UM president to meet with student protesters; students give list of demands

By Megan Favignano

Friday, October 23, 2015 at 2:00 pm

On Monday, University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe will meet with students who stopped his car during MU’s Homecoming parade on Oct. 10 in a protest meant to draw attention to race issues on campus.

“I applaud our protesters for speaking up,” Wolfe said. “We’ve heard and appreciate the voices of our students on our campus who are speaking up about this issue and applaud their courage for speaking up.”

At the Homecoming parade, a group of black students formed a line at the corner of Ninth Street and University Avenue in front of Wolfe’s car, stopping the parade. A video of the demonstration shows a few white parade spectators get between the protesters and Wolfe’s car before police step in to move protesters off the street.

Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin and Wolfe received a letter Wednesday with a list of demands. A group calling itself Concerned Student 1950 says it represents every black student admitted to MU since 1950 — when the university accepted its first black student. The letter, which was signed “Concerned Student 1950,” was disseminated online by student protesters.

Among the students’ demands are a handwritten apology from Wolfe to the demonstrators. The letter asks that Wolfe’s apology be read at a news conference. The list of eight demands also includes removing Wolfe as president and creation of a racial awareness and inclusion curriculum. The letter said students want a response by 5 p.m. Wednesday.

Students have criticized Wolfe on Twitter for not intervening when police removed protesters from the parade and pressed Wolfe to make a statement recognizing the student protesters.

“This topic is complex and it requires a lot of listening and conversation — much more complex than responding to a tweet that limits the number of characters. And that’s what we’re doing. We’ve been talking to a lot of people,” Wolfe said.
Jonathan Butler, one of the student protesters, on Monday emailed Wolfe to say he found it troubling Wolfe had met with individuals at MU but had not organized a meeting with student protesters.

“Please understand that” adjunct journalism instructor “Carl Kenney, Chancellor Loftin, and other individuals do not represent us as student organizers nor do they speak on our behalf,” Butler wrote in an email to Wolfe. “So in order to begin rectifying the issues that are transpiring on the University of Missouri campus it is” imperative “that you personally address the concerns face-to-face with those students your actions are impacting.”

Wolfe and the students will meet Monday, UM System spokesman John Fougere said.

After receiving the Concerned Student 1950 letter this week, Loftin told the group he would like to meet with them.

Butler did not respond to repeated emails asking for comment.

Debate Over Jefferson Statue at U of Missouri
October 23, 2015

Students at the University of Missouri at Columbia are debating the appropriateness of a statue of Thomas Jefferson on campus. A petition was recently created urging the removal of the statue. The petition notes that while Jefferson is known as a proponent of equality, he was a slaveholder and held racist and sexist beliefs. "Thomas Jefferson’s statue sends a clear nonverbal message that his values and beliefs are supported by the University of Missouri. Jefferson's statue perpetuates a sexist-racist atmosphere that continues to reside on campus," the petition says.

College Republicans have countered with a #standwithJefferson hashtag on Twitter, demanding that the statue remain in place. Defenders of the statue have also draped an American flag around it (above right) for events at the site of the monument.
The short, controversial life (so far) of MU’s leader

Recent issues — graduate insurance, racial tensions, Planned Parenthood contracts, among others — have put Loftin's management in the spotlight, drawing criticism and support

KASIA KOVACS, 1 hr ago

COLUMBIA — Twenty months into his tenure, MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin isn’t winning any popularity contests.

Students have protested on campus and through social media. Since the semester began, the hashtag #LoftinCantExplain has been both tweeted and written on signs. Student activists and some faculty have said:

- Loftin can’t explain why the administration has been lagging in its response to racism on campus.
- Loftin can’t explain why the university bowed to political pressure to cancel contracts with Planned Parenthood.
- Loftin can’t explain why graduate students have lost benefits, one by one, including full tuition waivers for those with 10-hour assistantships and then health insurance subsidies.
- Loftin hasn't explained the sudden resignation of medical school Dean Patrice Delafontaine after less than a year on the job.

Since then, Loftin and the university administration have backed up a few steps.

Graduate students would get health insurance subsidies back, Loftin said at a general faculty meeting. He also announced mandatory diversity and inclusion training for students, faculty and staff. The nursing school has established three new agreements with Planned Parenthood.
But backtracking simply isn’t enough, activists say, criticizing these moves as mere PR stunts to re-establish favor with donors.

"All the action that’s been had has been a response to something. Rather than pro-action, it’s been reaction," said Kenneth Bryant Jr., president of the Graduate Student Association. "Many students don’t see the chancellor as visible on these issues as he ought to be. And when he has the opportunity to respond to things that do happen, people are not satisfied with the response."

Many are calling for greater transparency and a shift in the way MU’s administration operates.

"The status quo moving forward can’t continue," said Kristofferson Culmer, Steering Committee chairperson for the Forum on Graduate Rights. "There has to be more open dialogue with student stakeholders and the faculty and staff."

Faculty members in the English Department are considering holding a vote of no confidence — a declaration that a person in a leadership position is no longer deemed fit — on the chancellor in November. Some faculty members are encouraging other MU departments to do the same.

University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe, who hired Loftin, met with MU deans and UM System Chief of Staff Zora Mulligan on Oct. 9. Wolfe met with them again on Oct. 13, this time joined by Loftin and Provost Garnett Stokes. The topics of their meetings were not disclosed.

“The morale in the university among the faculty is fairly low," said Bill Kerwin, an associate professor in the English Department. "I think we’re inspired by the graduate students and their response to the health care issue. … And I think we need to step up and stand up as well."

“At the end of the day, he’s doing the right thing." — Sen. Jamilah Nasheed

**Speculation and legislation**

Talk about Loftin’s job security has become noisier. Even legislators in Jefferson City are taking note.
When speculation circled around a closed UM Board of Curators meeting Wednesday — the second non-regularly scheduled curators meeting in a month — about whether Loftin would be let go, state Sen. Jamilah Nasheed, D-St. Louis, drove from St. Louis to Columbia to speak to the curators in defense of the chancellor.

Nasheed ultimately squashed those rumors — Curator Chairman Donald Cupps told her that Loftin’s job status was not on the meeting's agenda — so she spoke to reporters instead.

“At the end of the day, he’s doing the right thing,” Nasheed said. “He’s a man of good character. He’s moving this campus forward in the most productive way and the most progressive way.”

Nasheed later tweeted, “WOW!!! MU Board of Curators wouldn't let me speak today? #nolegislaivecourtesy.”

But in many ways, legislators want more than courtesy. They provide funding to MU — that is, $224.1 million in fiscal year 2016, or 9.8 percent of MU’s budget. The push-and-pull of university power isn’t confined to Columbia’s campus. It’s being fought in Jefferson City, too.

Indeed, MU’s decision to cancel contracts with Planned Parenthood and cut hospital privileges for the only doctor providing abortions in Columbia came when Loftin was in communication with state Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia.

Schaefer is leading the state legislature’s Senate Interim Committee on the Sanctity of Life, which has been examining the legality of Planned Parenthood operations in Missouri. Loftin attended a committee hearing on MU’s relationship with Planned Parenthood on Aug. 25; the university cut its contracts with Planned Parenthood between Aug. 21 and Sept. 3.

The last time an MU chancellor was dismissed from his office, the Board of Curators voted 5-4 to fire Chancellor Charles Kiesler on July 18, 1996. Then-Curator President Fred Hall said Kiesler was not carrying out policies while increasing administrative expenses.
“What really impresses me, what I’ve seen so far, is a sense of sincerity.” — Ted Ayres, Missouri Alumni Association

#IStandWithLoftin

Nasheed isn’t the only one speaking on behalf of Loftin.

A Twitter account with the handle @standwithLoftin emerged hours before Wednesday’s curators meeting, sharing tweets with the hashtag #IStandWithLoftin.

“Hey @UMPrez (Wolfe) — worry about things like keeping tuition low and college affordable, instead of playing political games. #IStandWithLoftin,” tweeted the Mizzou College Republicans.

Ted Ayres, who will take over as president of the Missouri Alumni Association next year, praised the chancellor.

“What really impresses me, what I’ve seen so far, is a sense of sincerity. I think he’s come to care about the university like many of us do,” Ayres said. “There have been some blips. … He’s had some difficult issues to deal with. I think he’s dealt with those with candor and dignity.”

Some argue that evaluating the chancellor’s work before his second-year work anniversary is, at its core, a futile task.

“I think it’s impossible to be a success in your first two years as chancellor,” said Ben Trachtenberg, Faculty Council chairman and professor of law. “It’s certainly possible to fail. It’s like steering a battleship — it takes time to steer it in a certain direction.”

“Not everything was his fault, but some things were.” — Angela Speck, a Faculty Council member and professor of astrophysics

The buck stops ... where?
Loftin has made a number of large, multi-million dollar decisions at MU, including shaking up the faculty and administration.

For one, the chancellor instituted a faculty buyout program last year, allowing tenured faculty who were eligible for retirement to leave. In all, 110 eligible faculty opted for the buyout.

Loftin also created new positions in the administration.

After dissolving the graduate school, which had a dean, he created the Office of Graduate Studies. He appointed Leona Rubin associate vice chancellor for graduate studies and Hank Foley to be the senior vice chancellor for research and graduate studies at MU.

Loftin hired Stokes as provost in February of this year, and he installed Elizabeth Loboa as the new dean for the College of Engineering. He also hired a few other deans and added a full-time administrator and investigator to the Title IX office.

Part of the reason for creating new positions is to delegate certain responsibilities to administrators he can trust, Ayres said. After all, Loftin can’t realistically take on all of MU by himself.

"Those changes that were made, they were difficult," said Craig Roberts, professor of plant sciences and former Faculty Council chairman. "When those administrators were removed, they needed to be removed. This was long overdue. And there are others who need to go.

“He cleaned out some of the previous leadership and built a team around him of capable people," Roberts said. "Gary Ward (MU vice chancellor for operations and chief operating officer) is exceptional. ... Rhonda Gibler (MU vice chancellor for finance and chief financial officer) is another name that comes to mind. A big one is Garnett Stokes, who is capable, honest, forthright and transparent."

Not everyone agrees.
Stokes and Rubin have come under scrutiny for the contentious decisions involving cutting graduate student health insurance subsidies and cutting tuition waivers in half for graduate students with 10-hour assistantships while increasing stipends.

Although health insurance subsidies have since been reinstated, Rubin was harshly criticized for mishandling communication regarding the original decision to cancel the subsidies. Graduate students were notified one day before the policy was effective. When Loftin was interviewed about the decision in August, he pushed the blame onto Rubin instead of accepting it himself.

Loftin should take responsibility for these decisions, particularly since he was the one who did away with the graduate school and hired Rubin, said Angela Speck, a Faculty Council member and professor of astrophysics.

“Not everything was his fault, but some things were,” Speck said. “It was a big mistake to dissolve the graduate school.”

“Loftin is a symbol”

“I don’t give a shit about my perception,” Loftin said in an interview with Missourian columnist George Kennedy in September.

Many other people do, and they care a lot.

On one hand, the chancellor’s reputation is tied to MU. If Loftin is swept up in not-so-favorable PR, that could mean fewer donor gifts and fewer students enrolling and paying tuition money.

On the other hand, “Loftin is a symbol” to students and faculty already on campus, said Jonathan Butler, a graduate student and activist.

Part of Loftin's job is to create a safe and appropriate learning environment for students and, Butler said, Loftin is failing to effectively do so.
Column: Witnessing separation in Columbia, Missouri

It's wrong to think that MU has no room for growth toward improving integration and inclusiveness.

By Kennedy Jones

For those of you who aren't aware, I am from Las Vegas. Now, Nevada was named the Mississippi of the West quite some time ago due to the fact that it was the only West Coast state that took Jim Crow laws seriously and even really enforced them. I bring this up to say that even in Nevada, the Mississippi of the West, I've never witnessed so much separation within a community. Before I moved to Columbia, my father told me that I would have to choose a side here, choose a side between black and white. I was appalled. I've never chosen a side in my life because I never needed to. I can have black and white friends, and there's nothing hard about that.

I didn't believe my father about choosing a side until I walked on this campus. There's blacks, whites and Asians and I don't see much else. I have very rarely seen black people walking with white people, and then again, I have probably only seen that once since I've gotten here, now that I'm thinking about it. The separatism on this campus is real. The feeling that, as a black female, I do not fit in comfortably with a group of white females is apparent. I've now realized how lucky I was to grow up on the West Coast, to very rarely have these problems until I moved here. Those who aren't black do not believe that there is truly a problem here, but I can tell you there is.

I have never met people who feel so free in expressing their generally socially unacceptable opinions, hiding behind the concept of free speech or simply the guise of intoxication. Even in situations when they're trying to choose their words carefully, I find people still thinking that racist and biased opinions and expressions are acceptable to use. I've heard a range of statements from, "It isn't sexist because women put themselves into that situation," to "You're the only pretty black girl I've ever seen in my life," as well as, "People need to stop complaining about their hardships, because no one cares, and people have the right to say and feel what they want."

I'll admit that your opinion or observation is yours to have, but is it really necessary to express? Why do you feel comfortably expressing that opinion? These are things that people may feel living in Las Vegas or on the West Coast, but they would never feel comfortable enough to express them in a public setting where people generally don't agree with them.
I am over-privileged. I have realized that I have been sheltered from situations such as these, but to see something portrayed through the media is one thing, and it's another to deal with it. I was never afraid to walk anywhere in Las Vegas — whether it was early morning, late night, downtown, or by my house in the suburbs — I was not afraid. Here in Columbia, I am consciously aware that it is dangerous for me, a black female, to walk to my residence hall by myself past 10 p.m. Back home, I never felt perturbed when approaching someone who did not identify as being black, but here, I'm overly conscious of the fact they do not look like me, and therefore this situation may not turn out to be "positive." Back home, I have always felt primarily as if security or police officers were there to help, even if they had stopped me. But in Columbia, I have never felt as if security is here to help me, but rather that I should be apprehensive of its presence.

As an outsider being exposed to this way of life for the first time, I say that we all have a lot of room to grow, and that over time, it's perfectly possible that education and diversity may develop in this area. But as of right now, for those of you who feel that MU is a perfectly fine campus, with no problems concerning diversity at all, you're wrong. You're wrong to believe that MU has no room to grow, because MU has a long, long journey ahead, and it starts with you.

Study shines light on pay disparity for women at university

Study says female faculty members at University of Missouri make less than men for a reason


COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — A study presented to the University of Missouri Faculty Council says female faculty members at the school make about $16,000 less than their male counterparts, mainly because the men have been there longer.
The study presented on Thursday also noted minority faculty members tend to make $16,000 less than their non-minority colleagues.

Despite those disparities, the study concluded there is no gender, racial or ethnic equality in faculty salaries in most university departments.

The study says male faculty members tend to have 3½ more years of experience at the university than female faculty and earn more because of that experience.

Linda Reeder, chairwoman of the school's Status of Women Committee, says the study doesn't adequately answer her committee's concerns about salary inequity for associate professors.

Urban encouraged the administration and Provost Garnett Stokes to use the study to prompt a discussion of the issue.

“What we would really like to do is basically explore that a little bit further and use this study as a starting point for a broader discussion about these things so that we can sort of help make the institution a little bit stronger,” he said.

Faculty in the School of Medicine and the School of Law were not included in the study because their salaries are determined by different factors. Non-tenure-track faculty and part-time faculty also were not included in the study.

Study shines light on pay disparity for women at university

Oct. 25, 2015

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — Female faculty members at the University of Missouri tend to make $16,000 less than their male counterparts, while racial and ethnic minority faculty members also make $16,000 less than their majority counterparts, according to a study released at the university Faculty Council meeting this week.
Despite those differences, there is no gender, racial or ethnic equality in faculty salaries at most university departments, the study found.

The differences can be explained by three main elements — research productivity, rank and administrative service, said Mike Urban, co-chairman of the Chancellor's Status of Women Committee.

Male faculty members tend to have 3.5 more years of experience at the university than female faculty and earn more because of that experience — not necessarily because of unfair treatment by the institution, the study concluded.

Male faculty members were more likely than females to reach the rank of full professor and were more likely to have higher productivity, the Columbia Missourian reported (http://bit.ly/1i0bRLf).

Linda Reeder, chairwoman of the Status of Women Committee in the College of Arts and Science, said she did not think the study adequately answered her committee's concerns about salary inequity for associate professors. She said she is hopeful the university will continue to commission studies on gender pay gaps.

Urban encouraged the administration and Provost Garnett Stokes to use the study to prompt a discussion of the issue.

"What we would really like to do is basically explore that a little bit further and use this study as a starting point for a broader discussion about these things so that we can sort of help make the institution a little bit stronger," he said.

Faculty in the School of Medicine and the School of Law were not included in the study because their salaries are determined by different factors. Non-tenure-track faculty and part-time faculty also were not included in the study.
Gene Therapy Treats All Muscles in the Body in Muscular Dystrophy Dogs; Human Clinical Trials Are Next Step

A quarter of a million people in the U.S. have muscular dystrophy. But there's a new type of gene therapy that could help. A team of researchers at the University of Missouri has successfully treated dogs with a specific type of muscular dystrophy. They’ve tested a gene therapy in dogs that appears to be working -- now -- clinical trials in humans are the next step. "The results are extremely promising. I have dreamed for this for years and it finally coming true." A federal grant is helping fund the research at the school.

Watch the story: http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=23dda0e-0368-4100-bdeb-df6e87e376b5

Watch the conversation about the University of Missouri on “This Week in Missouri Politics”

http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=a3fc66bd-77e2-4aa0-8f98-84d2d16b76cf
COLUMBIA - Seven journalists from all across the world will be on MU's campus accepting the Missouri Honor Medal on Monday.

The Missouri Honor Medal is a lifetime achievement award that is presented annually by the Missouri School of Journalism to journalists who have had superior career achievement.

The winners include outstanding journalists, media organizations, business people, and advertising practitioners.

The winners are chosen by the faculty of the journalism school based on their achievements during their careers.

The awards have been presented annually since 1930 to recipients such as Tom Brokaw and Sir Winston Churchill.

This year’s winners include:

- Bill Plante, senior White House correspondent, CBS News
- Yoani Sanchez, Cuban blogger, journalist and entrepreneur
- Barbara Ehrenreich, author and activist
- Merrill Perlman, copy editor
- Gerd Ludwig, photojournalist and documentary photographer
- Lincoln Stephens, co-founder, The Marcus Graham project
- Sports Journalist Institute
- CNN Digital

The ceremony is set to take place Monday evening on MU’s campus.
Missouri Honor Medalist's photos document environmental, human aftermath of Chernobyl

NANA NASKIDASHVILI, Oct 25, 2015

COLUMBIA — When you walk through the glass doors of the McDougall Center at MU, you walk into history. Photographs showing the results of nuclear catastrophe cover the walls. "The Long Shadow of Chernobyl," the name of German photojournalist Gerd Ludwig's exhibition as well as his 2014 book, is in Columbia.

Ludwig, who also calls himself a documentary photographer, has worked on the Chernobyl project for 20 years. He is one of nine people and organizations who will receive this year's Missouri Honor Medal from the Missouri School of Journalism.

Because of a sudden death in his family, Ludwig was not able to give an interview to the Missourian, but he responded to questions by providing answers he has given in previous interviews.

Chernobyl is a city in northern Ukraine. On April 26, 1986, an explosion happened at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant.

"The Chernobyl accident in 1986 was the result of a flawed reactor design that was operated with inadequately trained personnel. The resulting steam explosion and fires released at least 5% of the radioactive reactor core into the atmosphere," says the World Nuclear Association's website.

In 1993, Ludwig was assigned to cover pollution in the post-Soviet republics for National Geographic and decided to include Chernobyl in the story.

“It was only supposed to be a small segment, but it ended up being a story in itself,” Ludwig told Vice Germany. “I began to develop a deeper interest in Chernobyl as a subject, and I knew I'd
have to return. It actually took me 11 years to go back. I returned in 2005, 2011 and 2013, for an extended period of time."

Ludwig made nine visits to Chernobyl, documenting the lives of victims, the Exclusion Zone, the abandoned city of Pripyat and destroyed reactor No. 4.

Ludwig recalled his first visit to the nuclear plant in the Vice Germany interview.

He told Vice Germany he spent about four weeks doing research and preparing himself for the trip, and armed with protective gear including gas masks, dosimeters and Geiger counters — which measure radiation levels — boot covers and protective overalls, he arrived at Exclusion Zone in 1993. But once he was there, officials asked him not to wear any of his protective gear, "so as not to scare people who worked there without any."

“When I visited the graveyard of Pripyat — a highly contaminated area — or returnees at their homes, I wasn't wearing any protection," he told Vice Germany. "As a photographer, you walk a fine line and you need people's cooperation to get the job done. In Chernobyl, I ate eggs, fish and potatoes that were all produced in the contaminated zone. I was concerned, but I wasn't really scared.”

David Rees is chairman of the MU photojournalism faculty that championed Ludwig's nomination to be an honor medal recipient. Ludwig's name made the list not only for his Chernobyl project, Rees said.

“This year we really wanted to have someone who represented environmental photojournalism because we have a number of students interested in reporting on the environment,” he said. “And when we got to that notion, that kind of general concept, Gerd Ludwig’s name came up, and everyone really endorsed him — because of the still (photography) work he has done, not just Chernobyl but other environmental work he has done.”
At the McDougall Center, a TV screen on the wall plays Ludwig's video of the nuclear disaster's aftermath. The video is a compilation of Ludwig's photos, largely different from the ones that hang on the gallery walls.

“These images remind us that accidents like Chernobyl are a possible outcome of nuclear power — anytime, anywhere. I want my project to stand as an all encompassing document of this man-made disaster — to remember the countless victims of Chernobyl and to warn future generations of the deadly consequences of human hubris,” he told National Geographic.

Visitors to the exhibition may look through Ludwig's book, "The Long Shadow of Chernobyl," which was recognized as the best book in the 2014 Pictures of the Year competition. All photos shown in the McDougall Center are from this book. The exhibit will be on display through Oct. 29. The gallery is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday.

The decision to focus the Ludwig exhibition on his Chernobyl work was intentional. "Which I think makes a lot of sense as it is such a timely topic," Rees said. "And by having one topic in the small gallery, we are able to get more depth.”


The honor medalists will meet with students and give master classes while they are in Columbia. Ludwig's class, "Winds of Change," is scheduled for 1 to 1:50 p.m. Monday in the Fred W. Smith Forum, Reynolds Journalism Institute. A full schedule accompanies this article.

“I think that the whole idea of having the Missouri Honor Medalist come to campus, spend time with students, and for us to be able to have his work exhibited under his presence ... is to extend the education mission of the school,” Rees said. "So students, beyond seeing the work online or
seeing it in the book, are actually able to reach out and touch the person and talk with him one on one.”

Ludwig said he feels incredibly humbled to receive the honor medal. “This honor means encouragement and obligation to continue the path of pursuing issue-driven journalism,” he wrote in an email.

He shared this bit of advice with students interested in studying photojournalism: “A great photograph touches the soul and broadens the mind.”

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Missouri Honor Medalists at a glance

NANA NASKIDASHVILI, Oct 25, 2015

CNN Digital

CNN Digital is one of the world’s leading digital news brands, reaching more than 100 million unique users a month worldwide across mobile and desktop. In addition to breaking news coverage, CNN is known for publishing across all platforms. The Digital team has launched coverage of key issues and beats such as climate, health, style, parenting and religion. In video, CNN has grown its global reach to more than 230 million views per month, and the award-winning CNN Digital Studios has produced more than two dozen digital series in the past year. Accepting the Missouri Honor Medal on behalf of CNN Digital will be Meredith Artley, BJ ’95, editor in chief.

Barbara Ehrenreich, Author and activist+

Time and has appeared on “Oprah” and "The Daily Show.” Her work life has settled into three tracks: journalism, book-length projects and activism on such issues as health care, peace, women’s rights and economic justice.

Rea Hederman, Publisher, The New York Review of Books

Rea Hederman, MA ’70, has been publisher of The New York Review of Books since 1984. A native of Jackson, Mississippi, Hederman came to The New York Review after a distinguished career in journalism. From 1973 until 1982, he was executive editor of the Clarion-Ledger in Jackson, Mississippi. During that period, he transformed what was generally considered to be a racist and journalistically inferior publication into a newspaper that won almost every major national award for journalism, including the Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award, the George Polk Award and the Heywood Broun Award, among others, and, in 1983, the Pulitzer Prize for public service for work published in 1982.

Gerd Ludwig, Photojournalist and documentary photographer

Gerd Ludwig was born in Germany. Soon after moving to New York in the mid-1980s, he started photographing for National Geographic magazine. His focus on environmental issues and the socioeconomic changes following the dissolution of the Soviet Union resulted in his book, “Broken Empire: After the Fall of the USSR,” a 10-year retrospective published by National Geographic in 2001 in the U.S., Germany and Korea. “The Long Shadow of Chernobyl” (essay by Mikhail Gorbachev), his trilingual photo book based on 20 years documenting the aftermath of the Chernobyl catastrophe in the Exclusion Zone and the surrounding fallout areas, was released by Edition Lammerhuber in 2014 to international acclaim.

Merrill Perlman, Copy editor

Merrill Perlman, has spent most of her career as an editor, teacher and motivator. She is a graduate of the Missouri School of Journalism. She has worked as a business copy editor at The New York Times, night metro editor, an editor on the Week in Review, recruiting editor for copy desks and managing editor of The New York Times News Service. In 2004, she was named director of copy desks, in charge of the 160-plus copy editors across the newsroom. Retiring
from The Times in 2008, she started Merrill Perlman Consulting, and edits high-level writers for ProPublica, Amazon Kindle Singles and Rosetta Books, among others. She’s trained thousands of people through on-site and online programs for the Poynter Institute’s NewsU, news organizations, journalism conventions and private companies. Perlman is president of the American Copy Editors Society Education Fund and on the boards of ACES and Journalism & Women Symposium.

Bill Plante, Senior White House correspondent, CBS News

Bill Plante is the White House correspondent for CBS News and has received numerous journalism awards. During his career he has covered the administrations of Ronald Reagan (beginning in 1981), Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama as well as every presidential campaign since 1968. He has covered such topics as the historic summit meeting in Moscow between President Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev and the death of Princess Diana. As a CBS News reporter, he was covering the bombing strikes over North Vietnam.

Among Plante’s Emmy awards is one for his investigative report on the U.S.-Soviet wheat deal broadcast on the “CBS Evening News” (1972). Plante’s international work has twice been recognized with the Overseas Press Club Award.

Yoani Sánchez, Cuban blogger, journalist and founder of 14ymedio

“I graduated in Philology, and am a lover of technology, literature and journalism. I live in Havana and try, every day, to help build a plural and inclusive Cuba with room for all Cubans.” That’s how the acclaimed Cuban blogger introduces herself to the readers of her blog.

A University of Havana graduate in philology, Sánchez emigrated to Switzerland in 2002 to build a new life for herself and her family. Two years later, she returned to Havana, promising herself to live there as a free person. In 2007, Sánchez began Generation Y, her personal blog about daily life in Cuba. She has been arrested and detained by the Cuban government for starting her activities. Time magazine listed Sánchez as one of the World’s 100 Most Influential People, stating that “under the nose of a regime that has never tolerated dissent, Sánchez has practiced what paper-bound journalists in her country cannot: freedom of speech.” Foreign Policy magazine has named her one of the Top 100 Global Thinkers.
Lincoln Stephens, Entrepreneur and activist

Lincoln Stephens is a former advertising account management executive turned activist, muckraker and entrepreneur. In his professional career, Stephens has worked at the Carol H. Williams, Martin Retail and TracyLocke agencies and worked on top brands such as Frito Lay, Quaker, Pepsi, Cadillac, Hummer, Chevrolet and Coca-Cola.

In November 2008, Stephens decided to quit his job to pursue his passion for mentorship and co-founded a nonprofit organization called The Marcus Graham Project. The organization, which is focused on bringing more diversity to the advertising industry through mentorship, exposure and career development, has been featured in Advertising Age, Black Enterprise magazine, Savoy magazine, and on CNN and NBC, according to the School of Journalism’s website.

Sports Journalism Institute, Training and internship program

“The Sports Journalism Institute is a nine-week training and internship program for college students interested in sports journalism careers. The Institute is designed to attract talented students to journalism through opportunities in sports reporting and editing and enhance racial and gender diversity in sports departments of newspapers nationwide,” according to SJI’s website.

The Sports Journalism Institute works with the National Association of Black Journalists, Asian American Journalists Association, National Association of Hispanic Journalists and Association for Women in Sports Media.

Leon Carter, an ESPN vice president and editorial director of TheUndefeated.com, and Sandy Rosenbush, an ESPN event news editor, will accept the medal on behalf of SJI. The two are co-directors of the Institute.
University of Missouri Holds Alcohol Responsibility Walk

The University of Missouri’s alcohol responsibility month culminates Friday, October 23, in a walk at the student recreation center.

Alcohol responsibility month was designed to create awareness and knowledge about health and safety choices regarding alcohol. Wellness center employees expect a turnout in the hundreds.

“This is our 33rd alcohol responsibility month and the purpose of it is to help educate our students, to make the best possible choices in regards to alcohol. It’s all about responsibility, it’s all about moderation and looking out for each other and those kinds of things,” Kim Dude, director of the wellness resource center said.

Throughout the month of October the wellness resource center put on a variety events in regards to all things alcohol. Dude want students to walk away from these events with a new outlook on the way that they deal with alcohol and situations they may be put in involving alcohol.

The co-chairs for alcohol responsibility month have worked to create a learning environment for the students who chose to go to the walk today. They want the students to really take something away from this event.

“A lot of students come to college and they’ve never had alcohol before and they don’t really know exactly what it all entails and how it can affect them so our purpose here is just to deliver that education that may have been missing in their lives before alcohol responsibility month and walking is just a really fun way to do it,” Ellen Hinze, alcohol responsibility month co-chair, said.

The amount of time spent doing the walk is discretionary, and some students could potentially walk for up to six hours. Throughout the walk, there will be four stations set up, allowing students to learn more information about the effects of alcohol.
MU to host 'New Media for New Voters' public forum

By Megan Favignano

Saturday, October 24, 2015 at 12:00 am

Five researchers will discuss millennials and politics at the “New Media for New Voters” public forum next week.

The event will focus on what millennials know about politics, how much they care and how actively they will participate in the 2016 presidential election. The forum also will look at how social media and mobile devices are transforming elections.

The event is set for 7 p.m. Thursday in Room 200 of the Reynolds Journalism Institute at the University of Missouri.

The forum is free and open to the public.

The panelists are: Leticia Bode, an assistant professor at Georgetown University; Stephanie Edgerly, an assistant professor at Northwestern University; Dhavan Shah, a professor at the University of Wisconsin; Emily Vraga, an assistant professor at George Mason University; and Chris Wells, an assistant professor at the University of Wisconsin.
COLUMBIA — Millennials, adults age 18 to 34, make up a quarter of the U.S. population and are now a bigger group than baby boomers. That means that as the 2016 elections creep nearer, millennials are poised to serve a more prominent role.

"The future of local politics is really dependent on these people," Esther Thorson, director of research at the Reynolds Journalism Institute and associate dean of graduate students at the School of Journalism, said.

Millennials, however, have displayed some disturbing qualities, such as not being very interested or involved in politics, especially local politics, Thorson said. Among their greatest qualities, on the other hand, are that millennials are fantastic with digital and social networking and are very sophisticated with their phones and social media, she said.

That prompts the question of how to better engage millennials in politics.

The Reynolds Journalism Institute and MU's Political Communication Institute are co-hosting a forum at 7 p.m. Thursday on how to reach millennial voters through social media and mobile devices. The forum will be at the journalism institute's Fred W. Smith Forum.

Thorson and Mitchell McKinney, director of the Political Communication Institute and an MU professor, are coordinating the event.

Five nationally known academic researchers have been invited to present their research in a panel discussion. They include Leticia Bode of Georgetown University, Stephanie Edgerly of
Northwestern University, Dhavan Shah of the University of Wisconsin, Emily Vraga of George Mason University and Chris Wells of the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The panelists will discuss how to get millennials better involved in community participation, how to organize millennials politically and how to get them motivated to take action and do something to take care of their towns and cities, Thorson said.

"We have to understand millennials because they don't operate like baby boomers or Generation X," Thorson said.

Although most people think about politics at a national level, those elections are less frequent. State and local elections happen more often and have larger impacts on citizens, McKinney said.

McKinney hopes people will learn how to use social media to connect with their communities and help local officials figure out how to connect with populations such as millennial voters that often are overlooked.

Obama's election in 2008 showed social media has powerful potential to mobilize younger voters, McKinney said.

"In using social media, we might be able to continue to more carefully and more clearly connect with these voters," he said.

The five panelists have been working together for the past eight years, Thorson said, and each has published numerous works regarding millennial voters and new media. Together, they will publish a book on their research. It will be co-edited by McKinney, Thorson and Shah. Thorson believes the book will be a valuable tool for the 2016 elections.

"Of course not all millennials are the same," Thorson said. "There are Hispanics, Asians, African Americans, and all types of backgrounds. "I don't want to oversimplify by saying they're all the same, but they have one thing in common, that their cellphone is their pathway to the world."
Rust on south smokestack at MU Power Plant will require work in spring

SEAN NA, 1 hr ago

COLUMBIA — Distinctive streaks of yellowish rust are appearing on the south smokestack of the MU Power Plant just a few years after MU spent millions to repair it and the north stack.

Karlan Seville, spokeswoman at MU Campus Facilities, said the rust began to appear this summer.

Campus Facilities spent $3.8 million from the University of Missouri System's general fund to fix cracks, remove rust and install new platforms on both smokestacks in 2010 and 2011.

Seville said the new rust on the south smokestack is coming from the metal platform that was installed in 2010.

The department is trying to figure out the cause of the rust and come up with a plan to either clean it off or recoat the surface of the smokestack. The cost of the repair won't be known until they put the project out for bids in the spring, she said.

McCarthy Building Cos. was the general contractor for the 2010-2011 project. A company representative said in an email that the warranty on that work is no longer in effect. The company declined further comment.

Seville said Campus Facilities will need more money from the University of Missouri System for the repair. She expects work will begin in spring and be done before students come back for the fall 2016 semester.
Op-Ed: Disability should disqualify killer from death penalty

By LEIGH TENKKU LEPPER

Sunday, October 25, 2015 at 12:00 am

Ernest Johnson is scheduled to die Nov. 3 by lethal injection, even though he does not meet such a standard of punishment because of his intellectual disability — IQ of 67 — and documented fetal alcohol syndrome. The death penalty in this case is prohibited by the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution and upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in Atkins v. Virginia 536 U.S. 304 (2002). We have no argument with his conviction — he is guilty of three counts of murder committed in 1994 — but Johnson has had clear deficits from the very beginning.

National forensic psychologist Natalie Novick Brown, who specializes in cases of individuals diagnosed with fetal alcohol syndrome, issued a report about Johnson in 2005. It read, in part:

“His mother abused alcohol from the age of 10, and by the time she was 18 and pregnant with Ernest, she was downing several pints of whiskey and gin each week in addition to consuming sedatives. She had a serious history of intoxication as well as several associated hospital admissions.

She prostituted herself out for money to support her addictions. When that wasn’t enough, she prostituted her children out, including Ernest. ... She rewarded Ernest’s childhood prostitution with alcohol and drugs, thus turning him into an addict. Later, Ernest’s mother married a man who physically and sexually abused Ernest.”

Brown’s report is replete with documented evidence of the many characteristics of a child whose mother abused alcohol during pregnancy, including attention deficit disorder, hyperactivity, small stature, incomplete formation of the frontal lobe, where executive functioning development occurs, resulting in poor judgment skills and understanding consequences of behaviors, all of which are well-documented in the now extensive literature on fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol spectrum disorders.

In addition, her report provides documentation of alcohol and drug abuse by his mother, and clear psychological and physiological deficits that have been evidenced in Johnson from an early age.
Yet none of this report has ever been admitted in the many appeals that have been conducted in this case over the years.

The Missouri Chapter of the National Organization of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome is an organization dedicated to providing education and training on fetal alcohol spectrum disorders as well as advocacy for these individuals who cannot speak for themselves.

As president of the Missouri chapter of the National Organization of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, I strongly encourage Gov. Jay Nixon to remove the death penalty from Johnson and grant him life imprisonment.

Leigh Tenkku Lepper is an associate research professor in the School of Social Work and Master in Public Health Program at the University of Missouri. She is also president of NOFAS-Missouri.

Wagner vs. Obama: Are investors being soaked?

October 25, 2015 5:00 am  •  By Jim Gallagher

Rep. Ann Wagner, R-Ballwin, scored a victory recently when the powerful House Financial Services committee voted to kill the “fiduciary rule” for retirement advice proposed by President Barack Obama’s administration.

Wagner has been leading the charge to kill the rule, which she says will hurt small investors by making advice too expensive. Obama’s side says it could save those investors $17 billion a year — the cost of subpar advice from brokers enriching themselves at clients’ expense.

The committee vote is the first step on an uphill effort to block the rule. If it passes Congress, Obama will probably veto it.

So, let’s see what they’re arguing about.

The Labor Department rule would turn advisers — read stock, bond and insurance brokers — into “fiduciaries” when they give advice on retirement accounts. That means they must place their clients’ interest above their own when advising people on 401(k)s, IRAs and the like. Many clients expect their advisers to do that anyway. But legally, most don’t have to.

So, it boils down to this: Wagner thinks we can trust brokers. Obama doesn’t.

A fact about the investment advice business: Conflicts of interest are rife. Investments that are best for the client don’t always bring the biggest payoffs for brokers or their bosses.
This can put good advisers in an ethical pickle: They want to do right by their clients, but financial forces tempt them toward the dark side.

For instance, a broker selling stock on commission makes money when you trade a lot, but that is rarely good strategy.

A broker might make a 4 percent commission on putting you in load mutual funds. But there’s often a 7 percent commission on choosing a deferred annuity or 10 percent on non-traded real estate investment trusts. Many of these conflicts, such as that annuity commission, are invisible to the client.

Brokerages often sell bonds out of their own portfolio. So, the brokerage makes more profit if you pay a high price for the bond.

Mutual fund companies often pay brokerages extra if they put a lot of clients’ money in their funds. The system gives the broker an incentive to sell the funds that pay the brokerages.

The money for these payouts comes out of the fund investor’s hide.

Some brokers are urged to beat the drums for their own company’s branded mutual funds, because the brokerage makes money managing them.

Some conflicts are visible if the client knows where to look. For instance, funds sold by brokers usually have higher expenses than no-load funds that clients could buy on their own.

But clients don’t know where to look. They come to advisers because they don’t understand investing.

Under the law, most brokers aren’t required to give clients their best advice. Their recommendations must only be “suitable.”

A broker can’t put a 90-year-old life’s savings into a couple of high-risk stocks. That’s not suitable. But he can recommend a mutual fund that pays a fat commission, knowing that a cheaper choice would be best for the client.

Despite this, Wagner thinks the advice industry merits the public’s trust. She says her own financial adviser is like a member of her family.

Advisers are not “snake oil salesmen,” she told a group of insurance people last May. “It’s amazing how you all have been villainized. You all are family to the customers you serve.”

Brokers know they live on word-of-mouth recommendations. If they don’t do well by clients, clients can walk — and talk.
Obama’s administration counters with its own study claiming that conflicted brokers are giving bad advice to boost their own pay. The effect is to lower investment returns by about 1 percent, equaling $17 billion per year in losses to clients.

Along comes the Labor Department with a proposal to solve that. It would make brokers fiduciaries, and give them two ways to get paid when dealing with retirement accounts.

They can charge investors a fee for advice and forsake the conflicts of interest. Or, they can keep the current commission model, with all the conflicts, but sign a contract with their clients promising to put the client first. Brokers would have to tell clients what they’re actually paying — exposing those behind-the-scenes payouts. They’ll have to set up websites showing how each investment product compensates the brokerage.

So, what’s wrong with that?

Wagner says advisers will have to drop their middle-class clients to avoid bureaucratic costs and legal risk. The rule “harms the very people it claims to protect: low- and moderate-income Americans,” she says.

She’s echoing the cry of the brokerage industry, which hates the Obama proposal. That industry is big in St. Louis. With Edward Jones, Stifel Financial, Scottrade and Wells Fargo Advisors all based here, St. Louis has the biggest concentration of retail brokerage honchos west of Wall Street.

The securities and insurance industries gave $456,000 to Wagner’s campaign in the 2013-2014 election cycle, according to Open Secrets, a campaign finance tracking group.

### INDUSTRY MAKES ITS CASE

Here’s the problem as the industry sees it: A fiduciary rule makes it easier to bring legal claims against brokers when investments go bad. Did the broker really believe that the commission-paying mutual fund was the best choice? Can the broker prove it? There are costs involved in disclosing what clients are actually paying, and satisfying the Labor Department that they’re doing it right. One solution would be to move more investors to “wrap” accounts. The investor pays a fee each year, but commissions on many trades are dropped. This eliminates some conflicts, but not all.

Many wealthier clients already have that arrangement. But a 2 percent wrap fee isn’t much on a $25,000 account. Many brokerages require $100,000 for a fee-based account, and 65 percent of people with IRAs don’t have that much.

So, the industry says it would have to abandon the little guys, denying them investment advice on their retirement.

Retirement savers could actually lose $109 billion over 10 years, the effect of less advice and the expense of complying with the rule, according to the Investment Company Institute, which represents mutual fund companies.
On the other hand, is the advice you get from a conflicted broker better than no advice at all? If small investors realized what they are paying now, they might never sign up.

And Obama supporters doubt the industry will dump small investors, because cumulatively they have lots of money. In 2012, workers took $300 billion out of low-cost company 401(k) plans and rolled them into IRAs, where brokers can make a buck on them.

There are other pay models. Some “fee only” advisers already sell their advice on a set-fee or hourly rate. They accept no other compensation and usually recommend low-cost investments.

At the University of Missouri, Michael Guillemette takes a middle view. He’s an assistant professor of personal financial planning, who trains tomorrow’s financial advisers. Being a fiduciary in a commission-based system would indeed be tough, he says.

“It’s difficult in my mind to justify significantly higher expenses. I think that’s what they’re worried about,” said Guillemette. “I see why there is trepidation.”

Then again, doctors, lawyers and accountants already work under a fiduciary standard, and they do quite well, he notes.

A form of financial adviser — called a registered investment adviser — is already a fiduciary, and they’re doing well, too. Certified Financial Planners pledge to act as fiduciaries, although the law doesn’t require it. However, like all advisers, they prefer clients with lots of money.

Guillemette thinks the Labor Department’s rule is much too complex, and complexity costs. Instead, the department should simply declare brokers to be fiduciaries, he said. That would be enough.

If other professions can figure it out, so could the brokerage industry. The Labor Department has heard an earful from the industry. It’s revising its rule, and plans to make a final call early next year.