Plastics chemical BPA can make male turtles act like females

Generated from News Bureau press release: BPA Can Disrupt Painted Turtles’ Brain Development Could be a Population Health Concern

Scientists are trying to understand how a chemical used in many common consumer products -- think water bottles or food containers -- could be having a strange effect on turtles: making male turtles act more like females. The research team from the University of Missouri previously found evidence that Bisphenol A (BPA), which finds its way in many rivers and streams, could alter sexual function in turtles, with males even developing female sex organs.

Beyond the physiological changes, the team is zeroing in on how this chemical appears to be altering turtle behavior as well, impacting their mating patterns and navigation. The concern is that this could ultimately result in turtle population decline.

“Previously, our research team found that BPA and ethinyl estradiol (EE2), a hormone found in birth control pills, could ‘sex-reverse’ turtles from males to females,” Cheryl Rosenfeld, an associate professor of biomedical sciences in the MU College of Veterinary Medicine and an investigator in the Bond Life Sciences Center, said in a press release.

How does this happen? She explains: “Painted turtles and other reptiles lack sex chromosomes. The gender of painted turtles and other reptiles is determined by the incubation temperature of the egg during development.”

Past studies have revealed that exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals like BPA can “override incubation temperature,” Rosenfeld said, effectively switching the sex of baby turtles from male to female.

The new study looks at how BPA can re-wire a male turtle’s brain to operate in more feminine ways.

To conduct the research, the team applied a liquid form of BPA and EE2 to painted turtle eggs and incubated eggs that were kept at the temperature that usually leads to the birth of males. The team examined the baby turtles five months after they hatched, giving them spatial navigation tests.

Each turtle was randomly assigned one of four food containers, with only one actually holding food. The theory was that males exposed to the chemicals would have slightly improved
navigation skills – more like typical females of the species. Yes, essentially, female painted turtles are better at directions.

The researchers found the chemical-exposed males did indeed show improved spatial navigational learning and memory, with these turtles doing a better job of navigating the maze leading to the appropriate food container.

“Previous studies have found that female turtles are much more adept at spatial navigation – think of female sea turtles that return many years later to the same beaches where they hatched to lay their own eggs,” Rosenfeld said. “We found that developmental exposure to BPA essentially overrides the brain development of male turtles as indicated by the enhanced navigational ability of the turtles we studied. While improved spatial navigation might be considered a good thing, it also may suggest that when they reach adulthood male turtles will not exhibit courtship behaviors needed to attract a mate and reproduce, which could result in dramatic population declines.”

This is the first study of its kind to show that these chemicals impact turtles’ brains in addition to their physiology. It’s also just the latest example of the unexpected impact humankind can have on the ecosystem and Earth’s environment at large.

Some studies have found evidence that BPA could raise the risk of a number of health issues in humans, including hormonal problems and prostate cancer. BPA was removed from baby bottles and sippy cups years ago amid concerns about its possible impact on infants, but it is still found in the packaging of many popular food products. The FDA says it is “safe for its approved uses.”

More students at SEMO, and university credits new programs, marketing
By Ashley Jost St. Louis Post-Dispatch

CAPE GIRARDEAU, Mo. • It could be a recent marketing push, a relatively new president or perhaps the fact that other state institutions aren’t faring as well, but Southeast Missouri State University appears to be flourishing with its sizable freshman class this fall.

The number of first-year students was bolstered by a little more than 10 percent compared to fall 2015 when classes started last week on the Cape Girardeau campus. Overall enrollment increased by just more than 1 percent.
SEMO President Carlos Vargas affectionately calls it “the perfect storm” of a major rebranding effort, innovative teaching, and increased, targeted marketing to areas like St. Louis and parts of Illinois.

Maybe he’s right. The freshman class has 20 percent more students from St. Louis in it than the year before. Illinois numbers have grown by almost as much. The school’s total enrollment is 11,536.

“Students, alumni and parents are increasingly telling us that this isn’t a second- or third-option school. This is the school to consider first,” Vargas said.

**Meanwhile, the freshman class has shrunk at other institutions. The University of Missouri-Columbia reported an almost 8 percent decline in enrollment at the start of classes last week. The largest hit was to the freshman class, which is the smallest the campus has seen in almost a decade.**

Mizzou is recovering from a series of protests last fall centered largely around racial tension on campus. At the peak of the student-led protests, the school’s top two leaders resigned.

Katie Matthias, from St. Louis, transferred to SEMO from Mizzou for reasons unrelated to the protests last fall. She never felt unsafe or concerned, but she did worry she was getting lost in the crowd at the flagship institution.

Her largest class at Mizzou was several hundred students in a lecture hall. At SEMO, her largest class is about 30 students. She’s a nursing major, and she’s already a fan of her new, smaller campus home.

“I’ve made more friends here in one week than I did at nine months at Mizzou,” she said.

Deborah Below, vice president for enrollment and dean of students at SEMO, said the campus was seeing an increase in applications by September of last year, well before events on Mizzou’s campus.
Officials boast a 24 percent increase in African-American students, and a more than 30 percent increase in Hispanic students at SEMO compared to last fall.

Mizzou, in contrast, has seen an almost 10 percent decline in African-Americans, as its total student enrollment also dips. Missouri State University and the Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla show nearly flat enrollment thus far. The University of Missouri-St. Louis is down 3.5 percent overall, with 14 percent fewer freshmen. Other state institutions have yet to report figures.

Meanwhile, Harris-Stowe State University is, like SEMO, seeing an uptick, with a surge of nearly 150 transfer and freshman students.

New energy

For years, state schools have worried about maintaining their market share of high school graduates. That prompted SEMO’s rebranding, which happened around the same time Missouri State University and Truman State University did the same thing.

The university unveiled new signs, literature and online marketing during early 2015. Administrators hired an Ohio-based marketing company to help with the mailers for prospective students as well as signs that are still up across campus.

“Students latched on to it,” Below said. “We have the highest retention rate for first-year students ever because of institutional pride.”

Students also are latching on to the campus president, who joined SEMO in July 2015. Vargas, who has a doctorate in physics and aerospace science from the University of Michigan, has a long career in higher education, most recently as acting president of Kutztown University of Pennsylvania.

The campus’s new slogan, “will to do,” caught on in particular after students made T-shirts that said, “#WillToVargas,” featuring the president’s face.
“The energy that he has brought to the campus has really played a part in everything,” she said.

That sentiment is echoed by students who recount stories of the president attending events, jumping into dodgeball games and even grabbing a bite to eat with student groups.

“Dr. Vargas embodies everything that Southeast Missouri is about,” said Dylan Kennedy, vice president of the student government. “He’ll meet you once and remember your name a week later, and that really makes it feel like a family, which is what this is to me.”

During protests at Mizzou, students led a campus protest at SEMO, too, and Vargas walked to the student gathering to hear their concerns, graduate student Harmon Mahli said.

Vargas says staying close with students helps him keep a finger on the pulse of what they need.

“They need to know that we don’t just see them as individuals who come here, get a degree and leave,” he said. “They tell us what we’re doing right and what they want to see. That approach is effective, except that very often universities don’t take the time to let students know that they care what they’re thinking.”

**Focused on innovation**

The programs at SEMO are the bread and butter of the university, and what Vargas likes to point to as a reason the institution is seeing gains in students.

With particular emphases in cybersecurity and education, along with new degrees in unmanned aircraft systems — or drones — and geographic information science, the school is focused on innovation, Vargas said.

“We hear from industries that they want to have talent that’s developed here, and that they find that very often when they import someone from another region, they don’t stay long,” Vargas said.
He goes to business organizations often to talk about these issues. “I often hear higher education leaders say, ‘You come to us and tell us what you need,’ but that’s insulting. We need to go to them and ask how we can help.”

But the school also has room for improvement, at least based on college rankings. U.S. News and World Report’s list of the best regional public universities in the Midwest place SEMO at 30th. Truman State tops that list, with Missouri State, Central Missouri State University and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville also ranking higher than SEMO.

But like college leaders at many schools, officials at SEMO say that’s just one measure. Vargas is confident in the school’s direction.

Looking toward next year, Vargas said he hopes to “stay the course” without getting complacent.

“We’re going to continue to invest,” he said. “We’re creating new programs and strengthening the ones that we have. We’re always asking what it takes to the next level, and then we go after it.”
Enrollment up at other Missouri universities as MU drops

Watch the story: http://mms.tveys.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=3a18e088-b240-4260-bca4-34b816e0486d

Watch the story: http://mms.tveys.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=7e4fde05-bf63-455e-a81a-530800a0d9f6

While the University of Missouri is dealing with a sharp drop in enrollment this fall, many other four-year universities in the state reported an increase in the number of students as classes resumed.

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA, MO. - While the University of Missouri is dealing with a sharp drop in enrollment this fall, many other four-year universities in the state reported an increase in the number of students as classes resumed.

After protests disrupted the University of Missouri's Columbia campus last fall, the incoming freshman class for this academic year shrunk by almost one-quarter and first-day student numbers were down more than 6 percent.
Missouri State University, Missouri-Kansas City, Missouri University of Science and Technology, Southeast Missouri in Rolla, Harris-Stowe State University and Missouri Southern State University all reported this week that they expected an increase in enrollment this year, The Columbia Daily Tribune reports (http://bit.ly/2bYFDOM).

Missouri State University in Springfield, for example, said this week the number of transferring students increased by 108 and first-day enrollment was up almost 4 percent to more than 21,000. The number of incoming freshmen declined slightly, but retention rates have climbed, President Clif Smart said in a news release.

"As those students return to campus, it has bolstered our total enrollment," he said. "We're excited that first time college student enrollment is mostly steady and we are continuing to increase the number of transfer students."

The University of Missouri reported 32,777 students were enrolled as classes began last Monday, down 2,373 from August 2015, and including 1,412 fewer first-time college students.

The enrollment drop was attributed in part to campus protests over race relations last fall, which eventually led to the resignations of System President Tim Wolfe and campus Chancellor Bowen Loftin. The university also cited declining high school graduation totals, increased admissions at the University of Illinois and more aggressive recruiting by other states.

Official enrollment totals are established for all schools in late September and early October. Missouri-Kansas City and Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla reported incomplete figures as classes began Monday, although both campuses anticipate growth. The first-day freshman class at Missouri-Kansas City was 1,151, 126 more than the official freshman enrollment for fall 2015. On the Rolla campus, the first-day enrollment total of 8,640 was the largest in school history.

Harris Stowe State University in St. Louis reported 600 incoming freshmen, 32.7 percent more than last year, while Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau reported a 10.6 percent increase in its freshman class, to 1,875 students.

Missouri Southern State University in Joplin could not provide first-day comparisons, spokesman Scott Meeker said, but first-day enrollment Monday was up almost 4 percent over official enrollment for fall 2015.
Other Missouri universities gain enrollment as MU numbers drop

By Rudi Keller

Saturday, August 27, 2016 at 12:00 am

Predictions of a sharp decline in University of Missouri enrollment came true this week as the freshman class shrank by almost one-quarter and first-day student numbers declined by more than 6 percent.

Other Missouri public four-year universities that reported first day attendance, meanwhile, bragged in news releases about breaking records. At Missouri State University in Springfield, the number of transferring students grew by 108 and first-day enrollment expanded by almost 4 percent to more than 21,000.

The number of incoming freshmen declined slightly, but retention rates have climbed, Missouri State President Clif Smart said in a news release. “As those students return to campus, it has bolstered our total enrollment,” he said. “We’re excited that first time college student enrollment is mostly steady and we are continuing to increase the number of transfer students.”

MU reported 32,777 students were enrolled Monday, down 2,373 from August 2015. There are 1,412 fewer first-time college students, a figure that includes a 19 percent decline in the number of students with an ACT score of 30 or higher and 13.9 percent fewer “Bright Flight” scholarship recipients.

Because those declines were smaller than the overall loss of freshmen, MU’s mean ACT score of 26 did not change.

That statistic was also aided by an increase in the number of Chancellor’s Scholars, students with an ACT of 31 or greater who also graduated in the top 10 percent of their high school class.

“We have been pleased in the last several years of an upward trend of high-achieving students that are choosing to come to Mizzou,” spokesman Christian Basi said Friday.

Campus protests over race relations put MU under international media scrutiny last fall at the same time internal administrative turmoil soured relations on campus and with the UM system administration.
The hit to MU’s reputation became apparent in donations during November and December and as the number of applications fell off from previous years.

The university blamed declining high school graduation totals, increased admissions at the University of Illinois and more aggressive recruiting by other states, as well as the on-campus turmoil, for the projected loss of enrollment. Illinois on Monday reported a first-day freshman enrollment increase of 35 students.

UMKC and Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla reported incomplete figures, but both campuses anticipate growth. The first-day freshman class at UMKC was 1,151, 126 more than the official freshman enrollment for fall 2015. On the Rolla campus, the first-day enrollment total of 8,640 was the largest in school history.

Of the Missouri four-year public universities reporting first day enrollment, Harris Stowe State University in St. Louis reported 600 incoming freshmen, 32.7 percent more than last year. Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau reported a 10.6 percent increase in its freshman class, to 1,875 students.

“This year’s surging beginning freshman class includes a record number of Illinois students,” Southeast said in a news release.

Official enrollment totals are established for all schools in late September and early October. Missouri Southern State University in Joplin could not provide first-day comparisons, spokesman Scott Meeker said, but first-day enrollment Monday was up almost 4 percent over official enrollment for fall 2015.

The news releases from Southeast and other schools also touted a more diverse student body this year. Southeast reported a 24 percent increase in black freshmen enrollment and a 33 percent increase in first-time Hispanic students. Missouri S&T also boasted records for female, minority and underrepresented groups.

The Columbia campus will not be more diverse this fall because enrollment declined among minority and international students at about the same rate as the campus as a whole.

There will be 5,117 minority students at MU, about 15.6 percent of the total, and 2,265 international students, about 6.9 percent of all students.
MU Enrollment Down 2,200, A Result of Attacks on Free Speech


Mizzou Slaughtered Six Beagles After Research Project

A quartet of professors at the University of Missouri-Columbia purposefully blinded six beagles — and then killed them after the research they were conducting failed to heal their wounded corneas.

That's according to a paper published in the 2016 Journal of Veterinary Ophthalmology, which details the ineffective treatment and the dogs' untimely end. The pups were just nine to twelve months at the time they endured the experiment and then were killed.

Dan Kolde is a St. Louis-based attorney for the Beagle Freedom Project, which seeks to rescue and protect the dogs, who are frequently used in scientific research. Even beyond his horror at the study, he says he's horrified that the university failed to work with his group to rehome the dogs.

"We would have found them homes," he says. "The Beagle Freedom Project would have happily taken these dogs."

Mary Jo Banken, a spokeswoman for the university, defended the project, which sought to explore a particular type of treatment for corneal ulcers.
"Without animal research, we would not be able to answer some of the most important medical questions," she told the *RFT* in an emailed statement. "Researchers at the University of Missouri are working to develop painless or non-invasive treatments for corneal injuries to the eyes of people and dogs, including search and rescue dogs and other service animals. Common injuries to the cornea can include force trauma, chronic defects and surgical procedures, and can lead to blindness. Since dogs share similar eye characteristics with people, they are ideal candidates for corneal studies, and veterinarians have provided vital information to physicians and veterinarians treating corneal injuries – which ultimately benefit other dogs, animals and humans, including many of our U.S. veterans who have sustained corneal injuries while defending our country."

The studies, she said, were performed in accordance with the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology and approved by the MU Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. "The animals were treated humanely and every effort was made to ensure dogs were as comfortable as possible during the tests to study the effectiveness of the new drug treatment."

Banken did not respond to a follow-up question asking for a second time why the beagles couldn't be rehomed.

And that's not Kolde's only question. He wonders about the very design of the study. The professors knew the study was bound to fail, he notes. The sample size was just too small.

That's by their own admission. As the study notes, "Prior to study initiation, a power analysis was performed and it was determined that 12 animals per group would be required to detect a clinically significant difference in healing rates." Yet, the professors write, "a study size of 24 dogs was deemed impractical given concerns of animal resources for this pilot study." They went ahead with six — and then got a published paper out of it.

Kolde had previously filed a lawsuit against Mizzou on behalf of the Beagle Freedom Project, seeking records relating to the university's care of beagles. The non-profit sought basic records that Mizzou is required by law to maintain. Yet the university sought to charge it $82,222 — as much as $7 a page.

The suit is still pending.
Hawley should 'resign immediately,' will lose tenure if he wins election, Foley writes

By Rudi Keller

Sunday, August 28, 2016 at 12:00 am

Josh Hawley’s leave from the University of Missouri, an obsession of vanquished primary foe Kurt Schaefer, will continue until Nov. 8, after which he must return to work or resign.

Hawley’s unpaid leave, originally granted through Wednesday, was extended for 69 days on Aug. 10 by interim Chancellor Hank Foley. Hawley asked for an extension after winning the Aug. 2 Republican primary for attorney general. Hawley has been an associate professor of law since 2011 and was granted tenure contingent upon returning to work after the primary.

“You will be expected to return to work on November 9, 2016,” Foley wrote in an email to Hawley to cover the chance that he will lose to Democratic nominee Teresa Hensley.

According to university’s rules, Foley added, Hawley must resign his faculty appointment if he wins.

“Actually, if you win, I expect you to resign immediately so that you can begin your transition into the AG’s office and your leave of absence will not be renewed again,” Foley wrote. “Lastly, upon resignation of your faculty position, you will forfeit the tenure that was promised to you upon your return to MU.”

Hawley’s campaign did not respond to requests for comment. Hensley had no comment, campaign manager David Woodruff wrote in an email.

State Sen. Kurt Schaefer of Columbia worked in the spring of 2015 to have the university alter its leave policy to make it more difficult for Hawley to run. The UM Board of Curators responded by requiring university employees to seek leave or resign when they become candidates instead of waiting until they formally file for office.

The change, however, did not take effect until April 1 and did not cover Hawley’s candidacy.

A January letter from former UM System President Tim Wolfe accused Schaefer of political pressure tactics intended to force the rule change. A watchdog group that generally targets
Democrats, the Foundation for Accountability and Civic Trust, filed a complaint with the Missouri Ethics Commission, citing Wolfe’s letter to allege Schaefer illegally threatened university funding. The commission dismissed the complaint.

Hawley is not listed on the School of Law’s fall or spring course schedules. His duties, if he loses, were not spelled out in Foley’s email. Hawley will not be idle if he returns to MU, spokesman Christian Basi wrote in an email.

“The schedule is very fluid and would probably change if he comes back to the university after his unpaid leave expires,” he wrote.

New MU system could prevent older people from falling

Generated from News bureau press release: Sensor Systems Identify Senior Citizens at Risk of Falling Within Three Weeks

COLUMBIA - Researchers at MU Sinclair School of Nursing and College of Engineering have come up with a way to predict when older people might fall and potentially stop it before it happens.

Associate professor at the nursing school, Lorraine Phillips, said falling among older people is a constant possibility.

“We were interested in preventing falls among older adults, and approximately one in three people over the age of 65 will fall every year, and of those, 20-30 percent sustain serious injuries such as head injuries or fractured hips, arms,” Phillips said.

The sensory system will allow for people to maintain their privacy also, while also being monitored.

“We’re able to extract effectively three dimensional silhouettes so we can see peoples’ faces. We can’t see what their hair looks like. We can’t see if they have makeup on or what kind of cloths
they’re wearing. All we can see is the shape,” professor in MU’s electrical and computer engineering department, Marjorie Skubic, said.

The new sensory system will monitor how fast people walk and how long their strides are.

If either of those factors change, the system can send an alert, and someone might be able to prevent the fall before it can happen.

“To prevent falls initially we’d like to be able to see when someone’s gait changes or their walking parameters change. So if their stride length changes or if their walking speed changes, then were able to know in advance someone might fall,” Phillips said.

While the main goal is to prevent falls, the sensory system will also be able to show if someone has fallen along with how they fell.

MU Developing Technology to Prevent Senior Citizens from Falling

Watch the story: http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=9db7341a-102b-4c92-bc9c-a06b82d5cebd
MU Welcomes New Vice Provost for Enrollment Management


MISSOURIAN

MU to host open forums on proposed freedom of expression policy
RUTH SERVEN, Aug 26, 2016

COLUMBIA — Students, faculty and staff will get the chance to sound off about MU’s new proposed freedom of expression policy in upcoming forums.

In May, an MU committee recommended the Policy on Use of University Facilities and Grounds. The proposed policy attempts to pull together University of Missouri System and MU codes of conduct into one policy that defines what protesters can and cannot do on campus.

The ad hoc committee was created in January by MU Faculty Council Chair Ben Trachtenberg and Interim Chancellor Hank Foley. The committee will recommend ways for the university to regulate public spaces on campus while protecting safety and freedom of speech and how the university can resolve future conflict over those spaces, according to the committee's website.
Before the policy can be adopted, it must be approved by Foley. However, the public will have a chance to weigh in on the proposed changes at two forums. The first will be held at 3 p.m. Tuesday at the Leadership Auditorium in the MU Student Center, and the second on Sept. 19.

Foley said in a Thursday news release that new rules were proposed to "recommend how public spaces can be regulated on campus in a way that protects safety, free inquiry and free expression as well as to suggest how the university might resolve future conflicts concerning the use of public space on campus."

For example, under the proposed policy, camping wouldn't be allowed on university grounds. Protesters wouldn't be able to occupy buildings after they close. They also wouldn't be able to disturb or interfere with university lectures, meetings, instruction or public events.

Another part of the policy recommends the university ban the use of sound amplification devices, such as a megaphone.

If the policy had been in place last fall, Jonathan Butler wouldn't have been able to lead rallies with his megaphone. Supporters of student activist group Concerned Student 1950 wouldn't have been allowed to pitch tents on Mel Carnahan Quadrangle. Concerned Student 1950 and the Forum on Graduate Rights wouldn't have been allowed to march through and hold demonstrations in Jesse Hall, the Student Center or Memorial Union.

Public universities are legally bound to uphold students' right to free speech, but in practice, that can get murky. In its 2016 report, the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education found that 49.3 percent of 440 public and private institutions surveyed have policies that substantially prohibit protected speech.

MU has a "yellow light" rating from FIRE, for speech codes that are ambiguous. In the past year, FIRE has issued letters to MU over concerns about the MU Police Department's email requesting reports of hurtful speech and MU's rejection of MU NORML T-shirts that featured the MU name and a marijuana leaf.
Any changes to system policies would have to be reviewed by the UM System General Counsel and adopted by the UM System Board of Curators.

Juvenile detention alternatives appear to be working

By Brittany Ruess

Sunday, August 28, 2016 at 12:00 am

Local efforts to derail the “school to prison pipeline” appear to be having an effect on how often minority youths enter the juvenile justice system.

The pipeline metaphor represents the national trend of youths entering the system as a result of school practices. Youths who land in juvenile detention are less likely to finish high school and more likely to end up in adult prisons later in life, said Clark Peters, a professor in the University of Missouri School of Social Work.

The relative rate index of referrals — a figure that shows how much more frequently minority youth are referred to the juvenile division than their white peers — has decreased since 2009. That year, minority youths were 7.7 times more likely to be referred to the system than their white peers. The index decreased in 2015 to 5.5.

“We’ve seen the number decrease, but we’re not where we want to be,” said Tara Eppy, superintendent of the Juvenile Justice Center in Columbia.

In recent years, the 13th Circuit Court’s juvenile division, which covers Boone and Callaway counties, has bolstered its detention alternatives.

A committee on disproportionate minority youth contact, consisting of juvenile officers, school officials and other community stakeholders, formed in 2011 to address the disproportionate representation of minority youths in the system. The committee has collaborated with schools and law enforcement to increase awareness of the issue.

Despite all the programs and education about disproportionality, said Mary Epping, courts administrator for the 13th Circuit, the committee has not been able to pinpoint why the number decreased. It wants to identify the cause and put more effort toward it.
Law enforcement accounted for 43 percent of the Boone County referrals in 2015, according to the juvenile division’s annual report. The figure was 71 percent in 2011.

School resource officers were the second most common referral source, with 19 percent, and school personnel and parents each made 6 percent of the referrals.

The 13th Circuit received grant funding in 2009 from the Annie E. Casey Foundation — an organization with a focus on disadvantaged children — to establish a Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative. Since 1992, the Casey Foundation has promoted such initiatives, designed to give youths options other than detainment while maintaining or improving public safety. A local initiative committee formed in December 2009 to identify detention alternatives for youths.

The initiative also made the detention stipulations stricter. Youths must be a threat to themselves or others, be unlikely to make a court appearance or have committed a serious offense warranting entry into the Juvenile Justice Center.

Delinquent youths have eight options if their behavior doesn’t warrant detainment, such as in cases of minor misdemeanor offenses, Epping said.

Previously, the primary option was in-home detention, using electronic monitoring, said Ruth McCluskey, juvenile officer for the 13th Circuit. That alternative was the second-most-used option for youths last year.

Conditional release, an alternative to detention, has remained the most popular option since 2013. The program allows youths in custody to be released on special conditions, which are typically stipulated in a contract, pending a meeting with a juvenile officer.

Other alternatives include shelter care, mental health placement, drug treatment and crisis intervention services in which therapists make home visits and assess family situations.

Juvenile officers use Missouri’s juvenile detention assessment, a tool designed to eliminate bias by an objectively determining whether youths should be detained.

Officers can use discretion and override the assessment result down to an alternative or release, Epping said. Many times, she said, an override is granted when a child is too young for detention.

“There’s still a human element” to determining detention, she said.

Juvenile officer detention decisions have remained consistent with the tool results, according to a juvenile division report.

If an officer took action consistent with the tool results, there was no override.

Among 55 black youths in detention last year, 49 had no override assessment results, four received a detention alternative, and two were released.
Lorenzo Lawson, executive director of the Youth Empowerment Zone, said he is optimistic about the steps being taken to address disproportionate contact with minority youths. Young black people have the “proverbial deck stacked against them” for two reasons, he said: their skin color and the fact that some live in poverty in single-parent homes surrounded by criminal activity.

The number of black youths 18 and younger living in Columbia Housing Authority public housing family sites is more than double the number of white youths of the same age range.

Lawson’s organization, which provides educational and employment support to youths, aims to divert children and adolescents from crime, he said.

**The new Family Access Center for Excellence of Boone County, or FACE, which opened earlier this month, is also expected to be a diversion tool to keep youths out of the juvenile justice system. The center, located at 105 E. Ash St., acts as a first stop for services. Case managers assess youths and families and direct them toward appropriate mental health, intervention, housing services and more.**

Columbia Public Schools implemented equity training to all schools, educating teachers about how to be aware of bias. The district has 13 certified trainers in equity, said Carla London, CPS director of student services.

The district is also in its second year of poverty training, which gives teachers a better picture of their students’ home lives and how that can affect classroom behavior, she said.

“These are efforts to examine ourselves, but we still have work to do,” London said.

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**New MU Program Aimed at Diversifying Campus**

MU becomes only SEC school with female athletic band director

COLUMBIA — Dr. Erin Cooper said it is "very overwhelming" to be named the first female director in Marching Mizzou history.

"It was very exciting to get that offer, and almost didn’t seem real that I was going to get to come work here and be part of the SEC," Cooper said.

She was named director of athletic bands at the University of Missouri on July 13. Cooper is the first female director in the program's history and the only current female director of athletic bands in the SEC.

Marching Mizzou, with more than 300 members, will be under new leadership for the first time since 2010.

Director of Athletic Bands Dr. Brad Snow left for the same position at Missouri State University, and Assistant Director of Bands Dr. Fuller Lyon left for his alma mater, the University of Tennessee, to be interim assistant director of bands.

Cooper was previously the director of bands at Southeastern Oklahoma University, a Division II college in Durant, Oklahoma. She also was previously a graduate assistant for the Million Dollar Band, the marching band of the Alabama Crimson Tide.

Cooper said she was first attracted to MU during Missouri’s match up with Alabama in 2012.

"I remember they parked our bus at the back of the tailgating parking lot, and I was really concerned," she said. "Like, you know, the fans aren’t really friendly and it isn’t as safe of an environment, and everyone was just so friendly and so welcoming, so excited to see us."

MU School of Music director Dr. Julia Gaines said Cooper was the obvious choice.
"She was our top candidate, so, the fact she’s a woman is just icing on the cake," Gaines said. "Band directing is very much a male-dominated field, so I’m thrilled we’re starting to slowly move in that direction. I’m not sure if this is indicative of women in the field. I think some of this is luck, but I love the fact we’re breaking that barrier."

Marching Mizzou drum major Sean Kraus, who was also on the selection committee, said Cooper was the most personable and experienced.

"She definitely connected with the students the most," Kraus said. "She was very, very positive, had a lot of energy, and the students just definitely felt that she was the best for such a leadership position as is, so, everybody’s very excited and very pleased with the outcome."

Ben Wilton, a member from 2010-14, said he was happy with the hire and looks forward to his sister, a freshman at MU, being able to share traditions while trading old and new memories.

"I’m excited for my little sister, personally, that she’s going to have a new director, kind of a new face of Marching Mizzou," Wilton said. "I think she’ll have a different experience than I had, which is kind of cool, that she’s kind of following in my footsteps, but she’ll have her own experience in general, so I think that's pretty cool."

Cooper said she wants to continue the band's "great traditions," such as their pre-game show and the Missouri Waltz.

"I hope we can continue to have exciting halftime shows and add to everything that's existed here and is already wonderful," she said. "Great things have been happening and I want to make sure that continues."

Marching Mizzou is expected to make its 2016 debut on Sept. 10 vs. Eastern Michigan.

Columbia College unveils bystander intervention program

EMILY SHEPHERD, 1 hr ago

COLUMBIA — Three college buddies were leaving a party. One volunteered to drive — but he was drunk, and the subsequent car crash killed his two friends.

That was one of several student-led scenarios presented as part of an orientation Friday for students new to Columbia College. "Choices," put on by the Elysium Players, Columbia
College's drama club, walked about 100 freshmen and transfer students through situations they might encounter as college students in Launer Auditorium. Other skit topics included sexual misconduct, day-to-day conflicts and sexual consent.

After the skits, students were introduced to Step UP!, a bystander intervention program. It is the first year for the program at Columbia College. The national program was put together at the University of Arizona in conjunction with the NCAA, said Molly Borgmeyer, the college's Title IX Coordinator. The program applies not only to dangerous situations such as drunken driving and sexual assault but also everyday conflicts.

"We liked that for our campus because it covered a lot of ground," Borgmeyer said. "My main goal is to create a safe and caring campus community.”

The program aims to educate students on how to intervene when the situation demands it. It suggests following five steps in deciding whether to intervene:

- Notice the event.
- Interpret it as a problem.
- Assume personal responsibility.
- Have the skills to intervene.
- Implement the help.

Although it is the first year for Step UP! training, it is the third year Columbia College has provided the Title IX presentation. Title IX protects people from discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance, according to the U.S. Department of Education website.

The college's Title IX Office and the Prevention Coalition hosted the orientation.
"I've seen a lot of similar things, but this presentation wasn't PG," Columbia College freshman Taylor Stewart said. "It was an adult conversation. We weren't being talked at — we were being talked to."

In the University of Missouri System, new undergraduates and graduate students are required to complete Not Anymore training. According to MU's Office for Civil Rights & Title IX website, the training is video-based and reviews topics such as sexual assault, consent, dating and domestic violence, stalking, and bystander intervention. Students need to get at least a 70 percent on a test with the program to complete it, though the test can be retaken.

The Step UP! program provides training for facilitators as well as presentation materials available online. Borgmeyer and about five others at Columbia College are trained facilitators.

"We set up this program to increase awareness but also to enlighten people that they can make a difference," Borgmeyer said. "It's not only up to administrators to do that."

After learning how to "step up," the students broke into small groups to discuss the skit topics and bystander intervention in greater detail.

"We all had basically the same responses to the scenarios, which gives me a lot of faith in their character and reinforces my decision to come to Columbia College," Columbia College freshman Maddie King said.

**MISSOURIAN**

Boone County residents have limited health care options after two carriers leave exchange

TAYLOR BLATCHFORD, Aug 26, 2016
COLUMBIA — There might only be one carrier option left for Boone County residents seeking health insurance through the government-run exchange in 2017.

Aetna, which operates under the name Coventry in Missouri, announced Aug. 15 that it would leave the government exchange in all but four states, although it will keep offering individual coverage off the exchange. UnitedHealth had previously announced in April that it would leave most states’ public exchanges.

Some people with those plans have been concerned that they’ll be immediately dropped from insurance coverage, but their current plans are still good until Dec. 31, said Kris Hickman, outreach and enrollment specialist for the Family Health Center, a local health care provider that serves uninsured and under-insured people.

As of right now, Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield is the only carrier that has said it will participate in the mid-Missouri insurance exchange next year. It only works with University Hospital and Clinics. Because of that, people who want to continue using the government-run exchange may only be able to use University Hospital and Clinics, whether or not that had been their previous provider.

The finalized list of carriers and plans won’t be released until October, Hickman said. Open enrollment for 2017 insurance begins Nov. 1.

Jeremy Milarsky, a program manager for Columbia-based health care consulting firm Primaris, said the marketplace was intended to offer people who don’t have health insurance more options. Yet even if only one carrier remains, Milarsky said that people looking for insurance still have more options than before the marketplaces took effect.

More people had health insurance in Missouri in 2014 than the national average, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. But not by much: 21 percent of people in the U.S. didn't have insurance, compared to 19 percent in Missouri. That number goes for Boone County residents ages 18-64, where 10 percent didn't have insurance in 2014.
As one of many health insurance navigators in mid-Missouri, Milarsky educates people about their health insurance options. Navigators legally aren’t allowed to advise clients to pick a specific plan or carrier; their job is to help people navigate the complicated government health care system.

“We don’t promote anything but educating yourself, sitting down and figuring out the numbers so you can make the best choice,” Milarsky said.

Hickman said she believes the marketplace will still be effective even if only one carrier is available because all plans are required to cover ten essential health benefits. Among them are emergency services, hospitalization, mental health services and prescription drugs.

Some people choose to pay a penalty instead of paying for health insurance, even though the penalty has increased dramatically in the last two years. Unless they are exempt, individual who choose not to buy health insurance must pay the higher of the following two options when they file their federal tax return:

- $695 for each adult, and $347.50 for each child under 18, with a maximum of $2,085 per family.
- 2.5 percent of taxable household income, with a maximum of the total yearly cost of the least expensive insurance plan.

**Wider ripples**

The Affordable Care Act established the health insurance exchanges when it passed in 2010. More than 250,000 Missouri residents used the exchange to sign up for health insurance coverage in 2015, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The goal of the exchanges was to make it easier to find and compare health insurance plans, with the hope that competition would also keep prices low. If only one carrier remains in Boone County, that competition won’t exist.

**Aetna and UnitedHealth both cited higher-than-expected costs as a reason for leaving the marketplace. When healthy people don’t participate in the insurance exchange, those**
remaining tend to be sicker and more expensive for insurers said Bob Jerry, insurance law professor at MU. As a result, carriers don’t make as much money on their policies and might choose to leave the exchange.

“If you don’t have competition among insurers on the exchanges, the ability of the exchanges to deliver what health care reform hoped for is challenged,” Jerry said. “Unless we get everybody enrolled in the system, market forces are going to create trouble for the system.”

Milarsky encouraged people concerned about their insurance to seek assistance from a navigator because they might be eligible for exemptions or have options they don’t know about.

“The root problem with a lot of this is anxiety that is caused by ignorance,” Milarsky said. “Investigating where you are with the law goes a long way with cutting down that anxiety.”

**Cornell Will Drop 'Plantations' Name**

Cornell University announced last week that it is changing the name of the Cornell Plantations to the Cornell Botanical Gardens.

**No MU Mention**

The university announcement stressed that the new name better reflects the 4,000 acres of natural landscape and natural history collections that have made up the Cornell Plantations. But the name of the Cornell Plantations has also been criticized by many minority students on the campus, who view the word "plantations" as associated with slavery, even if the land and programs that makes up the Cornell gardens never had any association with slavery. Last year, Black Students United demanded a new name for Cornell Plantations as one way Cornell could be more inclusive of its minority students.

Cornell officials who have been reviewing the identity of the Cornell Plantations said that its name is inconsistent with the name. Christopher Dunn, director of the Cornell Plantations, said he viewed "plantation" as being about a single crop. "A botanic garden is all about showcasing the rich diversity of the plant kingdom. How can you have a
plantation that is a botanic garden? It’s a non sequitur,” he said in the university announcement.

He also noted that many people associate the word plantations with slavery. And the announcement quoted Ryan Lombardi, vice president for student and campus life, saying: “Renaming Cornell Plantations not only respects the richness of this great natural and scientific resource, it shows our full respect for the diverse and highly valued community of students and scholars this university is fortunate enough to serve.”

**Changing Names**

Many colleges and universities have been debating what to do about buildings, statues or inscriptions that praise the Confederacy or its supporters. This summer has seen changes at several universities:

- The University of Texas at Austin moved a panel in a prominent campus location with an inscription that praises “the men and women of the Confederacy who fought with valor and suffered with fortitude that states' rights be maintained” and who were “not dismayed by defeat nor discouraged by misrule.”
- Vanderbilt University announced that it will pay the Tennessee chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy $1.2 million (the value in today's dollars of a gift from the group in 1933) so the university can legally remove the word "Confederate" from Confederate Memorial Hall, built in part with that gift.
- Yale University, three months after announcing it would keep the name of the slavery advocate John Calhoun on one of its residential colleges, announced a process to reconsider, and to possibly remove, the name.

The Cornell Plantations name is in some ways different from the other examples. The panel at Texas and building name at Vanderbilt were intended to honor the Confederacy. The college at Yale honors one of the most effective politicians of his era at preserving slavery and promoting racist views. In contrast, the Cornell Plantations were never intended to honor slavery. In some ways the debate is similar to the one at several colleges that led them to drop the word "master" (for leader of residential college). The origins of the word have nothing to do with slavery, but the word has come to be associated with it.

Language experts say that the word plantations is associated with slavery, but also has roots that are about plants, not slavery.

The name ended up on the Cornell gardens specifically as a way to promote a non-slavery meaning. The horticulturist Liberty Hyde Bailey named the Cornell Plantations in 1944, and according to a profile in the Plantations’ magazine, "he purposely chose to
dismiss old associations with slavery in favor of the proper meaning of the word, plantations: ‘areas under cultivation’ or ‘newly established settlements.’”

Reactions to the Change
Cornell surveyed supporters of the Cornell Plantations and found overwhelming support for changing the name.

People weighing in on the website of The Cornell Daily Sun have expressed a range of views. One alumna wrote of assuming from the Cornell Plantations name that it was a site of crop research, and said that it took her a while to discover what was really there -- and to enjoy visits there. She said the name change was "sensible." Another wrote: "As long as people can still trip and enjoy the trees I don't care what it’s called."

Others, however, wrote that there was no reason to change the name. One alumnus wrote: "You mean it’s NOT a slaveholding operation? I had no idea — THANK YOU for changing the name and making that clear to me. (Ridiculous -- just ridiculous.)" And another wrote: "A monstrous betrayal of generations of Cornell alumni attached to the Cornell Plantations. And for what? To appease a handful of crybabies who can’t read a history book or a map, given that they can’t tell the difference between the Cornell Plantations and an agricultural model practiced 150 years ago a thousand miles south of Ithaca. This university administration needs to start standing for something other than appeasement, retreat, and milquetoast nonsense. Can everyone just grow up now? The world doesn’t pander, and Cornell shouldn’t either."