University of Missouri student arrested for Yik Yak threat

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA, MO. - A University of Missouri student is accused of a campus threat posted on social media.

The university says the 18-year-old student was arrested Monday and later released on $4,500 bond. Formal charges had not been filed by midday Tuesday.

The student is accused of making a threat on the social media site Yik Yak. University police have not disclosed details, but interim chancellor Hank Foley says in a statement that the threat was not believed to be credible.

It was the second threat against the university on Yik Yak since Nov. 9, when racial unrest led to the resignations of the Columbia campus chancellor and university system president. A student at Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla was arrested on Nov. 11.
MU freshman arrested for allegedly making terrorist threat

By THE TRIBUNE'S STAFF

Tuesday, December 15, 2015 at 9:56 am

University of Missouri police on Monday arrested a student on suspicion of making a terrorist threat on an anonymous social media app, a little more than a month after campus was nearly closed because of a racially charged threat using the same app.

Nathan W. Benz, 18, was arrested at 7:54 p.m. Monday and booked into the Boone County Jail, Maj. Brian Weimer said in a news release. Benz was released after posting a $4,500 bond.

Weimer said Benz posted a threat on Yik Yak — an anonymous social media app — at about noon Monday and that MUPD served a search warrant to the company, which identified Benz. Even though the app’s users are anonymous to each other, the company tracks user information.

Benz, 18, is a freshman at MU, according to the school’s online directory. Officers located Benz at a building on campus and arrested him at the police department, Weimer said.

Charges had not been filed against Benz, a St. Louis resident, as of Tuesday morning.

Interim Chancellor Hank Foley released a statement condemning the threat and thanking MUPD for quickly investigating the incident. He said the threat was never believed to be credible.

“We are doing everything possible to ensure a campus that is welcoming and safe,” Foley said. “We will do everything in our power to identify and prosecute individuals who threaten that safety.”

Weimer would not reveal the threat but said it was not racist in nature. Race-related threats Hunter M. Park allegedly posted Nov. 10 caused widespread fear on campus at the height of unrest over issues of racism. Park, 19, was charged with making a terrorist threat for allegedly posting he would shoot black people at MU.

Park, a former student at Missouri University of Science and Technology, has a case review scheduled for Dec. 23 in Boone County Associate Circuit Court. Within days of Park’s alleged
crime, two other Missouri college students were arrested on suspicion of making anonymous threats against black students.

MISSOURIAN

UPDATE: MU student arrested for terroristic threat

JENNIFER ALDRICH, 23 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — MU Police arrested an 18-year-old man from the St. Louis area Monday night on suspicion of making a terroristic threat.

Nathan Benz has been released from Boone County Jail on a $4,500 bond, according to Boone County Sheriff's Department records.

According to MU’s directory, Benz is a freshman at the university.

The nature of the threat was unclear, but according to an MU Police Department news release on Tuesday morning, Benz is accused of making the threat anonymously on Yik Yak, a social media site.

According to the release, after learning of the threat, police served a search warrant to Yik Yak, and the site released Benz's information.

The release did not say what the threat was or who it was directed toward. Police cited an open investigation for not releasing more information.

MU Interim Chancellor Hank Foley said in a statement released on Tuesday that "at no time was the threat ever perceived to be credible."
"Safety is our No. 1 priority, and we will not tolerate threats to the peace of our campus," MU Police Chief Doug Schwandt said in the department's release. "This is the second threat that we have investigated on Yik Yak in the past two months that has resulted in an arrest."

On Nov. 11, MU Police arrested 19-year-old Hunter Park, a student at Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla on suspicion of making a terroristic threat. Park was then charged and was being held in the Boone County Jail.

The threats posted on Yik Yak expressed the intent to shoot black people on MU's campus.

Park was being held without bond, but his bond was later reduced to $10,000.

"We're trying to send a strong message that if you go to sites and make threats that are criminal in nature, we can get search warrants and make arrests," Maj. Brian Weimer, of the MU Police Department, said of the latest arrest.

Foley said in the statement that individuals who threaten the safety of the campus would be identified and prosecuted.

MUPD arrests man for making terror threat on social media site


COLUMBIA, Mo. - A University of Missouri student was arrested Monday evening for allegedly making a terrorist threat.
The University of Missouri Police department arrested Nathan Benz of St. Louis just before 8 p.m. after he made a threat on the social media site Yik Yak Monday. Benz is a freshman at MU.

Major Brian Weimer said they received multiple calls of the threat around noon on Monday. He said they are not releasing the details of what the threatening post said at this time.

However, he did add that the threat wasn't racially motivated or had anything to do with the recent protests on MU's campus.

"We take these very seriously and we will do everything in our power to identify individuals who are making these types of threats," he said. "If they're in violation of the law we will be making the arrest."

Major Weimer said Benz could also face disciplinary action at the university.

Christian Basi, a university spokesperson, declined to comment on the incident.

Interim Chancellor Hank Foley responded to the arrest of Benz Tuesday morning. He said, "We will not tolerate any threat to our campus; I’m once again extremely grateful for the fast work of the MUPD. This is the second time in two months that they have identified an individual who has threatened the peace of our campus," in a statement.

You can read the full statement here.

On November 11, Hunter Park, a now former University of Missouri Science and Technology student was arrested for making a racially motivated threat on Yik Yak.

He was later charged for making a terrorist threat and released from the Boone County Jail on a $10,000 bond. The judge ordered him to be placed on house arrest and have no access to the internet.

Prosecutors tell ABC 17 News charges on Benz are under review.

Benz has since bonded out of the Boone County Jail.
MU threat latest in Yik Yak controversy

By Garrett Bergquist Tuesday, December 15th 2015


Columbia — Tuesday's announcement that an MU student had been arrested for an online threat is the latest such story involving the social media app Yik Yak.

Launched in 2013, Yik Yak lets users post anonymous messages, called yaks. The app has drawn controversy after some students have used it as a platform for issuing threats. Missouri S&T student Hunter Park was arrested last month after police say he posted a threat relating to the protests on the MU campus at the time. Around the same time, at least three other colleges nationwide including Missouri Valley College reported similar online threats. On Monday night, police arrested MU student Nathan Benz for an alleged threat of his own.

Psychotherapist Nicole Saltzman said the ability of YikYak users to hide behind user names offers anonymity that some might find empowering. She said apps like Yik Yak can create an echo chamber if other users egg on someone who writes angry posts. Saltzman said users should take threatening posts seriously.

"If you see someone on social media who is kind of outrageous, it's really important not to engage in an argument with that person," she said. "But you definitely want to take the steps that you need to take to flag that."

MU police spokesman Maj. Brian Weimer said Yik Yak doesn't offer the anonymity users might think it does. He said police can obtain a search warrant to determine who is behind a threatening post.

"The university police department, and the university in general, takes this very, very seriously, and we will do everything in our power to identify individuals making threats to the campus, and when appropriate, we'll make an arrest," he said.
That echoes a statement released by Yik Yak co-founder Brooks Buffington last month. After Park's arrest, Buffington called his actions "upsetting and completely unacceptable."

"This sort of misbehavior is NOT what Yik Yak is to be used for. Period. It is not condoned by Yik Yak, and it violates our terms of service," he wrote, adding Yik Yak takes threats seriously and works alongside law enforcement in investigations.

Benz was arrested on a charge of making a terrorist threat. Under state law, he could face 1 to 7 years in prison if he is convicted.

MU student arrested for making terrorist threat on social media

Watch story: http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=31923&zone=5&categories=5

COLUMBIA – University of Missouri police said Tuesday they arrested an MU student around 8 p.m. Monday for making a terrorist threat.

Police said they arrested 18-year-old Nathan Benz for making a terrorist threat on the social media site Yik Yak.

Interim Chancellor Hank Foley said Tuesday at no time during the investigation was Benz's threat considered credible.

Because users post anonymously to Yik Yak, MUPD said it served the social media site with a search warrant in order to identify Benz.

“Safety is our no. 1 priority, and we will not tolerate threats to the peace of our campus,” MUPD Chief Doug Schwandt said. “This is the second threat that we have investigated on Yik Yak in the past two months that has resulted in an arrest.”

In November, MUPD arrested 19-year-old Hunter M. Park for making threats to the MU campus on Yik Yak.
Backlash begins over University of Missouri protest response

BY SUMMER BALLENTINE Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, MO. - Two Missouri legislators propose that universities revoke the scholarships of athletes if they go on strike. Another proposes mandatory classes on free speech for all students. And state legislative leaders say funding for the University of Missouri could be cut.

Those are a few examples of the backlash after members of the university's football team threatened to strike and joined protests over the administration's handling of racial tensions on campus. Top university officials later resigned.

"The perception is that there's a lot of things that went wrong, and there's going to be a price to pay," Republican Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard said Tuesday.

Last month a graduate student went on a hunger strike, the football team supported the student and the head football coach backed his players. The next day former university system President Tim Wolfe stepped down. The Missouri protests prompted demonstrations of support at universities around the country.

The upheaval shocked and embarrassed some alumni, as well as members of the state legislature. With weeks before the 2016 state legislative session is scheduled
to begin on Jan. 6, some lawmakers, most of them Republicans, say the university will face consequences for how leaders handled the protests.

The university "coddled the students and gave them everything they wanted," said Republican Rep. Kurt Bahr, who co-sponsored the bill on student athletes' scholarships. He said the university should have revoked football players' scholarships if they didn't practice or play.

University of Missouri System spokesman John Fougere in an emailed statement said the university is "committed to working closely and rebuilding confidence with our state legislators in the upcoming session."

The backlash comes at a time when the University of Missouri's relationship with the Legislature already was tense. The school this past year faced criticism from some GOP lawmakers who questioned agreements between the Columbia campus and a local Planned Parenthood clinic that had offered medication-induced abortions. Republicans hold supermajorities in both chambers of the state legislature.

A major lever they could use to punish the state's flagship university is money.

Funding for the University of Missouri is "going to take a haircut," Senate leader Richard said.

About 15 percent of the system's budget this fiscal year came from state appropriations.

Republican House Majority Leader Mike Cierpiot said lawmakers should be sensitive to the feelings of minority students protesting on campus but also need to stress the university's mission to educate.

"They want to find out what's going on and how we can get Missouri out of the headlines," Cierpiot said, referring to national media attention.

Some of the proposals suggested by legislators are more symbolic that real. Bahr said his goal for the bill to punish student athletes was to show the university that some lawmakers disagree with how leadership handled the campus unrest.

The proposals have drawn criticism from some Democrats.

The bill to punish athletes "seeks to further solidify and legalize institutional racism by targeting black athletes for exercising their constitutional rights to free
speech and reducing them to the status of subjugated livestock," Missouri Legislative Black Caucus Chairman Rep. Brandon Ellington said in a statement.

Republican Rep. Dean Dohrman said his bill to require students in public colleges to take a class on freedom of speech was in part motivated by a communications professor who tried to stop a student photographer from taking pictures of protesters. Her actions were widely criticized by advocates for freedom of the press and speech, and she later apologized.

Senate Democratic Leader Joe Keaveny said it's not up to the Legislature to fix issues at the University of Missouri.

"I'm not about to begin to run that university, and I don't think anybody in Jefferson City should begin to run that university," he said.

Missouri Lawmaker Would Revoke Scholarships of Athletes Who Boycott

A month ago, when football players at the University of Missouri at Columbia said they would boycott the sport until the university system’s president, Timothy M. Wolfe, stepped down, observers quickly pointed out that, hypothetically, the university did have one point of leverage to get them back on the field — it could revoke their scholarships.

It never came to that. The team’s coach, Gary Pinkel, tweeted his support for the players, and Mr. Wolfe resigned the next day.

But if one lawmaker in the Missouri House of Representatives had his way, the protest would never have gotten that far. State Rep. Rick Brattin, a Republican, has sponsored a bill that would revoke the scholarship of “any college athlete on scholarship who refuses to play for a reason unrelated to health.”

The bill has been only “prefiled,” it has no scheduled hearing date, and it’s not on the legislature’s calendar, but it has already caught the attention of online observers. And not because they like it:
A @!@#$%&*% bill. twitter.com/MatthewACHerry...
3:55 PM - 14 Dec 2015

HB 1743

Provides that any college athlete on scholarship who refuses to play for a reason unrelated to health shall have his or her scholarship revoked

Sponsor: Boebig, Rob (R)

Proposed Effective Date: 8/29/2016

Bill Number: 4679-1

Last Action: 12/1/2015 - Prefiled (6)

Bill String: HB 1743

Next Hearing: Hearing not scheduled

Calendar: Bill currently not on a House calendar

Bill Summaries
Not Available

Bill Text
Not Available

Amendments (Expand)
12/14/2015 11:24:16 AM
CBS Sports reports that one of the boycott’s organizers, the former player Ian Simon, ripped the bill in a statement: “They want to call us student-athletes. But they keep us out of the student part of it,” he said. “I’m more than just a football player. … As soon as we’re done playing at the University of Missouri, the University of Missouri does not care about us anymore. We are not their responsibility. … Our sport is just a small part of who we are.”

Mr. Brattin previously gained notoriety for introducing a bill that would have required all women receiving abortions to obtain the permission of the man responsible for the pregnancy.

Forbes

A Veteran Standing for Free Speech—Apparently not in Missouri

Few things shock me anymore—but I must admit that sometimes politicians can say and do things that surprise me. Donald Trump I am talking to you—need I say more? Over the past two days there has been another firestorm started by a politician concerning basic American rights such as freedom of speech, expression, and the right to peaceably assemble to protest a grievance. You would think that a United States military veteran, who has fought and pledged to protect these basic American rights guaranteed under the Constitution, would be against any form of
censorship or attempt to deny or prevent access to these basic rights for any citizen. **Well—apparently not in Missouri, where a former US Marine is spearheading legislation to actually punish University of Missouri college athletes for exercising their basic and unalienable rights just as any other student.**

In what I consider a shocking and very stupid move, Missouri state representative and former Marine Rick Brattin (R-Harrisonville), has sponsored legislation in the Missouri House of Representatives that seeks to revoke an athlete’s scholarship if he or she “calls, incites, supports or participates in any strike or concerted refusal to play a scheduled game.” This proposed piece of legislation seeks to punish athletes who participate in boycotts such as the one the Missouri football team spearheaded last month in response to perceived racial injustices on campus and in the state. Missouri football players stood in solidarity with hunger-striker Jonathan Butler and pledged a stop to all football-related activities by players “of color” until President Tim Wolfe had resigned.

What was a fairly nondescript hunger strike at first eventually became international news. Soon other players joined the boycott as did former head coach Gary Pinkel and Athletic Director Mack Rhodes (not that they had much of a choice as challenging their players efforts would have backfired badly) and Wolfe resigned less than 2 days later, followed by Chancellor Bowen Loftin.

This was a game changer and the effect of the athletes standing up was immediate and effective. College athletes, specifically the ones in the for profit sports of NCAA Division I men’s basketball and football have tremendous leverage and in this case they used it very well. Let’s face it—we don’t tune in to watch Nick Saban or Urban Meyer. We want to see the players and if they use that power to advance social justice—I say more power to them. An effective athletes rights movement is going to be the best way to also repair and reconfigure the system of intercollegiate athletics in America in the future, but that is a conversation for another day.

The bill, co-sponsored by Kurt Bahr (R-St. Charles), is a direct reaction to protected, albeit uncomfortable speech to some, and is nothing more than political grandstanding and a publicity stunt—apparently something Brattin is very good at given his overall legislative track record.

**Are College Athletes Employees or Students?**

In a December 15th blog post on the Columbia (MO) Tribune website, author David Morrison asked a very simple question in response to this action. The question is: **If athletes are truly “student-athletes” as the NCAA stresses, would they not also have the right to protest without having their funds revoked, just like any other student?**

To me this is the key point. The NCAA consistently says that college athletes are students first. Amazingly even their rhetoric when speaking about college athletes now uses the word” student” instead of the ubiquitous and improper moniker of “student-athlete.” However actions are stronger than words and it is by actions only where the definition of a college athlete will be decided.
Missouri Lawmakers: Athletes That Strike Should Lose Their Scholarships

After a group of University of Missouri football players announced a boycott of team activities in November, a pair of state lawmakers is looking to prevent such a scenario from happening again.

The state’s flagship school was home to a series of protests this fall by students dissatisfied about the school's response to several race-related incidents. Players on the football team joined the mix by refusing to participate in football-related activities until then University of Missouri President Tim Wolfe resigned. The boycott called into question whether the team's November game against Brigham Young University would be played, with a forfeit potentially costing the school $1 million.

Now, despite Wolfe's stepping down and the game being played, Republican state Reps. Rick Brattin and Kurt Bahr are backing a bill that would require colleges to revoke student-athletes’ scholarships if they are healthy but refuse to play. The bill also would mandate that action for "any college athlete who calls, incites [or] supports" such a strike, and would require any coaches who encourage or support those students to be fined.

“The issue really is, they can have the freedom of speech (when they) like or don’t like something on campus,” Bahr said, according to student newspaper The Columbia Missourian. “But if they’re going to receive state money, there are going to be ramifications.”

However, student-athlete scholarships aren’t state-funded, according to the Missourian, which says the school's Tiger Scholarship Fund pays for them. The Kansas City Star also says revenue from broadcast rights, ticket sales and private donations help fund scholarships and facility upgrades at the school.

“The University of Missouri does not receive state appropriated funds to operate its intercollegiate athletics programs,” the school's student-athlete handbook says. “Similar to private business, the [Missouri] Athletics Department must operate solely from what revenue it generates.”
Coaches and the athletic director have the power to take away scholarships at Missouri, according to the Star, though the legislation apparently wouldn’t give them an option in the case of a player strike.

Ian Simon, a redshirt senior safety and captain on Missouri’s football team this year, isn’t intimidated by the proposed measure.

“I don’t just wear a helmet on Saturdays and disappear the other six days of the week,” Simon told a reporter for the Missourian.

Simon also said whether the bill becomes law or not, Missouri’s football players will take a stand when they feel like one is needed.

“They want to call us student-athletes, but they keep us out of the student part of it,” he said. “I’m more than just a football player. … Our sport is just a small part of who we are.”

Bill would revoke scholarships of athletes who boycott games

By Rudi Keller and David Morrison

Tuesday, December 15, 2015 at 2:00 pm

When the University of Missouri football team embraced the Concerned Student 1950 protests, the possibility players could lose their scholarships — as proposed by a state lawmaker — was not a factor, sophomore safety Anthony Sherrils said Monday.

On Nov. 7, Sherrils tweeted a photo of more than 30 players who declared a boycott of football activities in support of Jonathan Butler, a graduate student at MU who went on a hunger strike to call for UM System President Tim Wolfe’s resignation. Under university rules, the players risked losing their financial aid if they missed a practice scheduled for the next day.

“We didn’t really care,” Sherrils said. “It was the right thing to do.”

State Rep. Rick Brattin, R-Harrisonville, filed a bill Friday that would revoke the athletic scholarship of any athlete “who calls, incites, supports or participates in any strike or concerted refusal to play a scheduled game.” Schools would be required to fine coaches who support the
banned activities, as then-Coach Gary Pinkel did by canceling practice and publicly backing the players.

“I have had to sacrifice things because it is the right thing to do,” Brattin said. “The thinking that you can act a certain way and get away with everything, that is not the real world. I think if the coaching staff had not given their blessing to this type of behavior, we would not even be talking right now.”

Wolfe resigned Nov. 9, two days after the team’s boycott brought national attention to the protests over racism on campus. Practices resumed the next day, but the move could have cost the university at least $1 million had the Tigers not played a game scheduled for Nov. 14.

The student athlete handbook says the university may revoke the scholarship of any athlete violating NCAA, Southeastern Conference, institutional or departmental regulations or failing to “maintain their academic or social responsibilities.”

The university does not have any comment “at this time” on Brattin’s legislation, UM System spokesman John Fougere wrote in an email.

The players would prefer the university address racism and systematic oppression so protests are unnecessary, Sherrils said. “But to say, ‘Your voice doesn’t matter. We’re going to take your scholarships if you feel that it’s just that you boycott,’ that’s crazy to me,” he said.

Brattin sponsored a law that took effect in August making public college campuses forums where non-commercial speech could not be restricted.

The issue for the new bill, he said, is not whether players had a right to support the protests. The problem is refusing to meet the requirements of their scholarships, he said.

“They had the opportunity to stand arm-in-arm peacefully with the protests without holding the football program hostage with their activity,” Brattin said. “That is where you went from their individual freedoms and rights to stepping on the rights of others.”

The reaction to his bill has been heated, Brattin said. “I am getting tons of calls. There is no lukewarm anything.”

State Rep. Stephen Webber, D-Columbia, said lawmakers should focus on helping the university instead of punishing students. “Coaching the football team from Jefferson City is not a higher education policy,” he said.

The university already has the power to do everything Brattin’s bill would mandate, said Rep. Kip Kendrick, D-Columbia. “What frustrates me the most is that there are so many people in the legislature trying to trash the University of Missouri.”

The bill will spur discussion about how the university handled the protests, said Rep. Kurt Bahr, R-St. Charles and co-sponsor of Brattin’s bill. The unrest was a major topic of conversation
when Republicans, who hold more than two-thirds of the seats in the Missouri House, met Friday, Bahr and state Rep. Chuck Basye, R-Rocheport, said.

“My issue isn’t that I am upset with students that said they didn’t want to play,” Bahr said. “My issue is broader to the unrest that is going on at the university and the poor response of the leadership.”

The General Assembly would be wrong to punish the university by reducing its funding or imposing some other penalty, Basye said. What lawmakers want is for the administration and the Board of Curators to show they are in charge.

“I wasn’t real pleased with” the resignation of Wolfe and MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, “and I know an awful lot of people don’t like it, either,” Basye said. “For them to resign over those issues they had no control over — the alleged racism — was a terrible mistake.”

Brattin’s bill might not be the best way to address lawmaker concerns, Basye said, but he was not sure he will oppose it.

“Those football players were way out of line,” Basye said. “They had a responsibility to the university and to the football program to play.”

MU employee back at work after confrontation at protest

By THE TRIBUNE'S STAFF

Tuesday, December 15, 2015 at 2:00 pm

University of Missouri employee Janna Basler has returned to her job as student life associate director, MU spokesman Christian Basi said Tuesday.

MU placed Basler on administrative leave Nov. 11 after a video went viral showing her physically confronting a student photographer during a demonstration on campus.

The demonstration came after then UM System President Tim Wolfe resigned. Students had held protests on campus for weeks, aiming to draw attention to MU’s racial climate and calling for Wolfe’s removal.
Basler and Melissa Click, an assistant professor in the Department of Communications, can be seen on video attempting to force journalists from Carnahan Quadrangle during the demonstration.

Both Click and Basler issued apologies for their actions.

Last month, MU police gave Columbia City Prosecutor Steve Richey reports for consideration of charges against Click.

Richey was out of the office Tuesday. A clerk said he did not think Richey has determined whether to charge Click with a crime.

Basi said he could not comment about discipline against employees, citing MU’s human resources policies.

Janna Basler, MU assistant director of Greek Life, back on the job after fallout from controversial video

BRENDAN SOLIS, 20 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Janna Basler has returned to her job as Assistant Director of Greek Life at MU after more than a month of administrative leave, the MU Office of Greek Life said Tuesday.

The MU Office of Greek Life placed Basler on administrative leave last month after a video that showed her confronting student photographer Tim Tai went viral. Tai was trying to approach a student encampment on the Mel Carnahan Quadrangle to take photos.

Students with the group Concerned Student 1950 had set up the camp the week before in protest of UM System President Tim Wolfe and his response to racist incidents on campus. The video was shot soon after Wolfe announced that he would resign.
The video, which was viewed 2.7 million times as of Tuesday, set off a firestorm on social media. It shows students forming a human chain around the Concerned Student 1950 campsite. Students can be seen blocking Tai’s view and keeping him away from the site.

The students declared the campsite a "safe space" and attempted to keep journalists from entering even though the quad is a public space.

"Sir, I'm sorry, these are people too," Basler said in the video. "You need to back off."

Both sides stood their ground.

Later in the video, Tai asks Basler what her name is, but she wouldn't say. Her response: "My name is Concerned Student 1950."

"Are you with the Office of Greek Life?" Tai asks.

"My name is 1950," she said.

Critics said that Basler, students and other MU staff members had stifled reporters’ rights to document the scene on the quad.

After the video gained traction online, Basler was placed on administrative leave and issued the following statement:

"As a student affairs professional, I take my responsibility to students very seriously. Yesterday, I allowed my emotions to get the best of me while trying to protect some of our students. Instead of defusing an already tense situation, I contributed to its escalation. I regret how I handled the situation, and I am offering a public apology to the journalist involved.

"I have the utmost respect for journalists and the profession of journalism. I have devoted my career to helping students learn and develop outside the classroom. What happened on Carnahan Quadrangle has been a lesson for me. I am deeply sorry for what happened."
The day after the video went viral, students at the campsite backtracked on their "safe space" declaration, welcoming media to the camp and admitting that the quad was, in fact, open to all.

It could not be immediately learned Tuesday whether Basler was paid while she was on administrative leave.

Policing opinions fritters away liberty

Tuesday, December 15, 2015 at 2:00 pm

Editor, the Tribune: This whole series of events at Mizzou, my late father’s alma mater, makes me shake my head at how far we have declined in the areas of maturity, responsibility and liberty.

One of the facts about adult life is that we’re going to encounter many people and ideas we find objectionable. Adult life is not kindergarten, where we run to the teacher when things bother us and expect the other person to be sent to the principal’s office. No, we must act like adults and deal with it ourselves. We need to realize that while someone else might say things we find objectionable, that doesn’t make that person a criminal. As long as the other person is not threatening or harassing you, just ignore him or her It’s that simple.

And that brings us to liberty. By expecting everyone to believe the same way and expecting to live in a world sanitized from all things we find objectionable, we pay the price in the form of the loss of liberty. Liberty means the freedom to express ideas without being punished. That includes opinions that some might disagree with or find objectionable. Being exposed to opinions we might disagree with is the “price” we pay for our freedom. However, that is a small price to pay compared to the loss of liberty. That is something that has been almost totally ignored in this recent series of events.

Stephen V. Gilmore

10305 Shelter Rock Court

Charlotte, N.C.
The Black Collective & Allies, a group of faculty and staff at MU, emphatically opposes the ideological underpinnings reflected in the recent comments of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia suggesting that black students may be better served by attending “slower-track” schools rather than elite universities. It is particularly distressing that Justice Scalia’s comments give credence to a flawed theory that the failure of black students at elite universities and colleges is based upon the misguided notion that it is their failure alone devoid of the structural and endemic barriers that prevent academic success for these students. Justice Scalia’s support of this theory resurrects a viewpoint that has long since been disproved.

The language used to undermine affirmative action and denigrate the ability of black students to be successful at elite universities and colleges will have ramifications long after this case has been decided. Justice Scalia’s remarks reject the constitutional principle of equal opportunity for all and the court’s own precedent that diversity is a valuable goal for all. Instead, the comments support a system of higher education based on the idea of separate and not equal.

It is this attitude and bias that caused black students at MU to stand up and demand action to change the campus climate for students of color. Their protests were sparked by hateful acts of racism, but they targeted a persistent, underlying attitude among many that they do not really belong on this campus. Drawing on the courage and resolve displayed by the student protesters at MU, our group formed to promote an inclusive climate that reflects racial, sexual, economic and religious diversity where all students, faculty and staff can thrive. Moreover, we are committed to promoting the recruitment and retention of more black students and faculty.
Contrary to Justice Scalia, we recognize the enrichment and strength that diversity brings not only to institutions of higher learning, but to every part of our society. We join the growing chorus of voices from different political, social and cultural spheres in denouncing his position as one that will push our nation back toward a shameful past, rather than promoting progress toward a brighter future.

MISSOURIAN

FROM READERS: Social justice conversations 'muscle out' opposing views

DANIEL MYERS/MISSOURIAN READER, 1 hr ago

Daniel Myers is an MU senior, former president of student organization SASHA, founder of the international trade startup Guanxi International, and a volunteer peer driving instructor. His areas of passion are intercultural and international exchange, socio-economic mobility and food cultures.

Thanks to the community at Mizzou, the support of friends and family, and the tolerance of many whom I've surely offended, I've been able to turn my life around. Thanks to you, I haven't worried about where I'd be staying overnight or whether I'd be safe. I no longer sleep with a weapon, and I haven't woken in panic fueled rages in over three years.

So, I want to thank all of you.

I'm thankful for those faculty who held me accountable when my assignments were late as you would any other student. You humanized me.

I'm thankful for the peers who held me close as I mourned loved ones and watched friends destroy themselves. Though I couldn't possibly put my pain into words, you bore it with me.
The support I’ve received from so many people with so many different perspectives has left me permanently humbled.

The beautiful, frustrating, compassionate, and even offensive help that Mizzou's secular, religious, artsy, scientific, liberal and conservative individuals have given me is an opportunity that no one should be bereft of.

So Mizzou, please look to the other perspective. Nearly everyone here wants classism, racism, sexism and other bigotries gone. Yet I see more and more alternative perspectives being muscled out, screamed at, stalked on Facebook and shamed into silence. Thus, instead of having holistic communities tackling issues together, we have an imbalanced treatment of societal ills that are never quite cured.

It is hard to do because so many different groups use different language to encompass, secure and protect the communal goals liberals aspire for with social justice. We get conflicting definitions for terms like social justice, humanism, Christian values, good business and many more terms that people hold dear.

For example, to the conservative social justice perspective, Welfare is a broken system that robs the poor of any sense of autonomy and self-reliance — personal strengths crucial to escaping poverty. Meanwhile, liberal social justice commonly sees Economic Development programs as anti-poor and wealthy-centric.

However, both Economic Development and Welfare are attempting to resolve the same problem: that poverty kills. That poverty robs people of opportunity, safety, friends and a sense of independence.

With race, there are similar differences in perspective. To conservative social justice, Affirmative Action is telling the middle class black student that (s)he is bound by events generations past, regardless of what their parents and grandparents went through and sacrificed to give them what they have. In short, Affirmative Action cuts out familial autonomy, legacy and opportunity. Affirmative Action, thus, tells the black student that (s)he'll always be inferior while
telling untargeted minorities that they aren't worth helping. Therefore, Affirmative Action is opposed by conservatives because it's racist, and supported by liberals because it's anti-racist.

Meanwhile, to the working class, both black and white, such policies feed interracial antagonism as both are only able to see the advantages they lack.

Blacks see whites with autonomy, and thus freedom, while whites see blacks with support and thus significance. Feeling trapped generations after emancipation is torturous. I can only imagine how it feels. Feeling trapped by poverty, unable to help your people, while your parallels are aided is embittering. I'm powerless as I bury my friends 10 years ahead of other Americans, regardless of their race.

What if we tried to avoid Social Justice terminology? Many people oppose the Social Justice framework because, for one, it indicates a population of Heroes, Villains and Victims. Victimhood as an identity is disempowering, Hero identities are self-serving, and Villain identities are assigned, not adopted. Unfortunately, such assessments are typically made far away from Social Justice crowds, though by people with similar focuses. Thus, whenever the concept of Social Justice as an oppressive construct is raised, it tends to get labeled as racist and bigoted without further thought.

THE KANSAS CITY STAR.

DECEMBER 15, 2015

Lewis Diuguid: America must make a conscious effort to turn away from divisiveness and see the humanity in others

‘Othering’ is part of the problem

Politics of the U.S. is filled with too much division
Shared stories would create a greater sense of togetherness

BY LEWIS DIUGUID
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John A. Powell helped a Kansas City audience understand more clearly how a presidential candidate like Donald Trump is getting so much political traction being divisive and why some people continue to be enraged by everything President Barack Obama does.

Powell said at the Kauffman Foundation that each situation involves what he calls “othering” or people’s sense of belonging. Powell, an internationally recognized expert on civil rights, human relations and civil liberties, didn’t use any of the presidential candidates’ names.

But the audience of more than 200 people could easily infer from his Monday night lecture sponsored by Communities Creating Opportunity and the REACH Healthcare Foundation that he was trying to explain why Trump’s poll numbers have stayed high despite Trump denigrating women, Latinos, blacks and Muslims. It’s easy for candidates today to capitalize on the fear and anxiety a lot of people are feeling as the nation’s demographics continue to rapidly change.

“For many people it’s quite scary,” said Powell, executive director of the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society and professor of law and African American studies and ethnic studies at the University of California-Berkeley. Some candidates are tapping into that fear to defy the political gravity that has caused other hopefuls to crash and burn.

Powell explained that candidates, including Barry Goldwater, Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan have used race and a sense of “other” to further their presidential hopes. The wealthiest elite in America continue to use race and ethnicity to separate whites from people of color.

It’s why some people refuse to accept Obama being in the first African American president. To many African Americans, Obama symbolizes a belonging in this country, Powell said.

But to many whites, “he’s not really an American.” It’s why people refused to accept that Obama was born in the U.S. even after Obama made his birth certificate public. They hated him because of his controversial Christian minister,
the Rev. Jeremiah Wright, but then accuse the president of being Muslim. “Most Americans are deeply obsessed with race,” Powell said.

“What they’re really saying is to be an American is to be white,” Powell said. “When we ‘other’ people we actually define ourselves.”

“Othering” includes people of different ability, sexuality, class, gender, race, skin tone, ethnicity, age and religion.

“We are questioning their belonging,” said Powell, whose used PowerPoint slides to help illustrate his lecture. “We are questioning their humanity. They are not like us. They are not like me.”

Powell conducted workshops and spoke to other Kansas City area groups this week, including area foundations and the Chamber of Commerce of Greater Kansas City. That’s important. Foundations will need to better understand the needs of minority communities so they can provide targeted funding.

The chamber can use Powell’s guidance as it continues its Urban Neighborhood Initiative designed to pump new economic vitality into neighborhoods running from 18th to 52nd streets and from Troost to Prospect avenues. That is to include starting a new charter school.

Powell’s lecture Monday was the day before Merriam-Webster Inc. named the suffix, -ism, as its 2015 Word of the Year. The top ranking -isms include socialism, fascism, terrorism, racism, feminism, communism, and capitalism, which have all made their way into the 2016 presidential campaign.

Powell used the 1857 Dred Scott Supreme Court decision, saying blacks whether slaves or free could not be American citizens. He said blacks because of race are the “infinite other.” Subconsciously, people take in thousands of images through the news media, reporting on blacks being involved in crimes.

Consciously people say they look past the race of individuals. But their subconscious isn’t as disciplined. Images of African Americans and crime surface causing race to negatively affect individuals’ decisions in hiring, housing, education and law enforcement, Powell said. He added that folks who self-identify as liberals tend to be more affected by subconscious bias.

Subconscious bias also helps explain why police, who are mostly white, have been “primed to associate crime and violence with blacks.”
That association has surfaced in the last year with many unarmed African Americans, including Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, Walter Scott and Eric Garner being killed by white police officers. People’s humanity has been diminished to where they are not seen as human. “The black community is being traumatized by the state,” he said.

The Black Lives Matter movement and the black student protests on college campuses like the University of Missouri-Columbia have become ways to humanize and give a voice to people who had been viewed as the “other.” Powell said he understands the anger of people who have been traumatized and oppressed.

“Anger is not the problem,” Powell said. “Rioting is not the most productive response, but it’s better than being asleep.

“We should all be indignant when a life is taken. If I were white I would be even more indignant. What the police are physically saying is we are doing this for you.

“White people should say, ‘Not in my name.’”

Powell urged the audience see the humanity in others. It’s done through people spending time together, sharing stories so everyone can gain a sense of community and togetherness from folks with whom they thought they had nothing in common.

It could be as simple as asking people who are homeless or ex-offenders what vegetables they like, he said.

Powell said there has to be a conscious effort to create a space that makes others feel like they belong. In addition to stories, that can include shared pictures, music and events. It’s about expanding the circle of humanity to be more inclusive. It’s also about building a society that doesn’t structurally exclude people with disabilities — like putting in an escalator when an elevator is needed for people using wheelchairs. “The strategies we use for people has to be different,” Powell said.

People also need to pull away from the political push toward white nationalism. He urged people to temper their anger with compassion for others.

“We don’t want to practice reverse ‘othering,’” Powell said.
Andy Blunt says there is no conflict between his lobbying and running his father's campaign

Dec. 15 • By Chuck Raasch

WASHINGTON • Andy Blunt said Tuesday he sees no conflict of interest between his lobbying in Jefferson City and managing his father's Senate campaign, and said that Roy Blunt's likely 2016 opponent, Secretary of State Jason Kander, had conflicts of interest of his own.

"I am a son who loves my father and helps his political campaign," Andy Blunt said in a telephone interview with the Post-Dispatch. "I lobby in the state of Missouri, not the United States Congress, and there is a clear distinction."

He added: "Roy Blunt isn't a state lawmaker and doesn't weigh in on state issues."

Asked if he and his father had discussed establishing a wall between his lobbying and the campaign, Andy Blunt responded: "I have always taken the approach that I don't talk to my father about my clients. And so there is really no wall discussion to be had, because the initial conversation never happens."

He said Democrats were attacking him because "they have nothing else to talk about."

"They know where their candidates stand on the issues... is contrary to that of Missourians," he said. "You run out of strategy in a situation like that rather quickly."

Democrats have criticized Andy Blunt for running his father's campaign while simultaneously representing the University of Missouri after recent campus unrest there and for a recently announced contract in which Blunt on Jan. 1 will be executive director of the Missouri Cable Telecommunications Association.

Chris Hayden, a spokesman for the state Democratic Party, said the latter was an apparent conflict of interest because Sen. Blunt serves on the Senate Commerce Committee and a subcommittee that oversees cable.

Hayden has also criticized Andy Blunt for representing Exelon, which is potentially liable for cleanup costs of radioactive waste at the West Lake Landfill. "His father is involved in the situation on the federal level," Hayden said, "which pits father and son/campaign manager on opposite sides of an extremely important issue with public health ramifications in Missouri."

The Blunt campaign would not make Sen. Blunt available for an interview on this topic. But Andy Blunt said Jefferson City and Washington, D.C., are two different universes, and that Missourians understand the
"I think if you surveyed the state of Missouri, that there are a number of issues that are much more significant in their minds than what Roy Blunt's children do for a living, or what Jason Kander's family does for a living," Andy Blunt said.

Andy Blunt said Democrats "don't see their own hypocrisy.

"When Jason Kander was in the legislature and was a member — a dues-paying member — in the Missouri Trial Attorney Association, he voted on every tort reform piece of legislation that was brought before the body. I mean you don't see us out there (criticizing Kander on that point). He is going to have to decide what is a conflict here, and what is not."

Abe Rakov, Kander's campaign spokesman, said that "Andy Blunt has 35 lobbying clients, all of which currently present potential conflicts of interest with his role running Sen. Blunt's campaign."

"Comparing Andy Blunt's scheme to get personally wealthy by using his father's connections in Washington and Missouri to Jason Kander paying $150 a year to be a member of a trade organization is absurd," Rakov said.

Andy Blunt said he believed he gets lobbying work because of his firm's and his colleagues' reputations of doing "great work."

When it hired Blunt's firm, the Missouri Cable Television Association described Andy Blunt as "one of the brightest young lawyer/lobbyists in Jefferson City" and a "respected strategist and tactician of integrity."

Questions about Sen. Blunt's family's lobbying have been previously raised. His wife, Abigail, is a top lobbyist for Kraft Food Groups in the nation's capital. She states on her lobbyist disclosure forms that she does not lobby the Senate, where her husband is a member of Republican leadership.

Another son, former Missouri Gov. Matt Blunt, is the president of the American Automotive Policy Council, which has wide interest in all areas of federal policy, including trade. When a question about currency manipulation — which automakers are keenly interested in — came up during a vote over a Pacific Rim trade deal, both Matt Blunt and his father said they did not discuss business.

Stanley Brand, an attorney and campaign ethics expert, said he saw no conflict in Andy Blunt running his father's campaign.

"If you went down to K Street in Washington, you'd find scores" of federal lobbyists involved in federal campaigns, he said. The fact that Andy Blunt lobbies only on the state level "makes a big difference," Brand said.

But Craig Holman, a government affairs lobbyist for Public Citizen, a non-profit watchdog group on campaign spending and ethics, said even the appearance of a conflict of interest is important in the nexus between elected office, campaign spending and lobbying. He said that over the past decade, he has documented about 25 senators who have family members as lobbyists, and Roy Blunt has the most.

"While it is not uncommon for lobbyists to be part of a lawmaker's campaign staff, or for family members of a lawmaker to be registered lobbyists, the Blunts are deeper into these conflicts of interest than any other family on Capitol Hill," Holman said.

He argued that issues that are important in Jefferson City are probably important in Washington, too. "Andy's ties to the cable industry lobby association raises concerns both about undue influence on behalf of the industry, which is the greatest concern, as well as the potential for self-dealing when it comes to Andy
directing Sen. Blunt's campaign expenditures," he said.

Andy Blunt rejected that claim, saying multiple people on multiple campaigns would make Missouri advertising decisions in 2016 and his position with the association would affect none of them. "All political candidates in Missouri are going to run advertising on cable TV, both Democrats and Republicans," he said. "They always have, always will."

**MISSOURIAN**

MU researchers on way to create biodegradable screens for electronics

YUAN YUAN, 13 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — **Your cell phone may one day become fully biodegradable. MU researchers have recently developed a potentially biodegradable screen layer for cell phones and other electronic devices such as televisions and computers.**

"People have shown that different components can be biodegradable, but the active layer so far was not shown to be biodegradable," said Suchi Guha, an MU physics professor who led the research. "That’s what we showed."

The active layer is a light-emitting layer sandwiched between two electrodes to make organic displays, or OLED displays, for organic electronics. The structure of an organic display is different from that of a liquid crystal display, which is widely used in current cell phone, television and computer screens.

The newly developing organic displays have much lower power consumption, Guha said. The main problem with liquid crystal display is that users cannot see clear picture from different angles. Organic displays can solve the problem, and it can be thinner and more compact than liquid crystal displays, according to a 2014 journal from the International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications.
Guha’s team has been working mainly with organic electronics for many years. An example of organic electronics is the OLED television. For organic displays, the active material they used is made out of polymers.

Despite the advantages an organic display has, the problem remains: Its active layer, currently made of organic polymers, is not biodegradable. To solve this problem, Guha's team collaborated with a group from Brazil studying peptide nanostructures a few years ago.

"Peptides are completely biodegradable," Guha said.

The two groups successfully created peptide nanotubes, formed by a specific type of small and self-assembled peptide molecule, that could be used someday as the active layer in a biodegradable screen.

To achieve biodegradability, the teams aligned the peptide nanotubes and coded them with the organic polymers. "We used the nanostructures as scaffolds or templates," Guha said.

A layer made of polymer is not degradable, but with peptide nanotubes as scaffolds, less polymer volume is needed. "Eventually we can get up to about 80 or 85 percent biodegradability," Guha said.

"Our work has centered only around the active layer, which has potential application in displays," Guha said. "Ideally, you would like all the components such as the electrodes, substrates on which the electronics is embedded, to be also degradable."

Discarded cell phones, along with other castoff electronic devices, make up an important part of hazardous waste called electronic waste, or e-waste.

In 2014, 206 tons of discarded electronics were collected from the city of Columbia, said Stanley Fredrick, president of Mid-MO Recycling. The business helps with the electronics section of household hazardous waste collection from the city.
E-waste is not biodegradable and can cause both environmental and health problems. Health risks connected to e-waste may result from direct contact with harmful materials such as lead, cadmium and chromium, from inhalation of toxic fumes and from accumulation of chemicals in soil, water and food, according to the World Health Organization.

Eventually the waste will end up in the landfills, bringing toxic materials with them, Guha said.

According to a 2011 statistic by Recon Analytics, Americans replaced their cell phones more often than people from 13 other countries included in the survey. On average, Americans replaced mobile devices after 21.7 months.

Although the team’s work has the potential to reduce the environmental impact of consumer electronics, more tests and improvements are needed before it can enter the market, Guha said.

A full-color screen used in electronic devices needs all three colors — blue, red and green light-emitting polymers. Her team has only worked on blue light and need to show similar success in red and green light.

"Right now, we are still struggling to get high efficiency of the blue light-emitting," Guha said. "For that, you really need the nanostructures to be aligned."
MU plant sciences professor says farmers can be more efficient

Watch story: [http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=31912&zone=2,5&categories=2,5](http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=31912&zone=2,5&categories=2,5)

COLUMBIA - **One MU plant science professor says crop rotation of soybeans and corn can increase yields.**

However, he said many farmers in Missouri aren't doing that.

"When they make the decision on what to plant, they need to understand that if they plant soybean after soybean, they're going to lower their yield potential," Bill Wiebold said.

Wiebold presented his research from over 20 years on rotation and tillage at the MU Crop Management Conference Dec. 15.

Wiebold found soybean yields drop by nine percent when they are not rotated with corn. He said a simple change like rotating crops each year can have a big effect.

"That's nine percent yield without doing very much of anything," Wiebold said.

In Missouri, farmers plant three million acres of corn and about five and a half million acres of soybeans each year. Wiebold said this is the highest ratio of soybean to corn meaning many farmers are not rotating crops each year.

He said if farmers rotate crops and increase yields, everyone benefits.

"What we want are farmers that are doing well, making money, making profit, buying things in their local community and that really helps the economy," Wiebold said.

Wiebold also said higher yields could result in lower cost for soybeans and corn for consumers, which he thinks is a positive for crop rotation.