Groups make statements about race at University of Missouri Homecoming Parade

By Caitlin Campbell

Sunday, October 11, 2015 at 12:00 am

Tensions were high during the University of Missouri’s 2015 Homecoming Parade, as activists took to the streets to protest what they say is an uninviting culture for minorities at the school and in Columbia, with one group causing a detour after blocking the parade route.

About a dozen members of local churches and the group Race Matters marched in the parade Saturday morning to support student inclusion and tolerance. Demonstrators carried a black-and-gold banner that said “Columbians for Diversity: We support our minority students.”

This year’s Homecoming came at a time when race relations are squarely in the spotlight at MU. Black students have organized several demonstrations in recent weeks in response to accounts of racist treatment on campus. Earlier this week, black students rehearsing for a Homecoming play at Traditions Plaza were interrupted by a white student using racial slurs. Last month the president of MU’s undergraduate student government, Payton Head, said he was called a racial slur on campus.

Race relations are also a major topic in municipal government after Dale Roberts, the executive director of the Columbia Police Officers’ Association, caused an uproar by declaring “Darren Wilson Day” on Aug. 9, the anniversary of the Michael Brown shooting in Ferguson, in honor of the white police officer who killed the black teenager. Roberts is white.

The events on and off campus have led activists to lobby the city and MU leaders for change. On Thursday, MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said incoming students will be required to complete diversity and inclusion training. City officials are emphasizing efforts to improve police relations with minorities.

Activist Traci Wilson-Kleekamp said the march was designed as a way to merge the “town and gown” efforts to improve race relations in Columbia. She said Loftin has made a “big step” in saying the campus will not tolerate racism, but both the university and city have “a long way to go.”
Wilson-Kleekamp has been challenging city officials to help close social and economic gaps between white and minority communities in Columbia.

“We’re trying to persist in the conversation because, unfortunately, our town does not understand what racism looks like institutionally,” Wilson-Kleekamp said.

John Clark, who often attends city council and commission meetings and has advocated for policy changes, came up with the idea to march in the parade as a way to merge the student and community movements for social equality.

“Part of all of this is to try to make a point,” Clark said, motioning to the crowd of marchers as they made their way to Rollins Street. “The point is that there are a number of people in the community who want our campus to have some type of attention to diversity and inclusiveness.”

Some did more than march. Several students with Black Lives Matter formed a human chain at Ninth Street and University Avenue to block the parade. The train of vehicles, bands and shouting sorority and fraternity members was briefly stalled, and the parade was detoured through the Domino’s Pizza parking lot to get around the demonstration.

At an afternoon tailgating event at the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center, several alumni said Loftin’s mandate that students take diversity training is only a first step to solving the campus race issue.

“That training needs to be put into practice, which in turn needs to be put into policy,” said alumna Rhonda Bivens-Wren, who attended the university from 1983-88.

Bivens-Wren said administrators marginalized minority students while she was in school. She said as part of her involvement with the Black Culture Center in the ’80s, she protested investments MU made in South Africa, where apartheid was in effect. Bivens-Wren said she and other students received threats from the Ku Klux Klan.

“That was the culture at the time,” Bivens-Wren said. “Your roommates would move out if you were black. The university played no role in trying to make that better.”

Former Legion of Black Collegians president Whitney Williams, who graduated in 2012, said she was pleased to see more attention from the media and administration to problems that have always plagued minority students. She said she was unsure whether diversity training would be enough to change the campus culture.

Williams said she remembers students leaving cotton balls on the Black Culture Center lawn, spray-painting racial slurs on buildings and hanging insensitive signs in student dormitories.

“The students are mad about it — but we’ve always been mad about it,” Williams said. “We just hope that the students get the support they need in an environment which can feel very violent.”

Bivens-Wren said racial tension at MU and in Columbia reflects national issues.
“We’re starting to recognize and call out institutional racism,” Bivens-Wren said. “A new civil rights era is being developed.”

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

In Homecoming parade, racial justice advocates take different paths

One group chose to march in the parade, another staged a protest along the route

RUTH SERVEN, ASHLEY REESE, Oct 10, 2015

COLUMBIA — A few minutes before the MU Homecoming Parade began Saturday morning, about a dozen people huddled together at the corner of Conley and Fifth streets. As they took their position behind the MU Water Ski and Wakeboard Club and a pickup truck carrying former Missouri wide receiver Bud Sasser, they unfurled an orange banner that read: "We Support Our Minority Students!"

Carl Kenney, who had organized the group, warned the group that spectators might heckle them. “I just want to tell you it might happen,” he said, “and just smile back.”

“We could just do this,” one person said, flashing her middle finger. Another began humming a protest song, and soon the whole group joined in. “We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes.”

The group was marching in support of students, particularly students who are black, rather than marching against something, said Kenney, who is a co-pastor at Bethel Baptist Church and a columnist for the Columbia Missourian.

As Kenney’s group carried its banner along the parade route, a few blocks away at the intersection of University Avenue and Ninth Street, a group of students wearing black shirts and wielding bullhorns linked arms in front of the red convertible carrying UM System President Tim Wolfe. The students, who
each called themselves Concerned Student 1950, brought the parade to a halt while they denounced what
they considered the administration's lackluster efforts to combat racism at MU.

Some parade spectators joined the protesters, filling the intersection. Homecoming organizers eventually
diverted the parade through the adjacent Domino's Pizza parking lot, but Wolfe's car wasn't able to
maneuver away from the protesters.

MU juniors Nick Jordan, Libby Snethen and Breanne LoPresti were standing at the corner across from
Domino's when the protest began. The car carrying Wolfe and his wife bumped one of the protesters, they
said. Snethen said the driver was getting impatient and kept revving the engine, but she didn't think the
protester was intentionally hit.

None of the protesters were arrested Saturday morning for disturbing the parade, MU Police Major Brian
Weimer said. Police were investigating an accident report related to Wolfe's car.

"We disrupted the parade specifically in front of Tim Wolfe because we need him to get our message,"
said Jonathan Butler, one of protesters. "We’ve sent emails, we’ve sent tweets, we’ve messaged but we’ve
gotten no response back from the upper officials at Mizzou to really make change on this campus. And so
we directed it to him personally. That we are here. We want to make our presence known, that we are
here and we deserve respect, we deserve humanity."

The protesters blocked the street for about 15 minutes, chanting and making speeches through a bullhorn.
Although some spectators supported the protesters, some people began chanting "MIZ" to drown out the
bullhorn speeches.

"All we get is emails and empty promises," Butler said. "And we're here to say we're not going to be OK
with just emails or empty promises anymore."

On Thursday, MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin announced all incoming students would have to compete
diversity and inclusion training before enrolling in classes. The university will also require faculty and
staff to complete the training, which is under development.
Snethen said she wasn’t sure if blocking the parade was the right way to get the protesters' message across.

"I don’t like that they were being so aggressive with children around," she said. "I mean, I understand where they’re coming from and I like their point, but I just feel like the kids don’t need to see that yet. Especially such little kids and they’re so like angry. I feel like there are other ways."

LoPresti disagreed. "No one’s noticing them," she said. "They have to do something to be noticed."

During the protest, multiple bystanders yelled that the protesters shouldn’t use racial slurs in front of their children. LoPresti said it was hard watching the demonstration because the protesters started getting really emotional. Once she noticed other people linking arms with the protesters, she did the same. Standing in the street, she noticed some of the protesters were crying.

"That’s what got to me," she said. "I joined in the line because white silence is compliance, like what they were yelling in the Student Center. I feel like I can’t just sit by and watch. It’s not my fight, but I support it."

Police eventually dispersed the protesters — to some cheers — and the parade route returned to normal.

Reached by phone Saturday afternoon, Kenney said he hadn’t heard about the parade protest. In an interview Friday, he worried that interracial tension on campus would worsen over the next few days. “And I think the reason for the escalation of the violence of the students is because of silence," he said.

The university has never effectively dealt with its racist history, said Kenney, who grew up in Columbia and graduated from the Missouri School of Journalism. "After the chancellor’s announcement for mandatory diversity training, students are still calling for something different. They want Missouri to face how racism has been a part of this institutional culture for beyond 50 years."

Kenney said his group was inspired to march by students in the Legion of Black Collegians, whose rehearsal for a Homecoming performance was disrupted Sunday when a man yelled racist slurs at them.
“I’m pretty happy,” said Lynn Maloney, a member of Race Matters who marched with Kenney to support minority students. "We got our banner and we got our group. We wanted to have a presence and an impact and let them know we see them, we hear them.”

Kenney said racism isn’t just a campus problem. “It’s a part of this city’s culture," he said. "The University of Missouri is embedded in a community where black people suffer the implications of implicit bias and marginalization because of race.”

MU has celebrated Homecoming since 1911, when Chester L. Brewer, director of athletics, invited alumni to “come home” for the football game. Homecoming is historically a day to celebrate MU’s traditions and its graduates. But not all students and graduates felt welcomed to Homecoming festivities; the Legion of Black Collegians created its own homecoming events in 1988 to protest the theme “Ol’ Mizzou,” saying it represented a racist history. MU did not admit black students until 1950.

On Wednesday, Kenney met with Loftin to discuss racist incidents on campus, including racist slurs yelled at MSA President Payton Head in September. He said he recommended to the chancellor that diversity training be mandatory for all incoming freshmen. When Loftin announced a more comprehensive plan on Thursday, Kenney said he applauded the chancellor for going beyond his recommendation.

Kenney’s group represented a coalition involving Bethel Church, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, Rock Bridge Christian Church, the African American Clergy Coalition of Mid-Missouri and the community discussion group Race Matters. Kenney said the role of the church, and of all people of faith, is to show a broken community what community should look like.

“We believe we are all created from the same source, and it is incumbent on each of us to find a way to coexist in peace. That’s why we march in the parade. Because we have to say, look at this here. This is real community.”
Huron, we have a problem

By EDDIE ADELSTEIN

Sunday, October 11, 2015 at 12:00 am

The Huron Consulting Group, which was started in 2002 from the troubled loins of the Anderson accounting firm, has acquired many consulting businesses and is highly successful, with an income of $800 million last year.

Its mission statement shares with us the philosophy of this giant consulting company: “Dedicated to delivering best-in class revenue enhancement, expense reduction and clinical transformation.”

It thus appears University of Missouri Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin contracted with Huron for advice and guidance at a cost of thousands of dollars. One always wonders why MU executives would seek consul when we are paying highly competitive salaries for their leadership. Loftin is paid $450,000, and Mitch Wasden, the MU Health Care CEO, is listed at $573,300 annual compensation. In general, the use of expensive consultants is to provide support for decisions that have already been carried out. It is the oldest administrative trick in the book.

Loftin has a great deal of administrative experience. We know he is a shrewd and tough negotiator: After serving four years as president at Texas A&M University, he received one of the highest payoffs to leave — $850,000. He has established himself at the University of Missouri as a significant power player, and initially we were pleased that he recognized this university was failing as an AAUP institution. He was instrumental in making sure an outside medical school dean with strong research credentials was appointed.

The selection of Patrice Delafontaine to be dean appeared to be an excellent choice. He has 163 publications, is an outstanding practicing physician and brought with him some research associates. He immediately won the respect of physicians and researchers at this institution. He stands strongly on the three-legged stool of academia with strengths in service, research and education. During the Katrina storm, he and his wife and two children stayed at his hospital and aided in the evacuation of 250 patients. He is a role model every physician, student and resident would hope to emulate.

His only flaw was perhaps that he did not realize a power transformation had taken place and he would not be allowed to serve in the usual role of a dean of a medical school. In the past, the CEO reported to the dean, who reported to the chancellor. Currently the chancellor acts as the real CEO, and Wasden reports directly to him. The dean reports to the provost.
The University of Missouri is an academic institution. The MU School of Medicine, with its responsibility of teaching research and medical care, has always been the guiding force in the activities of the hospital. There has always been competition between the School of Medicine and the hospital, which has generally resulted in a power-sharing compromise with the leadership coming from the office of the dean. Past chancellors rarely interfered in the medical school and hospital. Clearly Loftin has inserted himself as a major player, and all medical parties report directly to him. While Loftin has a doctorate in physics, he has no real knowledge about the practice of medicine.

When there was an interim dean, apparently Loftin and Wasden increased their influence over the medical school by consolidating the budgets and the interface with alumni and the public relations department.

Wasden has been an aggressive entrepreneur, and under his leadership the hospital has profited, patient satisfaction has improved and MU Health is the major player in Columbia. The hospital profits contribute to the School of Medicine. However, some of the recent decisions have been controversial:

- A deal was made between local surgeons and the hospital giving them operating privileges at the university.
- An attempt to establish a 10-bed medical surgery center with a Callaway County hospital failed when the state Facilities Review Committee denied the project a certificate of need. This was an embarrassing and likely expensive failure.
- The decision to retract “refer and follow” privileges for a physician doing abortions at the local Planned Parenthood clinic panders to politicians who are inappropriately injecting political and religious issues into university governance. The Missouri attorney general determined fetal parts were handled appropriately. Loftin was asked to speak to this. Normally, Hal Williamson, the vice chancellor of health affairs, would have dealt with this, but he was essentially fired after Loftin abolished his job. The Huron group has suggested the position be re-implemented. Many of us are embarrassed by Loftin’s actions in this situation.
- The worst and most dangerous decision by Loftin was to remove Delafontaine as the dean of the medical school. The implications of this are huge, and we might never recover from that decision unless serious damage control is carried out. This lack of transparency sends a message that this is a dangerous institution. A number of chairs are reconsidering their positions, and apparently some chair candidates are backing out.

Who would come to this university? It appears control has been given to the chancellor, who has little or no knowledge of the traditions of academic medicine. The accrediting process starts in January, and we will not have qualified people in positions of leadership. If the medical school is put on probation, it will be disastrous.

Those involved in scientific research will doubt this institution’s commitment to research activities. Residents are wondering whether this is a quality institution for training. Resident recruitments might become difficult.
So perhaps the Huron Consulting Group, whose expertise appears to be limited to cutting costs and increasing profits, can tell us what to do.

These are the steps that should be taken:

Ask Delafontaine to come back as dean of the School of Medicine and give him strong influence in the operation of MU Health Care. Although this seems unlikely, he is an exceptional individual and likely would take over the position.

- Because it often hires individuals with limited experience in leadership, the UM Board of Curators should look within to see if it can make better choices for presidents and chancellors.
- The curators should inquire as to the lack of action by UM System President Tim Wolfe in allowing this to incur. Did he actually support these moves?

They might need to up the ante. If Texas officials bought out Loftin for nearly a million dollars, perhaps $2 million would be cheap to start over. Here, he is perceived as a knee-jerk, shoot-from-the-hip guy who really needs to be outsourced.

*Now retired from MU, Eddie Adelstein is a former associate professor of pathology at the MU School of Medicine and former president of the MU chapter of AAUP.*

Protesters raise awareness of campus racism during third Racism Lives Here event

Their second event of the day planned for 5:30 p.m. was cancelled.

Graduate students Reuben Faloughi and Danielle Walker were drawing attention to racial injustices on this campus on the morning of Friday, Oct. 9. *They stood along with three other protesters at the top of Turner Avenue Garage holding a sign that said in all capital letters: “RACISM LIVES HERE,” the official name of the series of protests against racist incidents on MU’s campus.*

The tone seemed to be much lighter than the previous two protests. This time, the participants stood on the top level of the garage and tried to get the attention of pedestrians walking on the street.

“I like your bag,” one protester said to a passerby.

“Happy Homecoming,” another protester said. “Turn up.”
On another occasion, Faloughi said to a student on the street, “Keep your head up too, brother.”

This event differed greatly from the two that came before it. The previous protest, held at 1 p.m. on Oct. 1 in the Student Center, created an intense environment as event organizers and other participants’ experiences of racial discrimination echoed off the walls of the building.

At the climax of the Oct. 1 protest, Faloughi stood on a chair outside The Mizzou Store and addressed Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs Dr. Cathy Scroggs, Director of Student Life Dr. Mark Lucas and many students.

“Students get served violence on this campus: physical, emotional, spiritual and fucking mental,” he said. “I’ve been in small group because students don’t have a space on this campus. No, those centers downstairs aren’t for everybody. They don’t always feel welcome. I’ve been in conversations where black students have thought about committing suicide — suicide — because they don’t belong. They don’t feel like they belong.”

Besides comments to individuals, the participants holding the sign did not chant specific messages relating to their movement. All five of the participants declined to comment on the event.

Another Racism Lives Here event was scheduled for the same day at 5:30 p.m. at the Reynolds Alumni Center, but the event was canceled.

THE KANSAS CITY STAR.

OCTOBER 11, 2015

University of Missouri must do more to counter recurring problem of racism

Online diversity training that the university plans will be ineffective

College officials should seek best practices in what’s worked elsewhere

Doing nothing should not be an option

It is shameful that overt racism remains a recurring problem at the University of Missouri in Columbia.

In response to two well-publicized incidents ahead of homecoming on Saturday, MU announced plans starting in January to require all
incoming freshmen to undergo diversity training. That’s the right step, but the effort will be meaningless if the university insists on it being conducted online.

Most of the 35,000 mostly white students attending MU come from largely segregated communities throughout the state, the U.S. and abroad. The university has a moral and ethical obligation to promote mutual respect through healthy face-to-face encounters among students, faculty and staff.

That duty, in fact, is inherent in the school’s formal statement of values: Respect, Responsibility, Discover and Excellence.

University officials should fully investigate the best practices used on other campuses to promote better understanding among students of different backgrounds, races and religions.

The two recently publicized incidents underscore the need. One occurred shortly after midnight Oct. 4. Members of the Legion of Black Collegians who were practicing for homecoming reported they were verbally blistered by a student who shouted racial slurs at them.

Homecoming on any campus is supposed to be a time of fun, togetherness and unity among students faculty, staff and alumni. The racial assault certainly made the African American students feel excluded from that camaraderie and from campus life in general.

University officials did the right thing by removing the offending student from campus. The investigation and action that are to follow need to be more than window dressing. Doing nothing is not an option.

The other well-publicized incident involved Missouri Students Association President Payton Head, who is African American. Less than a month ago, he endured drive-by racial slurs by white males riding in the back of a pickup truck. He went on Facebook last month to explain what occurred on campus and let people know that it should never be tolerated.

Unfortunately, the harassment directed at Head, a student leader, is undoubtedly being felt by other students of color. It hampers the university’s long-standing efforts to increase racial and ethnic enrollment, and may work against the recent launch of the $1.3 billion “Mizzou: Our Time to Lead” fundraising goal.
In years past, the small minority of black students on MU’s campus had only each other to turn to for solace over the hurt, embarrassment and shame they felt at being targeted and for the strength they needed to continue their education.

Fortunately, the university has changed enough to take forceful action against such problems. Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said in online posts that racism “and all prejudice is heinous, insidious and damaging to Mizzou. It hurts students’ education and experience, including their mental health and academic achievement. That is why all of us must commit to changing the culture at this university.”

Even the best diversity training isn’t a cure-all for the deeply engrained racial problems that flow from the state onto the campus. But, done properly, it should provide a necessary and long-overdue start toward getting all MU students, faculty and staff to ensure that the university is a better, safer learning environment for everyone.

Letter to the editor: Mizzou's values are bigger than its challenges

October 11, 2015 12:00 am

Regarding "Mizzou to require diversity training" (Oct. 9):

There is a lot that needs to be done, and, yes, there is a lot that needs to be achieved in reclaiming trust when it comes to race relations at the University of Missouri.

The incidents of harassment against Payton Head, the Missouri student body president, as well as the Legion of Black Collegians have certainly left a mark of distrust among many students, faculty and administrators at Mizzou. In these challenging times, the college community has asked the relevant question: How do we fight racism?

Unfortunately, as we understand from the very history of our country, racism cannot be defeated in a day or perhaps on a pessimistic note it can never be exterminated, for it is in the very human nature to discriminate. However, what can be achieved is to implement and support policies that will end institutional racism and take tough actions on individuals promoting or involved in acts of racism.
And yet fighting racism is just one act to this solution, for we, as Mizzou Tigers, need to bring the community together in understanding and appreciating our differences. Yes, we may come from different backgrounds from different races, ethnicities and speak in different accents, and yet we all firmly believe in the fundamental human values of respect and responsibility, which are also the values of Mizzou and what it stands for.

Once again it is time to trust, to believe and to expect that one day we can rebuild the "One Mizzou" campaign we hoped for.

*Ragh Singh • Columbia, Mo.*

**MU students burn Islamic State flag in protest of terrorist group's activities**

By Katie Pohlman

Friday, October 9, 2015 at 2:00 pm

A group of students, faculty and staff on Thursday afternoon gathered around the Columns on Francis Quadrangle in anticipation of watching an Islamic State flag burn.

Some of the attendees stood on the path running parallel to the Columns while others stood off to the side under the shade of trees. More passionate students sat on the bases of the Columns and waved U.S. flags. Young Americans for Liberty organized the event to protest the militant organization’s killings using weapons supplied by the United States and to honor those killed by members of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria.

“If we are too afraid to speak out against them, they will continue to take lives,” Ian Paris, an MU senior and president of Young Americans for Liberty, told the crowd Thursday afternoon.

Paris said the event was intended to “initiate a dialogue to effect change” and not “to ignite hatred for Islam.” Instead, he said, the event was meant to protest the use of American weapons “that you and I have paid for, to methodically kill innocent people.”

While most of the crowd appeared to support Paris’ cause, there were some concerns about student safety.
Two attendees stood separate from the crowd and held signs that read “student safety is #1” and “Ian’s Agenda: disregard the safety of the MU student body; fail to educate appropriately; exploit the University of Missouri.”

Brett Beutenmiller and his younger sister, Melissa, held the signs because they said the flag-burning was “drawing negative attention” to the university. While the siblings protested the flag-burning on campus, Brett Beutenmiller told multiple people who questioned his intentions that they did not support the Islamic State.

He said he would be OK with the flag-burning if it happened off-campus rather than in front of the iconic Columns.

The Beutenmillers weren’t the only ones who were worried about safety. Paris said he talked to many other students who had similar concerns.

“I spent up to the point of burning the flag talking to students,” Paris said. They could have potentially talked him out of it, he said.

Most of the other attendees came out to support the event despite any potential danger. Daniel Duncan said safety “might be a risk, but that’s a chance we have to take.”

William Morgan said he understood the Beutenmillers’ safety concerns, but that the group was exercising its right to free speech by burning the flag.

The flag, which was made by MU junior Lucy Mulvihill, was indeed tossed into a fire pit and set ablaze to cap the event. Some students chanted “USA” while the flag burned; others pulled out their cellphones to catch it on camera.
University of Missouri launches $1.3B fundraising campaign

October 09, 2015 12:15 pm • The Associated Press

COLUMBIA, Mo. • The University of Missouri has officially begun the public phase of the largest fundraising campaign in the school's history, with the goal of raising $1.3 billion by 2020.

At a gala event Thursday night, university Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin and other officials said money raised in the campaign, called "Mizzou: Our Time to Lead," will be to add new centers and institutes, increase the school's endowment and fund building projects, The Columbia Daily Tribune reported.

"This campaign will start a campus renaissance that transforms the campus skyline," said Tom Hiles, vice chancellor for university advancement.

Another goal of the campaign is to raise Missouri's status in the Association of American Universities, which ranks universities and emphasizes research.

Campaign supporters believe the fundraising could lead to five to 10 new centers or institutes with endowments of $10 million or more.

The Kinder Foundation helped launch the campaign with an announcement earlier Thursday of a $25 million gift to create the Kinder Institute for Constitutional Democracy on the Columbia campus.

Hiles said the campaign also wants to increase the university's endowment to more than $1 billion. The endowment currently is $820 million and creates almost $37 million annually.

The campaign has already raised $650 million during its silent phase in previous months.

Campaign supporters also will seek public and private partnerships to pay for new academic buildings, including new School of Music and Fine Arts buildings. It also would fund a teaching winery, which would support the Grape and Wine Institute in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. The
university started renovations to Lafferre Hall, the main engineering building, this summer after receiving matching funds from the state.

Singer Sheryl Crow, a Missouri graduate, made a surprise appearance at the gala dinner. She will perform on campus during homecoming weekend, with all proceeds going to the School of Music building project.

"It's exactly the same as when I went to school here," Crow told dinner attendees. "The music school needs some love and care."

Mizzou announces $1.3 billion fundraising campaign

October 09, 2015 11:00 am  •  By Koran Addo

The University of Missouri-Columbia has kicked off its latest fundraising campaign, seeking to raise $1.3 billion to advance the university's education and research goals.

To date, the “Mizzou: Our Time to Lead” effort has raised $650 million as part of the campaign’s silent phase.

Among the campaign’s priorities is to increase the university’s endowment. Currently, Mizzou boasts an $820 million endowment that generates nearly $37 million a year to support various programs, scholarships and research.

The goal is to increase the endowment to more than $1 billion – a figure that would put Mizzou in line with many of its peers.

The campaign also hopes to bolster Mizzou’s numerous centers and institutes that promote research in areas including the life sciences, neurodevelopmental disorders and journalism.

A third priority for the campaign is what university leaders are calling a campus renaissance that would include a new School of Music building, a new Fine Arts building, a teaching winery and renovations to Lafferre Hall.

The new buildings would be financed through public and private partnerships. State funding hasn’t supported a new academic building on Mizzou’s campus in 12 years.

Another hope for the campaign is that an influx of money promoting research and education will elevate Mizzou’s status in the prestigious, 62-member Association of American Universities.
Membership in the AAU is a coveted distinction for major research-based universities in the U.S. and Canada.

This fundraising campaign comes six years after Mizzou completed its first $1 billion campaign, “For All We Call Mizzou,” in 2009.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Thomas Jefferson's original epitaph rededicated at MU

ANADIL IFTEKHAR, Oct 9, 2015

COLUMBIA — After sitting in an attic for more than a century, the original epitaph from Thomas Jefferson's grave was placed on display in Jesse Hall as part of a rededication ceremony on Friday.

"Instead of being stuck in a box in the attic, it is now available for everyone to see," Robert Dickeson, a former Jefferson Club trustee who spoke at the event, told the Missourian.

The event started with Naomi Cupp, chair of the Jefferson Club Board of Trustees, dedicating the epitaph. She was followed by Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, who recalled the history of the epitaph from its original dedication all the way to its restoration by the Smithsonian Institution.

The epitaph was originally dedicated to the university by the Jefferson family in 1885 and placed by Jefferson's grave marker that stands on the east side of Francis Quadrangle. However, to protect it from deteriorating, it was replaced with a replica and moved inside Academic Hall, which burned down in 1892. From then until 2012, it lay in a fourth floor attic in Jesse Hall. In 2012, it was sent to the Smithsonian Institution for restoration. While it was returned last year, the epitaph couldn't be put on display, as Jesse Hall was undergoing construction, according to MU spokesman Christian Basi.

While the restoration was done free of cost, the expenses associated with shipment and display are expected to be around $113,000.
The event was held two days after a protest by a small group of students who wanted Thomas Jefferson's statue to be removed from the east side of Francis Quadrangle. Members of the student group called Jefferson a racist and a sexist.

University of Missouri seeing increased anxiety in students

October 10, 2015 11:11 am


COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — The University of Missouri's Counseling Center is seeing a sharp increase in students seeking mental health services — 35 percent more in the last five weeks compared to last year's first five weeks of fall semester of last year, center director David Wallace recently told the Board of Curators.

The demand is leading to delays in getting appointments at the center, which has 12 full-time and four part-time professional staff, The Columbia Missourian reported (http://bit.ly/1OnVHtl ).

"We've had kind of a rush this fall, frankly, that's a little bit concerning," Wallace said.

Stress, anxiety, depression, grief and academic concerns are the top reasons students seek counseling, Wallace said. The center tries to determine a treatment plan for each student, who attends an average of six sessions.
"People come in here maybe quite depressed, maybe they're really struggling with anxiety, but that's not something just in isolation. It has a context, and that context is life," Wallace said.

If necessary, students who are considered in danger of harming themselves or others are referred for hospitalization. The number of students hospitalized has varied from between eight to 15 each year in recent years.

"Suicidal thoughts are not that rare," Wallace said, estimating that 16 to 17 percent of students had suicidal thoughts.

This year, students are sometimes waiting for an appointment for weeks, Wallace said.

Jessica Semler, who has worked at the center for five years, said she has an average of five hours of client contact per day, which includes groups and individuals.

"We might have to take on a few more clients," Semler said. "But I think as a system we're willing to do what we need to do to make sure they get seen."

Wallace said it is important for everyone to help as anxiety disorders and demands for counseling increase. That makes mental health resources an integral part of a college campus, Semler and Wallace both said.

"If we're really invested in our students we need to be taking care of the whole person, not just physical, academic and career needs but their mental health needs as well," Semler said. "It just doesn't make any sense to me to not look at them as whole people who need support in a lot of different ways."

Planned Parenthood protesters out in force locally for national event

By Caitlin Campbell

Sunday, October 11, 2015 at 12:00 am

Anti-abortion protesters wearing red and wielding signs lined Providence Road outside a Planned Parenthood clinic Saturday morning as part of a national day of protest.
Meanwhile, Planned Parenthood advocates took advantage of the University of Missouri Homecoming crowd to drum up support for the besieged organization.

“I don’t know but I’ve been told, but Planned Parenthood’s pockets are lined with gold,” protesters chanted outside the clinic Saturday morning as they shook signs at passing cars.

Among anti-abortion cheers, the crowd of about 70 heard a series of speakers, including members of Mizzou Students for Life, Concerned Women of America, Missouri Right to Life and the Newman Center. The speakers said they were against the sale of fetal tissue and the Columbia facility’s licensing to perform medication-induced abortions. Demonstrators also pushed for an end to government funding of Planned Parenthood.

Karianne Boldoc, a Fellowship of Catholic University Students missionary, said she saw a mother abort a Down syndrome baby so she would not have to care for the child. Boldoc called the baby Aiden.

“We’re here to be voices for millions of babies like Aiden who never got the chance to live on this world we live in,” Boldoc said.

A man laid on his horn and flashed an obscene hand gesture as he drove by during Boldoc’s speech.

Planned Parenthood has been in the crosshairs of conservative politicians and activists after the Center for Medical Progress released edited videos showing officials talking about the sale of tissue from aborted fetuses. Planned Parenthood insists the videos are heavily edited and it does not profit from tissue sales.

The Columbia clinic’s license was issued in July, at about the same time the first video was released. Since that time, state Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, has led a committee scrutinizing the clinic’s licensing. The clinic had not had a license since its last abortion doctor moved in 2012.

Jason Davidson of New Franklin wound his way through the crowd with a petition in support of Schaefer’s investigation into Planned Parenthood and the University of Missouri’s connection to the organization.

As protesters started packing their belongings, a half-dozen people calling themselves the “Guild of Silly Heathens” showed up with tongue-in-cheek protest signs with phrases such as “Down With This Sort of Thing.”

Protester Dawn Finney, who held a sign that read “15 Miles to the Love Shack,” said the counterprotest was meant to use kindness and humor to combat misinformation about Planned Parenthood.
“When you see the images here of 20-week-old fetuses, that is misinformation,” Finney said. “That size of baby is not being aborted at this facility. That is a lie. Planned Parenthood provides mostly” preventive “health services.”

M’Evie Mead, Missouri organizing director for Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri, said volunteers on campus Saturday during Homecoming collected more than 100 signatures on a petition urging MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin not to cave in to political pressure MU has drawn over its relationship with Planned Parenthood.

University of Missouri Health Care gave privileges to a doctor working for the local clinic, which allowed the clinic to be licensed for abortions.

Loftin directed a review of hospital privileges at MU after being questioned by Schaefer’s committee.

MU Health has since decided to eliminate refer and follow privileges in December, the type of privileges granted to the doctor providing services at Planned Parenthood. MU also ended all but one of its clinical agreements allowing students to learn at the clinic, though students can still request clinical rotations.

Mead said volunteers talked to many people who were upset at MU leadership.

“They love Mizzou but are very disappointed in what politicians are pressuring Loftin to do,” she said.

SLU case highlights the gray areas of campus sex assault investigations

October 11, 2015 12:15 am • By Koran Addo

NO MU MENTION

In March 2014, after a night of partying, two St. Louis University students ended up in bed together at a house off-campus.

Two months later, the man got a letter from the university telling him he was under investigation for sexual assault.

The investigation carried on for months. During the inquiry, it was never disputed that the woman packed an overnight bag, willingly walked to the man’s house, got into his bed and had sex with him.

The pivotal question is whether the man knew the woman was too drunk to consent.
Initially, SLU suspended the student for a year just as he was preparing to graduate.

Two months later, the university reversed itself and cleared him of any blame — but not before holding his education in limbo.

Similar stories have played out across the country. Each has added to a wider conversation about whether universities should be handling rape investigations, whether they are particularly good at them and whether their procedures are slanted too far in favor of the accusers.

“You have to have a process that’s able to look at both sides of the coin,” said Ryann Carmody, a former prosecutor who represents the man accused in the case. “If this case was brought to any prosecutor’s office to be reviewed, it would be refused. There’s no way any prosecutor could convict him.”

Universities across the country have struggled to tackle the issue of sexual assault.

Critics say schools have long played down the problem, with sham investigations that have swept rape cases under the rug. Four years ago, the federal government warned colleges to develop strong protocols for rape investigations or face sanctions.

But some say the pendulum has swung too far in the other direction, punishing the accused with little or no evidence of guilt.

Schools in states such as Michigan, California and Pennsylvania have faced lawsuits from students who say they were falsely accused.

The suits challenge the fairness of investigations that are often handled by colleges separate from any investigation by the criminal justice system.

Such proceedings are closed and private, focusing on student discipline rather than criminal punishment. And critics say the result is a system that serves neither side.

“What we’ve seen so far is that they’ve done a terrible job that has been harmful to accusers and the accused,” said Samantha Harris, director of policy research at the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education.

**GRAY AREA**

Carmody provided documents to the Post-Dispatch that detail how the school came to find her client at fault before ultimately reversing that decision. She did so on the condition that her client not be identified.

The newspaper has also chosen to not name his accuser, who declined to comment. St. Louis University also will not discuss the case.

According to the documents, the sexual encounter happened hours after the two met for the first time at a party.

As the party was winding down, the two left and walked back to the woman’s apartment, where she packed an overnight bag. The two then walked about a mile to the man’s house, where they had their sexual encounter.

In the morning, they got dressed and then the man walked the woman halfway home. The two wouldn’t see each other again until a February 2015 disciplinary hearing, almost a year after their encounter.

After that hearing, SLU initially determined the man sexually assaulted the woman.

The university reached that conclusion despite a number of witnesses stating that the woman was not obviously incapacitated by alcohol.
One witness said the woman was clinging to the man at the party but that she could still carry herself. Another witness saw no signs that would indicate the woman needed the man’s help.

The man appealed, claiming the process was unfair, the penalty was too harsh and information provided didn’t match the disciplinary board’s conclusion.

Jill Carnaghi, an assistant vice president in SLU’s office of Student Development who had no prior role in the proceedings, reviewed witness statements — including a recording in which the accuser herself acknowledged that the man had no way of knowing she was too drunk to consent.

“The test of whether an individual should know about another’s incapacitation is whether a reasonable, sober person would know about the incapacitation,” Carnaghi wrote. “It is unclear to me if the Board considered all the information … in making their decision.”

Even as she reversed the decision, Carnaghi saw a gray area.

“I firmly believe (the woman) believes she was sexually assaulted that evening,” Carnaghi wrote to the man. “And, I also believe that you believe that the sex was consensual.”

Carmody, the man’s attorney, described the entire process as flawed. Some witnesses weren’t approached for four months, she said. And during the hearing her client was made to reword or toss out questions he wanted his accuser to answer.

“The lack of due process is my major concern,” she said.

**A DIFFERENT STANDARD**

In handling the case, St. Louis University followed guidelines set out by the federal government.

Those regulations stem from Title IX, the federal law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex in federally funded education programs and activities. Increasingly, Title IX has been used to also address on-campus sexual assault and harassment. In 2011, the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights spelled out steps for schools to take, including hiring a full-time Title IX coordinator.

Catherine Lhamon, assistant secretary at the education department’s Office for Civil Rights, said much of the scrutiny over a university’s ability to investigate sexual assault is unfounded.

“No one questions if colleges are equipped to investigate assault and plagiarism or drug dealing,” Lhamon said.

Proper training is critical, she said, but schools are showing they are up to the challenge.

When a student reports any type of sexual assault at the school’s Title IX office, the protocol is for schools to offer counseling and other resources. Additionally, schools are to advise students of their options to address the matter through the criminal justice system, the university’s administrative process or both.

University punishment for sexual assault can range from an official warning to expulsion.

Generally, both parties are interviewed, witnesses are questioned and wrongdoing is determined either by a single investigator or in a disciplinary hearing conducted by administrators.

The extent of training that administrators and investigators undergo is unclear and varies by institution.
The college process also uses a lower standard to determine wrongdoing. In criminal court, where the reasonable doubt standard is used, a prosecutor has to prove there’s a great likelihood the accused committed a crime.

In a university proceeding, the federal government set the standard at “preponderance of evidence,” meaning that it only has to be more likely than not, or a 51 percent chance, that the accused committed a crime.

That was the standard used initially to determine that the SLU student committed sexual assault. But critics say that with so much riding on the hearings — including the academic future of the accused — a higher standard needs to be in place.

‘BALANCE AND FAIRNESS’
The case at SLU shares similarities with others across the country, such as one in 2013 at Occidental College in Los Angeles. In that case, two students, who by all accounts were both extremely drunk, had sex after flirting and text messaging.
As in the SLU case, the question boiled down to what exactly defines incapacitation and whether the man would have known the woman was unable to consent.

An investigation revealed the woman initiated the intimacy, asked for a condom in a text message and informed a friend she was on her way to have sex.

Police later concluded there wasn’t enough evidence to charge the man. But Occidental sided with the accuser and expelled him. The case is currently in court.

In another case, Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania spent much of 2014 fighting off a lawsuit filed by a student who claimed that he was a victim of a college too eager to appear tough on sexual assault.
In that case, an investigation first found the student had done nothing wrong. That finding was revisited after the school came under fire for not taking sexual assault seriously.

After reopening the case, the Swarthmore student was expelled and he sued. Swarthmore eventually cleared the man for a second time, and he dropped the suit.

Meanwhile, at Harvard, 28 law professors wrote an op-ed in the Boston Globe taking issue with new policies there on sex assault investigations, saying they tossed out “balance and fairness in the rush to appease certain federal administrative officials.”

CHANGE AND DISRUPTION
Anna Kratky is SLU’s Title IX coordinator. She has a law degree and formerly worked in the circuit attorney’s office.

She defended the university’s process for handling sexual assault as “an absolutely fair process,” carried out by well-trained staff.

Additionally, Kratky said SLU is constantly revising its policies and making revisions to the entire investigative process.

“Frankly, we’re very proud of it,” she said.

But Harris, of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, sees deep problems with the very structure of campus-based hearings under Title IX.

She said colleges lack tools available to the criminal justice system to investigate sexual assault. Those include the authority to collect and store forensic evidence and subpoena powers to compel all pertinent witnesses to testify.
Many colleges tell students they have to get affirmative consent — meaning conscious and voluntary permission — before any sexual encounter.

“If you’re innocent, how exactly can you demonstrate you obtained affirmative consent?” Harris asked. “These are situations when two people are usually alone. Absent any evidence of force, you’re going to have a problem proving your innocence.”

Marcia McCormick, is a professor of law and a professor of women’s and gender studies at SLU. She sees problems with sexual assault investigations both on and off campus.

“The criminal justice system is also terrible for sexual assault,” McCormick added, citing the country’s current rape kit processing backlog. “So having an alternate system may be a good thing.”

And yet, McCormick said colleges on the whole have not yet proven they can handle the cases.

Still, she said, critics should consider that in the past, when a student reported a sexual assault, victims were the ones who had to change their schedule or leave school.

Policies have now shifted so that the accused have their lives disrupted during the investigation, McCormick said.

“It’s a challenge any time you change the status quo. People feel like they’ve lost an important right,” she said.

The idea behind the policy shift is generally considered a safer approach, she said. Because unlike in the criminal justice system, where the penalties are more serious, universities can easily backtrack when they make the wrong decision.

“The accused has the opportunity to get reinstated,” she said.

But Carmody said that kind of system hurts students like her client — even when punishments are reversed.

After his case was resolved he moved from St. Louis to Kansas City to work with a relative. He’s just now starting to apply to graduate school, more than a year after he had first planned.

Report: Pinkel led nation in bonus pay

October 09, 2015 12:50 pm  •  By Dave Matter

COLUMBIA, Mo.  •  USA Today released its annual college football coaching salary survey with Missouri’s Gary Pinkel on top in one category: bonus pay.

For the 2014-15 contract year, Pinkel hauled in $900,000 in bonuses, more than any coach at the 121 FBS schools that participated in the survey. (Private schools are exempt from reporting salary figures, as are some public schools under certain state laws.)
Louisville’s Bobby Petrino finished second to Pinkel in bonus pay with $782,667. Alabama’s Nick Saban, who again has the nation's highest overall salary at $7,087,481, had the next-highest bonus pay in the Southeastern Conference at $425,000, which ranked No. 8 overall.

No matter how many games the Tigers win this year, Pinkel won’t stay on top of the bonus list next year under his new contract. We’ll get to that shortly.

**Overall, Pinkel’s total pay of $3,768,889 ranked No. 20 nationally and No. 11 in the SEC. His new salary, will pay Pinkel $4,020,000 through 2021, MU announced in April.**

Here’s how the SEC coaches stacked up in total pay, according to USA Today’s figures. Vanderbilt did not disclose coach Derek Mason’s salary.

1. Saban, Alabama, $7,087,481, No. 1 FBS
2. Kevin Sumlin, Texas A&M, $5,000,000, No. 7 FBS
3. Les Miles, LSU, $4,385,567, No. 9 FBS
4. Hugh Freeze, Ole Miss, $4,310,000, No. 10 FBS
5. Mark Richt, Georgia, $4,124,000, No. 12 FBS
6. Gus Malzahn, Auburn, $4,104,500, No. 13 FBS
7. Steve Spurrier, South Carolina, $4,028,600, No. 15 FBS
8. Dan Mullen, Mississippi State, $4,000,000, No. 16 FBS
10. Bret Bielema, Arkansas, $3,960,666, No. 18 FBS
11. Pinkel, Missouri $3,768,889, No. 20 FBS
12. Butch Jones, Tennessee, $3,633,000, No. 23 FBS
13. Mark Stoops, Kentucky, $3,263,600, No. 27 FBS

Here’s how Pinkel’s $900,000 bonus pay came together:

$150,000 for winning 11 games in 2014

$100,000 for winning the SEC East outright

$150,000 for leading Mizzou to a Tier 2 SEC bowl (Citrus)
USA Today’s figures don’t take into account ticket sales incentives. Pinkel’s former contract paid him $150,000 if home ticket sales receipts exceeded $15 million — or 1 percent of ticket sales receipts if the total exceeded $15.5 million.

Should he hit the same incentive marks under his new contract, Pinkel’s bonus pay would be lighter at $375,000. Under his latest deal, Pinkel’s academic/social bonus tops out at $300,000. He’d earn $25,000 for winning the SEC East outright, $25,000 for reaching a non-playoff bowl and $25,000 for being named SEC coach of the year.

Knowing what to do if shooting starts still hazy at colleges

October 10, 2015 9:17 am  •  By LISA LEFF and RYAN J. FOLEY

NO MU MENTION

Eight years after the Virginia Tech massacre led to tighter security at colleges across the U.S., some schools make "active shooter" training mandatory for incoming students, while others offer little more than brief online guidance on what to do if there's a gunman on the loose, a review by The Associated Press finds.

The AP looked at public colleges and universities in more than 40 states after yet another shooting rampage, the killing of nine people at an Oregon community college Oct. 1. On Friday, there was more bloodshed, with one person killed and three wounded at an Arizona university.
At some institutions, such as the Colorado School of Mines and Arkansas State University, training on how to respond to an armed intruder has become as much a part of fall orientation as lessons on alcohol abuse. Students hear presentations covering their options, such as running, hiding or fighting back.

Other schools have purely voluntary training. Or they put information on what to do in an emergency on websites, where it can easily be overlooked by students and staff members. Many public college and university systems leave it up to their individual campuses to draw up emergency plans and decide what level of training, if any, to give employees and students.

In the wake of the recent violence, some professors, students and administrators are asking whether schools need to do more to deliver potentially life-saving messages to those on campus.

The challenges are particularly acute at two-year community colleges, which often do not have their own police forces to conduct training exercises for staff and students. They also tend to have lots of older, working students who can be hard to reach.

"That it's actually happened recently with the frequency and danger it has, I think everyone is frightened and asking a lot of questions about how well-prepared we would be as a campus," said David Morse, an English instructor who is president of the Academic Senate for California's 113 community colleges.

The 2007 slaughter of 32 people by a student at Virginia Tech prompted Congress to require colleges and universities to adopt procedures for notifying the campus of an immediate threat. Under the law, schools also must publicize their emergency response plans "in a manner designed to reach students and staff."

The AP review found that most schools have set up sophisticated alert systems that use text messages, social media or technology that can remotely take over computers tied to campus servers. Many also have added armed officers, conducted drills with law enforcement authorities and created threat-assessment teams that try to determine whether an overheard remark or violence-tinged essay is a genuine danger sign.

Some of these measures are credited with saving lives. When a gunman shot students at a Florida State University library a year ago, campus police responded within minutes of the first 911 call and fired a barrage of bullets that killed him. Less than two weeks before, the police had participated in active shooter training that included a scenario with a gunman at the library.

Umpqua Community College, site of the Oregon mass shooting, also did many things right to prepare, and experts said its efforts may well have saved lives.

A small, rural school, Umpqua didn't have its own police force, but administrators brought in local officers so they would be familiar with the layout. Professors and staff regularly discussed how they should respond if someone started shooting, and where in their buildings would be the safest place to hunker down. The school also had emergency notification and lockdown procedures in place.
But in general, educating students and employees about what to do in the event of an attack has proved something of a stumbling block. While most schools have created posters, brochures and online guides, some of them have yet to figure out how to get people to read, much less absorb, the material.

Richard Turton, chairman of West Virginia University's Faculty Senate, said he wasn't familiar with his school's active shooter plan until a reporter's question prompted him to do some digging. He found a PowerPoint presentation and videos on the university's website.

"I would suspect many faculty who are very busy would tend to not look at those things unless they're sort of prompted several times," Turton said.

Matt Barnes, 30, a civil engineering student who just transferred to the University of Minnesota's Twin Cities campus, received a booklet during orientation that outlined the school's emergency notification procedures. He realized it didn't mention anything about an active shooter situation.

Barnes said he gets emails any time there is a crime on campus with details about the incident. But he said he's not sure what he's supposed to do if something happens in a building where he happens to be.

University spokesman Steve Henneberry confirmed the booklet doesn't specifically mention active shooter situations and said it was written from an "all-hazards planning point of view."

On some campuses, some of the advice itself isn't detailed or even particularly helpful.

The website of 20,000-student Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, advises students that in the event of a shooter or sniper, "listen for instructions from authorities such as whether to remain inside or to evacuate." Campus security director Melissa Jensen said more specific training videos also are available.

The instructions can vary from campus to campus. Many schools have adopted the run, hide or fight-back training developed by the city of Houston and promoted by the FBI. Others have embraced the procedures developed by the I Love U Guys Foundation, which urges students to lock themselves in classrooms if it all possible.

At Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, the active shooter training that is mandatory for new students is voluntary for the faculty.

"How many faculty have availed themselves of these trainings? Unfortunately, the answer is not many," said Greg Phillips, chairman of the Faculty Senate, which will take up the issue during the coming week.

Ron Hackenberg, a security consultant and former police chief at California State University-San Marcos, said the slayings in Oregon should spur more schools to go beyond voluntary training.

"In real life, unless you are a combat veteran, most people will freeze if they are not prepared," he said.
In California, community college campuses historically have been given wide latitude in drawing up emergency preparations. Gov. Jerry Brown signed a law in July that calls on the system to add active shooter training to the emergency planning it recommends for campuses.

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Leff reported from San Francisco, and Foley from Iowa City, Iowa. Associated Press writers Amy Forliti in Minneapolis; Gene Johnson in Seattle; Claudia Lauer in Little Rock, Arkansas; and John Raby in Charleston, West Virginia, contributed to this story.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU Homecoming parade brings more than 120 organizations together

SEAN MCNEALY, Updated Oct 10, 2015

COLUMBIA — Each fall in Columbia, whether it’s freezing or blazing, dedicated spectators line downtown streets to watch the Homecoming parade.

As one of MU’s oldest traditions, the parade brings together organizations from across campus and the community. High school marching bands, MU athletics teams and campus residence halls are some of more than 120 organizations that join the parade.

This year’s parade on Saturday will repeat the 2014 route, cutting a path through downtown Columbia.

Emily Russo, a junior from Flossmoor, Illinois, and a peer adviser at South Hall, was one of many in the parade last year. Russo said the residents from South Hall held their Halloween-themed banner proudly as they marched.

“At first the residents don’t fully grasp how big a deal Homecoming is,” Russo said. “Allowing them to play a role in the parade makes them appreciate how much history, tradition and community involvement goes into it.”
The pageantry of banners and floats are the result of months of planning, particularly by Aly Friend and the Homecoming Steering Committee. Friend is coordinator of student programs at the MU Alumni Association and oversees most Homecoming events.

Planning for the parade begins in the summer, Friend said. Contacting marching bands, working with the city on street closures and arranging convertible availability for dignitaries — including UM System President Tim Wolfe — are examples of event preparation.

The Steering Committee helps her plan nearly every aspect. The committee is broken down into subcommittees, one with students who work on this MU tradition.

“We have some awesome, hardworking students on the Homecoming Steering Committee,” Friend said.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU's LGBTQ Resource Center celebrates 20th anniversary

ERIN QUINN, Oct 9, 2015

COLUMBIA — One of MU senior Laurel Sheffield's favorite pins depicts a bearded person with a nose piercing putting on lipstick.

It is one of many pins that were freely available at MU’s LGBTQ Resource Center on Friday, as the resource center celebrated its 20th anniversary. Cake balls and lemonade were provided as refreshments at the open house, and conversation flowed from the resource center out into the hallway of the MU Student Center's basement.

A timeline of newspaper articles on multi-colored construction paper showed the history of the resource center and its programs as Sean Olmstead, the resource center's coordinator, mingled with the crowd.
"The center, when it first started, was a place of self-preservation for students to have a place that they feel safe," Olmstead said. "That exists still today. There's still a lot of microaggression and heterosexism that exists in the world. So this is a place that students can kind of let their barriers down and be who they are."

Conversation was an unofficial theme of the event. Students gathered in a horseshoe of couches, engaged in lively chats. Alumni and other visitors filtered through, signing the guestbook and chatting with current students.

MU freshman Bryan Mink met his boyfriend at the resource center and has developed close friendships through his time there.

"I came up here for a college visit, and I visited the resource center," Mink said. "I got to march in the Pride Parade around campus, and I had a lot of fun. So whenever I came back this fall to go to school here I decided to apply to work here as a staff member, and it's been pretty awesome."

Sheffield has been coming to the resource center since enrolling at MU in 2012 and found support through members of the Triangle Coalition, a program by the resource center that seeks to provide a voice to LGBTQ students and their allies, according to the group's Facebook page.

"So I was able to talk to them and be like, 'I'm having some feelings. I don't know what the feelings are,'" Sheffield said. "And eventually came to the conclusion that, actually, the gender I was assigned at birth doesn't quite fit right and it was like, 'Okay, okay, that's a thing, and I'm allowed to do that.'"