." Despite Burnes' and his colleagues' attempts to persuade Bluford to let them profile her, she refused time and again.
"She never saw herself as the story," said Burnes, who is an MU alumnus and wrote "Mizzou 175," a book about the university's history. For her, "the story that was worth paying attention to was the civil rights story."

There might be another reason why Bluford didn't agree to having journalists write about her: She didn't trust reporters, Stewart said.

"She had her reasons," Stewart said. "I think she felt she might be misquoted. I don't know."

Most of all, Bluford "just wanted to work and get the paper out," Stewart said. As an editor, she tried to instill in her reporters the values of truth, speed and accuracy.

"She demanded perfection and professionalism, but she was interested in you as a whole person," Stewart said. "Not just the work part, but your development as a human being."

Bluford returned in 1984 to the university that had put more than three years into keeping her off its grounds. This time, she visited the campus at MU’s request — the School of Journalism wanted to recognize her with the Missouri Honor Medal, its highest award for distinguished service in journalism.

During her stay at MU, Bluford paid a visit to Canada, who was about 90 years old and still living close to MU's campus, according to previous Missourian reporting.

"Do you remember me?" Bluford said, according to her oral history interview.

"Oh yes, come on in," she recalled him saying.

"He admitted the university told him not to let me in," she said, according to previous Missourian reporting. "He knew he was wrong, but he was trying to keep his job. They spent a lot of time and money trying to keep two blacks out of the university."

Lloyd Gaines, the man whose case opened the door for Bluford to apply to MU, was never found. Even today, his whereabouts remain a mystery. In 1993, MU dedicated a walkway of the law school to Gaines and established two scholarships in his name.

"That university is changing, isn't it?" Bluford said about the dedication, according to previous Missourian reporting.
In 1989, five decades after Bluford’s first application, MU granted her an honorary doctorate degree in humanities. With speeches and a diploma, the university recognized Bluford’s fight and accomplishments. A document in her commencement materials read:

"We are embarrassed now that you lost the battle at this university, but today we are proud to add you to our list of degree holders. At long last."

Many details in this story come from an oral history interview conducted by Fern Ingersoll for the Washington Press Club Foundation, which promotes "equality, education and excellence among journalists in print and broadcast media," according to its website. The foundation's "Women in Journalism" oral history project comprises dozens of interviews with pioneer women journalists. Visit wcpf.org for more information about the project.

How garden plants fight off ‘speck disease’

Bacterial infections can stunt growth and lower the nutritional value of plants, such as those many Americans will soon plant in their gardens this year.

New research has uncovered new regulations of defense pathways for plants. This discovery could lead to helping those home-grown tomatoes fight off certain bacteria better and has implications for pear trees, roses, soybeans, and rice.

“Each year, millions of dollars are lost from damage to crops and ornamental plants caused by pathogens, which include a bacteria known as Pseudomonas syringae,” says Antje Heese, assistant professor of biochemistry at the University of Missouri.

“This bacteria directly affects tomatoes and causes speck disease that permanently damages the fruit and leaves. In our study, we used Arabidopsis thaliana, a plant that has the same immune response as tomatoes but grows at a faster rate, to study the immune responses of plants.”
Previously, researchers thought that a plant defended itself against bacteria by activating a specific, several-step process. However, Heese’s team found that if the plant is exposed to bacteria, it actually activates its immune system using three separate mechanisms.

Heese and her research team, including graduate student John M. Smith, confirmed that each mechanism responding to the infection is doing so independently of the other two mechanisms, and that each of these mechanisms must have the right amount of specific proteins, called immune receptors, in the right place to respond appropriately.

Having the right combination provides the plant with an effective and efficient immune response. This discovery could allow future scientists to create new strategies to help plants fight disease and lead to better crops.

“Like any living organism, plants have limited resources and they have to use those resources effectively,” Heese says. “If the plant makes too much of the proteins responsible for these mechanisms, they will suffer in other areas, such as creating quality fruit.

“This same discovery can be applied to many crops, including rice and soybeans, and ornamental plants, including roses, pear, and apple trees. The information discovered in this study gives scientists something new to study in plants, with the eventual goal of better crops and ornamental plants.”

The study appears in *PLOS Pathogens*. The National Science Foundation and the University of Missouri funded the work.

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**Farm subsidies explode as food stamp program goes under the knife**

*BY DAVE HELLING*

3/17/2015 12:00 PM

Criticism of the agriculture price supports in the 2014 Farm Bill is starting to escalate — even as House Republicans consider cutting the food stamp program embedded in the bill.

*The Environmental Working Group says the 2014 bill will be the “most expensive ever” because of unanticipated additional spending on farm*
insurance programs. The group bases its conclusions on a new report from the University of Missouri.

“The new analysis confirms that the promised cost savings of 2014’s subsidy ‘reforms,’ which were much touted during the farm bill debate, are turning out to be pie in the sky,” the EWG says.

The Farm Bill was supposed to cost about $1 trillion over the next ten years. About 20 percent would go for farm price supports, loans, and other spending. The rest goes for food stamps, now called SNAP payments.

The new Republican House budget, released Tuesday, calls for making SNAP a block-grant program administered by states. It doesn’t suggest any specific number for reductions in SNAP spending, but such cuts seem inevitable.

“This budget assumes the conversion of the program into a flexible State allotment tailored to meet each State’s needs,” the document says.

But Republicans in the House and Senate may be forced into the interesting and difficult position of supporting higher spending for ag subsidies at the same time they’re cutting food assistance to the poor.

Sen. Pat Roberts is chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee. He’s looking at the food stamp program.
WASHINGTON -- Kicking off what will likely be months of contentious budget battles, Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives on Tuesday released a 2016 funding blueprint that calls for freezing the maximum Pell Grant award.

The proposal, which was spearheaded by the House budget committee chairman, Representative Tom Price of Georgia, would keep the maximum Pell award at the current $5,775 for the next 10 years.

It is part of an overall plan that seeks deep cuts in domestic spending in order to bring the federal government’s expenditures into balance with its revenue over the next decade.

The proposal echoes the budgetary visions of Representative Paul Ryan of Wisconsin, who chaired the House budget committee in the last Congress. Like Ryan’s recommendations in previous years, this year’s Republican plan criticizes the expansion of the Pell Grant program under the Obama administration as unsustainable.

Still, the budget outline is more of an ideological statement of priorities than it is a road map to any specific changes to student aid programs.

It calls, for instance, for better targeting of Pell Grants to "students who need the most assistance," but does not suggest how to do that.

Rhetorically, the proposal goes even further than previous Ryan budgets in its skepticism of how Pell Grants are currently awarded.

"Increasing eligibility to those with higher incomes drains resources from those who need the most help," the budget framework says. Advocates for student financial aid rejected the budget proposal's approach to Pell funding.
“Congress should not balance the federal budget on the backs of students,” the Institute for College Access and Success said in a prepared statement. “With higher education more important and harder to afford than ever, we need to do more, not less, to keep college within reach for all students.”

**Setting Stage for Reconciliation**

The budget resolution also includes language that would allow for a parliamentary maneuver known as reconciliation. Republicans included the language in their budget resolution because it would allow them to pass a repeal of President Obama’s health care law with just a simple majority in the Senate.

But the mechanism -- which amounts to a procedural shortcut -- could also be used to change other policies, including student aid programs. The budget blueprint calls for a budget reconciliation process that would task the House education committee with finding savings of $1 billion over 10 years from the programs it oversees.

In achieving those savings, lawmakers could change any number of policies affecting higher education. Such was the case in 2010, when Democrats used reconciliation to cut banks out of the federal student lending system.

In recent years, as reconciliation has been used to push through changes to student aid programs, it has at times undercut momentum for reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. Some observers of the process have said that as a result, important changes to higher education policy that can't be achieved through reconciliation (because they don't have a direct budgetary impact) have been left to linger.

The prospect of significant shifts in policy outside of the normal budgeting process worries Justin Draeger, president of the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, who said student aid programs could be “collateral damage” in larger political fights.

The reconciliation process, he said, is an "unpredictable monster whose major focus is producing savings, not good policy making."

**Tough Proposal for Research Funding**
The framework unveiled Tuesday does not spell out how Republicans would fund academic research. But it does propose slashing the overall pool of funding that Congress allocates each year across domestic programs, including research, by $759 billion over the next decade.

Those cuts would “significantly impede our ability to advance science and combat disease,” said United for Medical Research, a coalition of groups that advocate for more federal funding for research.

House lawmakers are expected to vote on the budget outline this week and will likely negotiate government funding over the summer with their Senate colleagues. Senate Republicans are to release their budget blueprint today. Any government funding measure would ultimately have to be approved by the president, who on Tuesday criticized some of the steep domestic-spending cuts in the Republican plan. The new federal fiscal year begins Oct. 1.