Can bacteria in yogurt calm your anxiety?

Generated from News Bureau press release: Common Probiotics Can Reduce Stress Levels, Lessen Anxiety

There’s new evidence that suggests a common probiotic found in supplements and yogurt could lower anxiety.

In a series of studies published in the journal Scientific Reports, researchers tested how stressed-out zebrafish behaved after doses of *Lactobacillus plantarum*.

“Our study has shown that simple probiotics that we normally use to keep our digestive tract in sync, could be beneficial to reducing our stress levels as well,” says Aaron Ericsson, a research assistant professor in veterinary pathobiology at the University of Missouri.

Ericsson says zebrafish are often used to screen drugs but are emerging as a model for neurobehavior.

Anxious fish

To test the effect, scientists added the bacteria to certain tanks housing zebrafish; other tanks of zebrafish received no probiotics. Then, the researchers introduced environmental stressors to both groups, such as draining small amounts of water from the tank and overcrowding.

“Each day we introduced a different stressor—tests that are validated by other researchers and cause higher anxiety among zebrafish,” says Elizabeth Bryda, professor of veterinary pathobiology. “These are common environmental stress patterns, such as isolation stress and temperature change, so it made the tests relevant to humans as well.”

By analyzing the gene pathways of both groups of fish, the research team found zebrafish that received the supplements showed a reduction in the metabolic pathways associated with stress.
“By measuring the genes associated with stress and anxiety, our tests were able to predict how this common probiotic is able to benefit behavioral responses in these fish,” says Daniel Davis, assistant director of the MU Animal Modeling Core. “Essentially, bacteria in the gut altered the gene expression associated with stress- and anxiety-related pathways in the fish allowing for increased signaling of particular neurotransmitters.”

To test their theory further, the researchers measured the movements of fish in their tanks using sophisticated computer measuring and imaging tools. Previous studies of fish behavior have found that fish that are stressed tend to spend more time at the bottom of their tanks.

Once the fish were administered probiotics, they tended to spend more time toward the top of the tanks—a change in behavior that suggests they were less stressed or less anxious.

“Using zebrafish, we’ve developed a relatively inexpensive platform for testing of other species of bacteria and probiotics and their potential benefit on different systems of the body,” Ericsson says.

Missouri probes tutor allegations of academic fraud in 'revenue-generating sports'
A former tutor is blowing the whistle on academic fraud in the Missouri athletics department

Allegations of academic fraud in the Missouri athletic department are being investigated after the resignation of a former tutor.

"The University of Missouri has received allegations of potential academic rules violations by a former tutor in the Athletics Academic Services area," the school announced Tuesday night. "Consistent with our commitment to rules compliance and to operating our athletics program with integrity, we are conducting a review of the allegations. We also have informed the NCAA who
is working with us on this matter. To protect the integrity of the review process, we will not comment further at this time.

The NCAA closed an investigation into the men's basketball program earlier this year. The school's self-imposed penalties were accepted, with a year of probation added, after the NCAA found Missouri boosters provided men's basketball players and their families with $11,402 in impermissible benefits from 2011-14.

The allegations come from former tutor Yolanda Kumar, who took to her private Facebook account to allege that she took part in academic fraud in "revenue generating sports."

"I have taken and assisted with entrance assessment, completed entire courses, and been present to provide assistance with online assessments," Kumar wrote, via the Kansas City Star. "It was encouraged, promoted, and supported by at least two Academic Coordinators for athletes in revenue generating sports, however, the widespread desperation to succeed by other student-athletes at the bottom of an inverted pyramid of the organization's construct cross (sic) multiple sports. I self-reported on November 2 and naively wanted to close the door on the manner after seeking counsel. I immediately resigned from my position on November 7 prior to meeting with a member for compliance, general counsel, and an individual that reports to the chancellor."

According to the Star, it is unclear if the allegations involve current basketball or football (revenue-generating sports) players. The men's basketball team forfeited scholarships and was banned from the 2016 postseason as a result of the previous NCAA investigation.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Sports Illustrated

Mizzou athletics looks into allegations of academic violations by former tutor
COLUMBIA, MO. • Three months into his job as athletics director at the University of Missouri, Jim Sterk has his first crisis to manage.

MU announced Tuesday that it has received allegations of potential academic rules violations by a former tutor who worked in the Athletics Academic Services area. Mizzou is working with the NCAA to conduct a review of the allegations.

It’s unclear from MU’s brief statement which teams were involved with the potential violations. MU did not disclose the tutor’s identity.

MU athletics released the following statement: “The University of Missouri has received allegations of potential academic rules violations by a former tutor in the Athletics Academic Services area. Consistent with our commitment to rules compliance and to operating our athletics program with integrity, we are conducting a review of the allegations. We also have informed the NCAA who is working with us on this matter. To protect the integrity of the review process, we will not comment further at this time.”

Sterk, hired in August to replace departed AD Mack Rhoades, issued the following statement: “While we recognize that there will be many questions regarding this situation, these investigations take time to ensure that we do it the right way. As always, our mission is to uphold the highest standard of academic performance and ensure the proper conduct with all of our programs.”

The Post-Dispatch has obtained a message posted on Facebook by a woman who identifies herself as a former tutor for the athletics department and said she self-reported her participation in “academic dishonesty.”

The woman's name, Yolanda Kumar, matches that of an employee in the university’s online database listed as a tutor for Intercollegiate Athletics. Contacted by the Post-Dispatch, Kumar agreed to an interview but didn’t return further messages.
On Facebook she posted: “I have knowingly participated in academic dishonesty in my position as a tutor at the University of Missouri-Columbia Intercollegiate Athletic department, which is not limited to assistance with assignments. I had taken and assisted with entrance assessment, completed entire courses, and I been present (sic) to provide assistance with online assessments.

“It was encouraged, promoted, and supported by at least two Academic Coordinators for athletes in revenue generating sports, however, the wide spread (sic) desperation to succeed by other student athletes at the bottom of an inverted pyramid of the organization’s construct cross multiple sports.

“I self-reported on November 2 and naively wanted to close the door on the manner (sic) after seeking counsel. I immediately resigned from my position on November 7 prior to meeting with a member for compliance, general counsel, and an individual that reports to the chancellor.

“You are able to see this post because I respect and honor your thoughts of me. I wanted you to hear it from me first. I apologize for disappointing you. I just can’t carry this burden anymore.”

THE KANSAS CITY STAR.

NOVEMBER 22, 2016 7:21 PM

NCAA investigating alleged academic fraud at Mizzou

BY TOD PALMER
tpalmer@kcestar.com

COLUMBIA - A former University of Missouri tutor has blown the whistle on alleged academic fraud within the school’s athletic department.
Three months after closing an investigation into improprieties within the men’s basketball program, Mizzou announced Tuesday evening that it is under investigation again for potential NCAA rules violations.

According to a statement from the athletics department, “The University of Missouri has received allegations of potential academic rules violations by a former tutor in the Athletics Academic Services area. Consistent with our commitment to rules compliance and to operating our athletics program with integrity, we are conducting a review of the allegations. We also have informed the NCAA who is working with us on this matter. To protect the integrity of the review process, we will not comment further at this time.”

The statement did not mention any specific programs or the scope of the alleged academic misconduct, but former tutor Yolanda Kumar detailed some of the potential academic fraud in a post on her private Facebook account Tuesday afternoon.

When reached by The Star, Kumar confirmed the authenticity of the post, in which she alleges that she took or assisted with entrance exams and completed classes for student-athletes. She also apologized to her friends for her role in the alleged academic fraud.

Here is the full text of Kumar’s social-media post:

“I have knowingly participated in academic dishonesty in my position as a tutor at the University of Missouri-Columbia Intercollegiate Athletic department, which is not limited to assistance with assignments. I have taken and assisted with entrance assessment, completed entire courses, and I been present to provide assistance with online assessments. It was encouraged, promoted, and supported by at least two Academic Coordinators for athletes in revenue generating sports, however, the wide spread desperation to succeed by other student-athletes at the bottom of an inverted pyramid of the organization’s construct cross (sic) multiple sports. I self-reported on November 2 and naively wanted to close the door on the manner after seeking counsel. I immediately resigned from my position on November 7 prior to meeting with a member for compliance, general counsel, and an individual that reports to the chancellor.

“You are able to see this post because I respect and honor your thoughts of me. I wanted you to hear it from me first. I apologize for disappointing you.

“I just can’t carry this burden anymore.”

News of Missouri’s latest NCAA run-in comes 10 months after the school announced self-imposed sanctions against the men’s basketball team stemming from a sham internship
program and impermissible benefits received by players and their families at Tan-Tar-A resort at Lake of the Ozarks.

Third-year basketball coach Kim Anderson’s team was banned from the 2016 postseason and forfeited two scholarships among the self-imposed sanctions, which the NCAA accepted in closing the case in August.

It’s unclear if any current players are involved in the new investigation, but the revenue-generating sports in college athletics are football and men’s basketball.

“While we recognize that there will be many questions regarding this situation, these investigations take time to ensure that we do it the right way,” Mizzou athletic director Jim Sterk, who was hired in August, said in a statement. “As always, our mission is to uphold the highest standard of academic performance and ensure the proper conduct with all of our programs.”

The news comes the same day the NCAA announced that Notre Dame must vacate its wins during the 2012 and 2013 seasons after an investigation into academic misconduct.

The Fighting Irish also were placed on probation for a year and fined $5,000, but in that case the cheating was orchestrated by a student athletic trainer unbeknownst to school officials.

If Kumar was pressured into performing academic work for student-athletes rather, as the post implies, the punishment for Mizzou could be much worse.

Mizzou Athletics acknowledges allegations of potential academic rules violations

Update (11:48 p.m.): ABC 17 acquired a Facebook post written by a person claiming to be the former Mizzou Athletics tutor. ABC 17
reached out to the individual who appears to have written this Facebook post but has not heard back from the individual.

In the post, the alleged former tutor says they "knowingly participated in academic dishonesty in my position as a tutor at the University of Missouri-Columbia Intercollegiate Athletic Department." The post goes on to say this person took entrance examinations and completed full courses for student-athletes during her time with Mizzou Athletics. It also claims two academic coordinators for "revenue-generating sports" promoted a culture of academic dishonesty.

The alleged tutor says they self-reported these potential infractions on November 2nd and stepped down on November 7th.

COLUMBIA- Mizzou Athletics is investigating potential academic rules violations by one of its former tutors, the department announced Tuesday night.

The athletic department did not specify what rules the tutor violated or which Mizzou programs this affected. In a statement, the department said it is working with the NCAA and is reviewing the allegations. The statement did release the former tutor's name.

Below is a statement from Mizzou Athletics and Athletic Director Jim Sterk.

STATEMENT FROM MIZZOU ATHLETICS

The University of Missouri has received allegations of potential academic rules violations by a former tutor in the Athletics Academic Services area. Consistent with our commitment to rules compliance and to operating our athletics program with integrity, we are conducting a review of the allegations. We also have informed the NCAA who is working with us on this matter. To protect the integrity of the review process, we will not comment further at this time.

DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS JIM STERK

“While we recognize that there will be many questions regarding this situation, these investigations take time to ensure that we do it the right way. As always, our mission is to uphold the highest standard of academic performance and ensure the proper conduct with all of our programs.”
#Mizzou reacts to allegations of academic violations

A former tutor for Mizzou athletics, Yolanda Kumar, has self-reported herself of wrong-doing in what she called “academic dishonesty,” in a post on her private Facebook account Tuesday afternoon.

“I have knowingly participated in academic dishonesty in my position as a tutor at the University of Missouri-Columbia Intercollegiate Athletic department, which is not limited to assistance with assignments. I have taken and assisted with entrance assessment, completed entire courses, and I been present to provide assistance with online assessments. It was encouraged, promoted, and supported by at least two Academic Coordinators for athletes in revenue generating sports, however, the wide spread desperation to succeed by other student-athletes at the bottom of an inverted pyramid of the organization’s construct cross (sic) multiple sports. I self-reported on November 2 and naively wanted to close the door on the manner after seeking counsel. I immediately resigned from my position on November 7 prior to meeting with a member for compliance, general counsel, and an individual that reports to the chancellor.

“You are able to see this post because I respect and honor your thoughts of me. I wanted you to hear it from me first. I apologize for disappointing you.

“I just can’t carry this burden anymore.”

From Kumar’s response, she is clear to point out, “revenue generating sports,” which are football and men’s basketball.

The news from Mizzou came out the same day when Notre Dame football was forced to vacate wins and pay a fine after an athletic training for the team was completing assignments and classes.

While the facts of the case at Missouri are still left to be determined, the penalty could be strong and harsh if it is proven that Kumar was pressured or forced by members within the athletic department to help.
STATEMENT FROM MIZZOU ATHLETICS

The University of Missouri has received allegations of potential academic rules violations by a former tutor in the Athletics Academic Services area. Consistent with our commitment to rules compliance and to operating our athletics program with integrity, we are conducting a review of the allegations. We also have informed the NCAA who is working with us on this matter. To protect the integrity of the review process, we will not comment further at this time.

DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS JIM STERK

“While we recognize that there will be many questions regarding this situation, these investigations take time to ensure that we do it the right way. As always, our mission is to uphold the highest standard of academic performance and ensure the proper conduct with all of our programs.”

MU reveals it is investigating potential academic violations

The Missouri athletic department is going back under the microscope, this time for allegations of academic fraud.

Missouri announced in a statement Tuesday that it has received allegations of potential academic rules violations committed by a former tutor who worked in athletics academic services. MU is investigating the matter in conjunction with the NCAA.

The announcement comes 10 months after MU revealed it was under review for major NCAA infractions committed by its men’s basketball program.

Missouri did not specify which sport or sports the potential violations were connected with or when they were alleged to have occurred. It also did not identify the tutor.

As first reported on PowerMizzou.com, a former tutor recently posted the following on Facebook: “I have knowingly participated in academic dishonesty in
my position as a tutor at the University of Missouri-Columbia Intercollegiate Athletic department, which is not limited to assistance with assignments. I have taken and assisted with entrance assessment, completed entire courses, and I been present to provide assistance with online assessments. It was encouraged, promoted, and supported by at least two Academic Coordinators for athletes in revenue generating sports, however, the wide spread desperation to succeed by other student-athletes at the bottom of an inverted pyramid of the organization’s construct cross (sic) multiple sports. I self-reported on November 2 and naively wanted to close the door on the manner (sic) after seeking counsel. I immediately resigned from my position on November 7 prior to meeting with a member for compliance, general counsel, and an individual that reports to the chancellor.

“You are able to see this post because I respect and honor your thoughts of me. I wanted you to hear it from me first. I apologize for disappointing you.

“I just can’t carry this burden anymore.”

The person who wrote the post, Yolanda Kumar, is listed in the university’s salary database for the 2015-16 school year as an intercollegiate athletics tutor with a salary of $15 per hour. She is not currently listed on the MU athletic department’s online staff directory. Kumar confirmed to The Kansas City Star that she wrote the message.

Tuesday’s news ends a relatively quiet period for the athletic department since Athletic Director Jim Sterk came on the job about three months ago.

“While we recognize that there will be many questions regarding this situation, these investigations take time to ensure that we do it the right way,” Sterk said in a statement. “As always, our mission is to uphold the highest standard of academic performance and ensure the proper conduct with all of our programs.”

Sterk declined further comment.

Athletics academic services falls under Missouri’s Total Person Program. According to Missouri’s athletic department website, the TPP employs more than 100 tutors, comprised of professionals, teaching assistants, graduate students and students from MU’s honors college.

Tami Chievous is Missouri’s associate athletics director for academic services.
Three and a half months ago, the NCAA handed down its decision on the basketball violations, which stemmed from a sham internship program and impermissible benefits, including lodging and meals for players and their relatives at a resort. The NCAA stated that Missouri “failed to monitor its men’s basketball program” and did not fully vet or follow up on a summer internship program at T3 Solutions, a company owned by now former Missouri booster Mark Tuley in Augusta, Ga. The company specializes in geospatial intelligence.

The NCAA tacked on a year probation to Missouri’s self-imposed sanctions on the men’s basketball team. The probation period runs through Aug. 1, 2017, and further violations, if tied to that sport, could be damaging.

Other stories:

- MU Athletics to review allegations of rules violations by former tutor
- Mizzou athletics aware of investigating possible academic rules violations
- Investigation of athletics department begins after allegations of academic violations

Graduate Student Lawsuit Moves Forward

MU dietetics students help low-income families eat healthier

Generated from News Bureau press release: New MU Program Will Help Low-Income Families Eat Healthier

COLUMBIA — A new hands-on program benefiting dietetics students and low-income families is on the horizon for MU.

The university announced Monday that the Department of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology received a $100,000 gift from the Bee Payne-Stewart Foundation.

"It provides for five years, financial support for a part-time dietitian to work at the Family Impact Center," said Chris Hardin, chair of the Department of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology.

The MU Family Impact Center educates those in need on financial literacy, life skills and other unmet needs among low-income populations. Hardin says dietetics counseling was not previously included in the services offered.

"With their broad range of services, one of the things they wanted to include was dietetics, but we simply did not have the funds to put a dietitian over there, even part-time," Hardin said.

The dietitian appointed will assume a supervising position over dietetics students that provide the counseling service.
"Our dietetics students get to practice in a real life setting giving dietary assessment and dietary counseling to patients who otherwise wouldn't have access to that," Hardin said.

Hardin said education on maintaining healthy eating habits with certain illnesses is important.

"They may have diabetes, they may have kidney disease, and they may not know what the appropriate food choices are to help them deal with these diseases," he said.

For five years, $15,000 annually of the gift will go toward supporting the registered dietitian at the MU Family Impact Center. The other $5,000 annually for the next five years will be dedicated to simulation training where dietetics students are assessed on their ability to consult and interact with patients.

Hardin said the money will start to be utilized in the summer of 2017.

Shooter training on MU campus tests agencies' ability to work together

Watch the video: http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/shooter-training-on-mu-campus-tests-agencies-ability-to-work/article_3bc3d4cd-2390-56d2-88f5-b55fdb15ba0e.html

Since Jan. 1, there have been at least 350 incidents of gun violence in the United States in which four or more people were killed or injured, according to the Gun Violence Archive.
Nine of those incidents took place in Missouri, including the murder of four people in February in Clay County.

On Monday, Columbia-based law enforcement and emergency responders tested their ability to respond to a mass shooting. **Using Laws Hall, an empty University of Missouri dormitory slated for demolition early next year, the agencies organized a command post, sent officers in to search for the shooter and treated victims.**

Sarah Stone, who took time from her job in the Department of Student Life and Campus Activities to play the part of victim, said she was told she was uninjured and needed to help the wounded and be prepared to give a description of the suspect. The experience was scary even though she knew it would happen.

“He came in and he’s like, ‘I’m going to fire these blanks. I’m going to fire them,’ Stone said. “So we knew, but just hearing it is always kind of freaky, and nobody wants to be in a room with a gun.”

The Columbia Fire Department, the Columbia Police Department, the University of Missouri Police Department, the Boone County Sheriff’s Department, the Missouri State Highway Patrol, Boone Hospital Center and University Hospital took part in the drill.

The active shooter training began with a simulated emergency call. The plan was not to test response times, fire department Battalion Chief Brad Frazier said, but to evaluate how well agencies work together.

“This exercise is really to test our capabilities, our inter-operability,” he said. “We work together one-on-one, with each agency one-on-one, on an almost daily basis, but to get them all together at the same time is pretty rare.”

The initial part of the exercise lasted about two hours and was followed by a six-hour hostage situation exercise by the Columbia Police Department. Other agencies moved to Ashland, where an active shooter drill was held at the Southern Boone County R-1 Elementary School.

In addition to testing law enforcement agencies, the exercise also prepared local media for how law enforcement would handle an active shooter incident. While reporters were allowed to go within a few dozen feet of the entrance to Laws Hall, they would be held much farther away, out of the line of sight and fire, in a real event, MU spokesman Christian Basi said. Basi said getting accurate information to the public through media in such an emergency would be important.
In the case of a shooter on the MU campus, the university would use its online MU Alert system to provide quick, accurate information. Basi and Major Brian Weimer of the MU police said they wanted to minimize the spread of rumors.

“We’ve had, in the past, traffic that has gone out and people pick it up, put it on social media, and there are rumors flying everywhere,” Basi said.

In a real event, law enforcement would be focused on stopping the shooter, Weimer said. Students, faculty and staff should expect to make decisions on their own about whether to stay where they are or go to a safer location, he said.

In addition, the university will be urging students to call their parents immediately to let them know they are safe.
Woman sentenced for embezzling from University of Missouri

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. - A former University of Missouri employee who admitted earlier this year that she embezzled more than $781,000 was sentenced to four years in federal prison without parole.

Fifty-five-year-old Carla Rathmann, of Mount Vernon, was sentenced Tuesday for one count each of mail fraud and credit card fraud. She also was ordered to pay $781,670 in restitution.

Rathmann stole the money while working as an administrative officer at the university’s Southwest Research Center in Mount Vernon.

Prosecutors say Rathmann embezzled the money over 13 years setting up three shell companies and submitting fake and fraudulent invoices and by fraudulently using a university credit card. She spent the money on gambling, remodeling her home, vacations, luxury items and to pay daily expenses.

Rathmann was fired in September 2015.
Former MU employee sentenced to prison in embezzlement case

ALLISON COLBURN, 15 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — The former MU employee who embezzled more than $781,000 from the university was sentenced Tuesday to four years in federal prison without parole. She was also ordered to pay $781,670 in restitution.

Carla Rathmann, 55, was working as an administrative assistant when she stole university money, including funds from state and federal grants, over a 13-year period.

She was an employee of the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources at the Southwest Research Center in Mount Vernon from January 2000 to September 2015.

Rathmann stole money by making unauthorized purchases on a university credit card and faking invoices and bills to MU to pay herself via three shell companies she created: R&R, R&R Agri and Garrett Farm and Oil.

Her husband, Thomas Rathmann, was a registered agent on two of the fictitious companies, according to the the Secretary of State's online business filings.

Don Ledford, spokesman for the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Western District of Missouri, said on Tuesday that Thomas Rathmann had not been charged. Ledford said he could not comment on any "potential or pending charges."

From 2005 to 2014, Carla Rathmann charged $570,521 to her fake businesses. According to the U.S. Attorney's Office, she used the money to gamble, remodel her home, take vacations around the world with her husband and pay for various day-to-day expenses. She also bought expensive cars, high-end appliances, a hot tub and an above-ground pool.
The money stolen using university cards was used to pay for dental expenses, cover veterinary bills for her dog and remodel her home, along with other expenses.

In 2014, Rathmann and her husband placed an ad in the Barry County Advertiser for a moving liquidation auction. A Samsung Plasma TV, a Yamaha Surround Sound System and leather furniture were among a long list of household items for sale.

The Southwest Research Center’s Superintendent, David Cope, reported concerns about Rathmann’s purchases in July 2015, a year after he first began working for the university. She was terminated for misconduct on Sept. 21, 2015.

On June 6, she waived her right to a grand jury and pleaded guilty to one count each of mail fraud and credit card fraud.

An internal investigative audit reported that her financial misappropriations were "a key factor" in the closure of the Southwest Research Center dairy operations in spring 2015. It found that Rathmann stole grant money from three different federal and state sponsors: $3,330 from Agricultural Research Services, $3,158 from the Missouri Department of Agriculture and $35,116 from the National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

The audit also found "a lack of fiscal oversight and accountability" within CAFNR that contributed to Rathmann’s ability to steal.

Another audit conducted by the UM System to look into CAFNR’s financial accountability system found that fiscal oversight was "inadequate" for the college’s 17 research centers scattered across the state.

**MISSOURIAN**

**MU student arrested on suspicion of trafficking ecstasy**
COLUMBIA — Columbia police on Monday seized about 1,100 doses of ecstasy and arrested a MU student on suspicion of drug trafficking.

Dylan Parham, 24, was taken into custody at 2:24 p.m. Monday after police seized the package of roughly 1,100 doses of ecstasy.

A search warrant was issued after a package addressed to Parham's residence at 1503 Lowe Street was found to have 252.79 grams of methylenedioxymethamphetamine, also known as ecstasy, according to a Columbia police news release.

Parham was arrested on suspicion of second-degree trafficking, felony possession of a controlled substance and felony unlawful use of a weapon.

Parham was in the Boone County Jail on Tuesday afternoon on a total of $30,000 bond -- $10,000 for each offense.

Parham is a sophomore enrolled at MU as a non-degree seeking student, according to a spokesman for the MU News Bureau.

According to a Drug Enforcement Administration research guide, ecstasy "acts as both a stimulant and psychedelic, producing an energizing effect, distortions in time and perception, and enhanced enjoyment of tactile experiences."

Columbia Police Department Vice Narcotics and Organized Crime Unit, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the East Central Drug Task Force and United States Postal Inspectors served the narcotics-related search warrant. Police searched Parham's residence and found the ecstasy along with a shotgun and three capsules of Vyvanse.
Website targets professors, some local, for 'un-American' acts

By Ashley Jost St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 14 hrs ago

ST. LOUIS • A new national website that seeks to expose college professors who engage in “leftist propaganda” is quickly drawing criticism within higher education.

And yet some of those targeted — including academics in the St. Louis region — are brushing it off.

The website, Professor Watchlist, is a project organized by conservative-leaning Turning Points USA, a nonprofit organization. It’s monitored by a graduate student, but tips can come from anyone.

Several local professors made the list.

Matt Lamb, director of constitutional enforcement and transparency for Turning Points USA, said the website was created to inform students “who are looking at schools know what they’re getting into.”

The website’s mission statement is to “expose and document college professors who discriminate against conservative students, promote anti-American values, and advance leftist propaganda in the classroom.”

Within 24 hours of the website going live, a social media conversation went viral among academics, encouraging people to submit fake names, mocking the website and its mission.

Lamb, a graduate student at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, is the person who ultimately approves additions to the website. He has received about 1,500 submissions since the website
went live, he told the Post-Dispatch. He acknowledges that some submissions are “spam,” submitted by those trying to be funny.

“Every instance must come from a documented source,” he said.

The site links professor profiles to documentation of their activity. Such links lead almost exclusively to conservative-run blogs.

A syllabus or some sort of document from class can be used as proof as well, Lamb said.

Washington University law professor Gregory Magarian is one of three from the St. Louis institution to land on the list.

Magarian jokingly calls it a “badge of honor.”

He made the list alongside two other WU law professors, Neil Richards and Lee Epstein, for the same reason: comments made on a panel about Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia after his death.

“The thing I’m on the list for is really stupid,” Magarian said. “I have a hard time not just laughing.”

Magarian said the website organizers have the First Amendment right to call him “un-American.” But he would be concerned if the website evolved into something that puts pressure on university leaders.

He said he has colleagues who are adding their own names to the list in solidarity.

As of Tuesday, the Professor Watchlist website showed four professors from WU, though one was actually a professor from the University of Washington. It also showed one professor from St. Louis University, who was actually a graduate student at SLU and has since moved on to Augusta University.
Of the two professors listed from the University of Missouri-Columbia, only one still works there. One was added for canceling class during the fall of 2015 for a student-led rally about graduate students possibly losing their health insurance subsidy.

The other named Mizzou professor was Melissa Click, who gained notoriety for asking for “muscle” to move a student journalist away from a campus protest. She now works at Gonzaga University.

Missourians Face Hard Choices When it Comes to Health Insurance, MU Expert Offers Advice to Understand Costs

Watch the story: http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=29e2adc4-6087-4c12-9b5c-4bfbf4d683ca

The Chronicle of Higher Education

NO MU MENTION
Federal Judge Block’s Obama’s Overtime-Pay Rule

A federal judge in Texas on Tuesday blocked the Obama administration’s effort to extend overtime pay to millions more workers, after 21 states and dozens of business groups asserted that the rule was unlawful and would cause them irreparable harm.

Judge Amos L. Mazzant III of the U.S. District Court in Sherman, Tex., concluded that the U.S. Department of Labor had exceeded its authority and ignored the intent of Congress in issuing the rule, which had been scheduled to take effect on December 1. The regulation sought to raise the salary cutoff below which workers would be eligible for overtime pay, to about $47,000 from about $23,000.

Generally, employees whose primary role can be defined as teaching are exempt from earning overtime pay. But many categories of campus employees — such as early career financial-aid officers and athletics staffers — would have benefited from the rule. This collection of Chronicle articles has more details on how colleges were anticipating the changes.

Since the rule was issued, many colleges have been scrambling to identify which employees would be newly eligible for overtime pay, and to plan institutional budgets around those changes. It’s not yet clear how colleges that had already changed their practices in anticipation of the rule will respond to the judge’s ruling, or whether they will roll back the adjustments they have made. In any case, the rule itself was already among many Obama-administration policies that had been cast into doubt by this month’s election of Donald J. Trump as president.

Judge Mazzant issued a nationwide injunction against rolling out the rule, saying that such an action best served the public interest. The court’s “ability to render a meaningful decision” on the merits of the case was in jeopardy because of the rule’s imminent effective date, he wrote.

The College and University Professional Association for Human Resources said it was expected that the Labor Department would appeal the ruling quickly, though it wasn’t
clear how long such an appeal might take. If the judge’s action pushes the rule’s rollout past the date of the presidential inauguration, the association continued, “then there will be room for the Trump administration to reopen the rule making and revise the final rule.”

An Admissions Experiment Succeeds

In an unprecedented move, the state of Idaho decided to automatically admit all high school graduates to its public universities. Enrollment rose.

No MU Mention

It’s been a year since the state of Idaho embarked on an ambitious experiment: directly admitting graduating high school seniors into Idaho’s public colleges and universities without requiring them to fill out an application.

For many institutions in the Idaho system, it worked.

Over all, enrollment at Idaho’s public colleges and universities rose 3.1 percent, to 74,632 enrolled students from 72,360. This comes after a volatile few years. Enrollment consistently increased from fall 2006 to fall 2012. In 2013, enrollment numbers dipped sharply, and the number of enrolled students has bounced up and down since then. The most recent bump was much larger than the only other enrollment increase in the past four years -- in 2014, enrollment only rose by 1.2 percent.

But with the direct admissions program, part of the state’s larger campaign to get more Idahoans to think about their Next Steps after high school, the number of first-time, resident freshmen who enrolled immediately after college jumped 6.7 percent from fall 2015 to fall 2016.

Boise State University saw the biggest boost, with an 8 percent increase in overall enrollment. The University of Idaho’s enrollment numbers rose 3.6 percent -- a reversal for the university, which before had seen falling enrollment since 2012.

“I consider the program a success,” said Chuck Staben, the University of Idaho’s president.
It was Staben’s idea to establish the direct enrollment program, an effort to boost the number of Idaho high school graduates who went straight to college instead of straight to career.

Idaho colleges have struggled to keep up with the rest of the nation in terms of the percentage of high school graduates who go directly to college. In 2010, the state ranked last. Although the rates have fluctuated a bit since then, they have remained low. In 2013, for instance, Idaho’s statewide going-on rate was 53 percent, while nationally, 65.9 percent of high school graduates enrolled in college. But Idaho isn’t the only state that must deal with this dilemma -- enrollment levels have lagged in much of the country since the post-recession postsecondary enrollment boom, according to the most recent figures available from the National Center for Education Statistics.

Staben attributes Idaho’s low enrollment rate in part to the state’s strong economy. While in October the national unemployment rate was 4.9 percent, Idaho’s was 3.3 percent. High school graduates could find jobs straight out of school and be paid instead of paying tuition. Many asked, “Why not?” Staben said.

Another reason why Idaho’s enrollment rates are lower than the national rate, according to Staben: those whose parents didn’t go to college are less likely to go to college themselves. They are unfamiliar with the application process, so they don’t apply. In Idaho, 25.4 percent of adults have a bachelor’s degree, which is a bit lower than the national rate of 29.3 percent.

Staben’s intention with Idaho’s direct admissions program was -- quite literally -- to eliminate that barrier.

“We’ve done some postsurveying, and we’ve had responses saying, ‘I didn’t know I could go to college,’ and, ‘This changed my life,’” Staben said.

“Thirty percent said receiving the letter made them more likely or much more likely to attend college.”

Idaho has a unique arrangement in which the State Board of Education not only oversees elementary and secondary schools but also acts as a Board of Regents for institutions of higher education. Thanks to that structure, coordinating a system where colleges and high schools had access to the student data -- necessary to make admissions automatic -- was relatively smooth.

Students who had a high school grade point average over 3.0 were directly admitted to all eight of Idaho’s public higher education institutions, including community colleges and four-year universities. Students with lower GPAs were admitted only to six public institutions (excluding the more selective Boise State University and the University of Idaho) unless they had high test scores.

As is true with any experiment, this initiative wasn’t without its hitches.
The primary challenge was sorting out the timing, said Blake Youde, chief communications and legislative affairs officer at the Idaho State Board of Education. Last year, because the initiative was approved in June, students received their acceptance letters in November, which didn't allow students a long time to consider their college options and enroll. In addition, because of the expedited timeline, communication was lacking between the universities and high schools, said Staben. This year the universities mailed two letters, one in September and a second one in October.

The cost was minimal. Most of the money was spent on printing and mailing letters to approximately 20,000 high school seniors, which cost about $40,000, Youde said -- money that was already in the state budget. The department did not hire any new staff to work on the project.

“Most environments cause higher education institutions to compete rather than collaborate, and the colleges in Idaho are collaborating in a big way,” said Demi Michelau, vice president for policy analysis and research at the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education. “There are inherent risks in this program, because it involves trust between [the institutions].”

Indeed, not every college got the same boost as Boise State and the University of Idaho. Idaho State University’s enrollment dropped by about 100 students. The College of Southern Idaho, a community college, saw enrollment drop by over 500 students, although its number of enrolled first-time students who had graduated from high school in the past year rose from 617 last year to 643 now. Community college enrollments have lagged in many parts of the country, though.

The state board isn’t ready to say with certainty why enrollment dropped for these schools, according to Youde, but part of the reason for the drop was likely the greater number of college choices for students.

“We had these students who thought they were going to enroll in two-year colleges, and then they were admitted to a four-year college,” Youde said. “So we probably did move students that way.”

Chris Bragg, the dean of institutional effectiveness at Southern Idaho, speculates that the overall dip in enrollment could be because of several factors, including dual enrollment, which could muddle the data, and a strong economy in which Idaho residents think they are better off earning money than studying.

It’s also difficult to pinpoint the reasons for the increase in first-time students, said Bragg, because Southern Idaho began another high school outreach program last year, too. It send transition coordinators to local high schools to help students with the college application process.

Even data from the colleges that saw increasing enrollment aren’t as clean and simple as at first glance. Although the University of Idaho’s enrollment rose, the
number of full-time students in fall 2016 actually dropped from last year, dipping from 9,183 to 8,872. Enrollment of part-time students increased, from 4,513 to 4,681.

Part of the reason for the drop in full-time students was because a larger class graduated in 2016, said Jodi Walker, director of communications at Idaho. And the rise in part-time enrollment includes a jump in the number of high school students who are taking dual-credit classes.

In fact, the number of first-time students did increase at the University of Idaho, from 1,588 last year to 1,660 this year -- a difference of 4.5 percent. Plus, first-year enrollment all over the state was up. Because of that, Staben, Youde and Michelau all call the first year of the initiative a success.

“It's the ultimate student-centered initiative, and it removes barriers,” Michelau said. “And a second benefit is a benefit to the institutions. You can think of this as a collective recruitment tool for the institutions. I believe all boats will rise, ultimately.”

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