MU Office of Advancement employees rewarded for record fundraising year

At the end of a record fundraising year, 20 employees in the University of Missouri’s Office of Advancement were rewarded with incentives ranging from $1,000 to $8,000.

MU spokesman Christian Basi said the 20 employees, including three senior staff members, received a total of $54,000 in bonuses.

MU recorded $171 million in pledges and new cash donations in fiscal year 2016, which ended June 30, up from $23.3 million in fiscal 2015 and $164.5 million in fiscal 2014.

Two large pledges totaling nearly $39 million boosted the total.

Basi said the Office of Advancement is in line with many university fundraising offices around the country in rewarding employees for exceptional performance.

The record fundraising year came as the university faced fallout from student protests over race issues, a threatened football boycott and the resignations of UM System President Tim Wolfe and Columbia campus Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin.

Tom Hiles, MU vice chancellor for advancement, said the office received 34,000 negative calls about those and other issues. He said the fundraising record was a surprise.

“We’re very proud of the donors who have stepped forward, especially during the challenges of last year,” Hiles said.

Hiles said the incentives are not a commission.

He said when he came into the position in 2012, there were 22 open positions in the advancement office and it was losing staff regularly.

“There’s a huge demand for experience,” Hiles said. “It’s a very competitive business. We had to find ways to retain them. Incentives were one piece of that.”

Hiles said the incentives are based on productivity, including the amount of money raised, promoting a collaborative culture and identifying useful information. He said about 10 percent of the office’s 190 employees received the incentives.
“These employees, who are doing exceptional work, are easily recruited by other fundraisers who can offer higher pay,” Basi said. “It is important that we recognize and reward our best employees in an effort to retain them. It’s much more expensive to recruit and train new employees than it is to retain a stellar employee who has a proven track record.”

Basi said other MU offices and departments can offer financial incentives based on employee performance, if there is money to do so in their budgets. He said other departments that have incentive plans include TV station KOMU, the University Club, Show Me State Games and Athletics.

The university is dealing with tighter budgets after a drop in enrollment to start the academic year. Basi said salary and wage guidelines from MU leaders for the current fiscal year do not permit merit pay increases, but individuals might have received increases if they were promoted, took on added responsibilities because of reassignments or if the salary range was increased and the individual was making below the minimum for the range.

He said those working in union-eligible jobs also might have received increases in accordance with current agreements, which include longevity milestones.

More than 350 employees received salary increases because of a proposed change in overtime regulations, though those requirements are being challenged in court.

Nonverbal boy with autism shares a special bond with his deaf shelter dog

Generated from News Bureau press release: Dog Ownership Benefits Families of Children with Autism, MU Researcher Finds

When stay-at-home mom Brandi Guillet, 42, first laid eyes on Ellie the dog, she knew she had found the perfect pet companion for her 6-year-old son. Connor is non-verbal and on the autism spectrum. Boxer breed Ellie, age 3, is deaf and has been trained to respond to sign language.

While words and commands aren't part of their relationship, Connor and Ellie already share an incredible bond.
“Boxers are known to be great with kids but there is definitely something special about Ellie,” said Brandi, who lives with her family in Cocoa, Florida. “When Connor has tantrums she will stand over him as if to comfort him. When he is upset, Connor will immediately go to Ellie for comfort.”

Brandi and her husband, Chad Guillet, 45, logistics manager for the Navy Air Warfare Center Orlando and a member of the Florida Air National Guard, adopted their son Connor when he was just four weeks old. The boy was born addicted to opiates and had to undergo a detox program. Genetic testing further revealed that he would also have special needs and medical issues, but that did not deter them. “He needed a family and we wanted a family. It was a match made in heaven,” said Brandi.

When Brandi shared the story of her son and his best friend with a Facebook page called Deaf Dogs Rock, her post went viral. There’s definitely something to the animal-human bond when it comes to helping children with autism — researchers have even studied it.

“Children with autism may especially benefit from interacting with dogs, which can provide unconditional, nonjudgmental love and companionship,” said Dr. Gretchen Carlisle, a research fellow with the Research Center for Human-Animal Interaction at the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine, who authored a study on the subject.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a developmental disorder present from early childhood that impairs a person’s ability to communicate and interact socially with others. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) identifies 1 in 68 American children as on the autism spectrum, with over three million people affected in the U.S.

Brandi believes there is something special about the connection that can form between people on the autism spectrum and dogs. “Connor can tantrum and melt down badly and it can be loud. Ellie just stands over him, it’s as if she knows he needs comfort but she can’t hear the noise so it doesn’t make her nervous.”

The couple already had a boxer — eight-year-old Chowda — and had never considered adopting a deaf dog. But after attending a rescue event and meeting at Coastal Boxer Rescue they knew they wanted to foster Ellie. “When Jon showed me that Ellie responds to sign I had a light bulb go off,” said Brandi. “She let Connor go up to her, touch her face and kiss her and put his arms around her neck to hug her. She was beyond gentle with him.” Brandi is awaiting papers to make Ellie’s adoption official.

Jon Nowlin, who has been a volunteer and behavioral trainer with CBR for the past five years and is known as the “Deaf Dog Whisperer,” said he has trained many deaf dogs and that they are among the easiest to train because they follow commands almost effortlessly and without distraction.
“Don’t discredit special needs animals,” he said. “We tell people time and time again that deaf dogs do not know that they are deaf!” He advises potential foster parents to not rush the adoption and to trust the recommendation of the shelter or foster parents. “If you are looking for an addition to your family, taking the extra time to correctly introduce them will pay off in the long run,” he said.

Brandi says that even though Ellie is deaf, she doesn’t require any special care. “It’s just a little different to get her attention than it is with other dogs,” she said. “And she is super smart. Anyone who can sign can communicate with a deaf dog. Boxers are work though! They are goofy, silly, playful and loving.”

Even Connor’s teachers have seen a positive effect from the relationship. “Ellie coming into Connor’s life is such a beautiful thing,” said Elizabeth Pobjecky, a behavior technician at Caladium Learning Center where Connor attends school. “Connor can do simple sign language to Ellie. It’s amazing because Ellie is almost human with him! It’s a win-win for both of them.”

MU study finds women, minorities paid less on boards of directors

Generated from News Bureau press release: Minorities, Females Serving on Boards of Directors Receive Less Compensation, Less Likely to Serve in Leadership Roles, Study Finds

COLUMBIA - Women and minorities serving on boards of directors are paid less and are less likely to serve in leadership roles, a new University of Missouri, University of Delaware study found.

This is despite the fact researchers found women and minorities, on average, are more qualified when comparing education, experience, and expertise. Only seven percent of minorities and 12
percent of women serve in leadership positions on boards of directors, which is lower than their prevalence in the population.

Adam Yore, co-author of the study and assistant professor of finance at the University of Delaware, said this trend can keep companies from having a variety of perspectives.

"The pay gap is not huge, so we think this might be some type of subconscious effect,” Yore said, "Yet, it is something that could impact a board because they could be missing a significant perspective by not having a minority or female on the board serving in a leadership role."

Yore added the pay gap gets bigger as women and minorities spend more time at a company, which he said is concerning, because companies are always trying to retain the most talented people.

Researchers suggest to avoid these problems in the future, firms should review how they appoint board members to certain committees and leadership roles to make sure they have a balanced perspective in their board meetings.

Tom Warhover steps down as executive editor

SHANE SANDERSON, 12 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Tom Warhover has stepped down as executive editor of the Columbia Missourian after 15 years in the position. Mike Jenner, Houston Harte Chair at MU's School of Journalism, has been appointed interim executive editor.

Warhover, who is an associate professor at the School of Journalism, will teach full time and conduct research at the Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute. Warhover, 53, said he will teach undergraduate news reporting and will help create an online course.

Asked about his motivation for leaving the Missourian, Warhover said, "It's been a long time in a job that's a little bit difficult."
In his tenure with the Missourian, which is a teaching lab for MU School of Journalism students, Warhover oversaw the Missourian's transition to an "online first" publication, and as a result, it publishes more news to more platforms than any other Journalism School professional outlet.

He led the staff to hundreds of Missouri Press Association awards and other honors in a period of financial difficulty in the newspaper industry. He also developed a keen interest in stress and resiliency, and his work helped identify students in crisis and improved the newsroom’s response.

Warhover offered his resignation to David Kurpius, dean of the School of Journalism, in mid-December. Kurpius and Warhover met Thursday and made Warhover's resignation effective Monday, Warhover said by phone. Kurpius issued a news release announcing Warhover's resignation early Monday afternoon.

Before joining the Missourian, Warhover worked at the Virginian-Pilot in coastal Virginia and North Carolina for 15 years. During his time there, he worked in a variety of roles, including reporter, editor and, finally, general manager for the paper's northeastern North Carolina operations. Warhover has also led the Missourian Readers' Board and written a weekly column explaining the Missourian’s inner workings. He is a 1985 graduate of the School of Journalism.

The search to replace Warhover will begin this spring, Kurpius said in a phone interview Monday. The board of the Missourian Publishing Association will work with Kurpius to find a successor.

Kurpius said the position will be filled "as soon as we find the right person for the job."

Major Garrett, a 1984 graduate of the Journalism School, chief White House correspondent for CBS News and president of the Missourian Publishing Association, said the board will defer day-to-day decisions to the dean and his search committee. The board members have "tremendous confidence" in Kurpius, Garrett said, and "will offer our assistance, our advice, our council and our encouragement" to the dean throughout the hiring process.
"Dean Kurpius is very much committed to diversity outreach and diversity in hiring," and diversity will be a "fixed goal" in the process, Garrett said.

"The competitive situation in Columbia is changing," Garrett said, referring directly to the Columbia Tribune's transition to a morning newspaper. Garrett also said he would like the new executive editor to expand the Missourian's video and audio reporting.

Jenner, 62, will not be a candidate to succeed Warhover on a permanent basis. He will return to his former role at the School of Journalism when he completes his time in the interim role at the Missourian, Jenner said.

Jenner served as executive editor of the Bakersfield Californian for 11 of his 17 years at the paper. In his time at the Californian, Jenner headed the launch of its interactive media division.

Jenner has been at the Journalism School since 2010. He has overseen an expansion of teaching in data journalism and a partnership with Politifact that puts students to work for the fact-checking authority. He is a 1975 graduate of the School of Journalism.

"My goal is to build on what Tom did and make the Missourian as strong as it can be," Jenner said. He said he wanted to ensure the Missourian will continue to be "an effective voice in the community, also an effective vehicle for students to learn to be great journalists."

"It's been a great ride," Warhover said in reference to his time at the Missourian. "I'd like to think I've been teaching for 15 years."
Cerner will help Missouri health systems share information, improve health

A group of independent health systems will share information — with an assist from Cerner Corp. — in a bid to improve the health of rural Missourians.

The Health Network of Missouri, a collaborative of six health care organizations, will use Cerner’s population health platform to gather and analyze information from their existing electronic health record systems. The network was created to improve the health of patients through the sharing of data and best practices and by improving coordination of care among providers and hospitals, HNM Executive Director Tom Tisone said in a release. Cerner’s involvement will help because it will allow sharing of data regardless of which electronic health record system a member uses, he said.

**HNM will partner with the University of Missouri's Tiger Institute for Health Innovation to scale Cerner’s HealtheIntent platform across the entire network. MU Health Care has used the platform since January, 2015.**

“Connecting these health care systems and their population health data will provide care teams with the information they need to make more strategic decisions across the continuum of health across Missouri,” John Glaser, Cerner’s senior vice president of population health, said in a release. “Having a more comprehensive view of a person’s health data and being able to meaningfully use it to engage individuals can help drive better patient outcomes.”

The HNM network includes members with more than 1,000 hospital beds and 1,200 affiliated physicians serving patients in central, southeast and northeast Missouri. It includes the University of Missouri Health Care in Columbia, Bothwell Regional Health Center in Sedalia, Capital Region Medical Center in Jefferson City, Hannibal Regional Healthcare System in Hannibal, Lake Regional Health System in Osage Beach and Saint Francis Healthcare System in Cape Girardeau.
Cerner health platform will help providers see more data

Six Missouri hospital systems that make up the Health Network of Missouri will begin using an electronic health management system created by health tech giant Cerner to coordinate and manage health care for residents in rural communities.

Cerner officials announced Thursday that University of Missouri Health Care will extend Cerner’s HealtheIntent population health management platform across the Health Network of Missouri. The health network is a group of six independent health care systems that use different electronic health record or EHR systems.

By connecting those systems through HealtheIntent, medical providers and health care systems can use the aggregate population health data to determine gaps in care and use it to “help drive better patient outcomes,” John Glaser, Cerner’s senior vice president of population health, said in a news release.

MU Health Care, Bothwell Regional Health Center in Sedalia, Capital Region Medical Center in Jefferson City, Hannibal Regional Healthcare System in Hannibal, Lake Regional Health System in Osage Beach and Saint Francis Healthcare System in Cape Girardeau will use HealtheIntent to link health data that originates from Cerner, Epic, Meditech, eClinicalWorks and Allscripts EHRs.

The network, which includes an academic medical center, state employer and a group of hospitals, serves patients throughout central, northeast and southeastern Missouri. Together, it accounts for more than 1,000 hospital beds and approximately 1,200 affiliated physicians, according to the news release.

MU Health Care, in partnership with the Tiger Institute for Health Innovation, has used HealtheIntent since January 2015.

Outgoing MU Health CEO Mitch Wasden said in the news release that managing the health of populations requires providers to be “armed with timely information so better care decisions can be made.” The data from HealtheIntent will combine demographic, clinical and sociological information for individuals and groups to improve health care, he said.

Wasden resigned his post last month and will leave MU Health on Feb. 24 to become CEO and executive vice president of Oregon Health & Science University in Portland.
MU to increase ticket sales efforts
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, 16 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — MU plans to be more aggressive in its approach to ticket sales after finalizing a contract with a sales solution company.

The Columbia Daily Tribune reports that on Friday the university finalized the contract with IMG Learfield Ticket Solutions, which will have a 13-person team serving as the school's outbound ticket sales unit. MU Athletics Director Jim Sterk announced the partnership in a Monday news release.

"We are excited to be partnering with IMG Learfield Ticket Solutions to create an energized outbound ticket sales effort," Sterk said in the release. "This is an untapped area that can be an invaluable resource for Mizzou and our fans, and we believe it will help us maximize attendance at our events. The resources and expertise that IMG Learfield can provide in this area is top notch and should provide outstanding benefits for years to come."

The team will work on campus calling potential season-ticket buyers and complement the university's ticket operations staff.

"IMG Learfield Ticket Solutions is proud to partner with Mizzou Athletics to create the most engaged fan base possible," IMG Learfield Ticket Solutions President Rob Sine said in a news release from Missouri Athletics. "We have been impressed with the vision and direction of the
Mizzou athletic department leadership. Our team will bring solutions to enhance business intelligence for both current and new fan bases."

IMG Learfield Ticket Solutions represents 40 collegiate partners, including the Big Ten Conference, the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Boise State University, Oregon University and Washington State University.

Missouri had an average of 52,236 attend its seven home football games in 2016, a nearly 20 percent drop from 2015.

Brian White, the university's executive associate athletic director for external affairs, said the sales team will likely begin its work in late February.

University of Missouri Hires Consultant to Boost Ticket Sales After 20 Percent Drop

Watch the story:
http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=be22d5a2-d511-4c10-ae8b-3782a91c7e54
On the left, a call to ‘Resist’ Donald Trump

Generated from News Bureau expert pitch

A few weeks after Donald Trump won the election, Neera Tanden, the president of the liberal think tank Center for American Progress, changed her Twitter photo from a headshot to a yellow square with a single word written in black.

“Resist,” her new profile photo said.

The word has become the unified rallying cry of the anti-Trump center-left since the reality show star’s upset victory in November — popping up everywhere from angry post-election hashtags to social media posts encouraging inauguration protests to Chuck Schumer’s opening speech on the floor of the Senate last week. Weeks before Trump was scheduled to take the oath of office, liberals began urging each other to form a “resistance” to push back against his promises of disruptive change — language that is far stronger than that used by minority parties in recent history. At the Department of Justice holiday party last month, Matt Miller, the former spokesman and a fierce Trump critic, even handed out pins with the Cross of Lorraine on them — a symbol of the French Resistance.

“Resistance became a watchword from Day One,” said Ben Wikler, the Washington director of the grassroots liberal organization MoveOn.

The night after Trump’s victory, MoveOn called for protests they described as “gatherings of solidarity, resistance and resolve.” Of those terms, the word “resistance” was the one that stuck out — and stuck. Wikler said it draws power from the way it evokes the image of the good guys fighting back against oppressive regimes in history and fiction, “from the French Resistance through the spirit of the rebel alliance in ‘Star Wars,’” which was again gaining attention thanks to the December release of the film “Rogue One.”

Grassroots activists have embraced the language, with the group carrying out civil disobedience actions at Trump Tower in Manhattan calling itself Rise & Resist. Since the election, Center for American Progress’ political action branch, Thinkprogress, has raised $200,000 selling black shirts that say “Resist” in white lettering. Last week, it was what a protester screamed when he interrupted incoming Trump press secretary Sean Spicer at a panel at the University of Chicago’s Institute of Politics. “This is not normal, people!” the activist shouted, before being escorted outside. “Stand up and resist!”

“There’s no secret committee that decided that this was going to be the word,” said Wikler. “It was something that everyone thought of at the same time, and that’s when you know an idea
has legs.” This Sunday, the group is sticking with that collectively decided call to arms, organizing 500 meetings around the country for activists to plot how to “resist” Trump’s cabinet nominations and legislative agenda.

“Resistance” has made its way from the grassroots to the Senate floor. In his opening speech as minority leader last week, Schumer vowed several times to “resist” Trump and congressional Republicans under certain circumstances. “His biggest and most consistent pledge was that he would make America great, make the lives of Americans better,” Schumer said. “We will hold him accountable for that. And we will resist him if he breaks that promise.”

The intensity of the language of opposition is reflective of Trump’s deep unpopularity on the left. Just 10 percent of Democrats said they had a favorable view of Trump in a November Gallup poll — far fewer than the 31 percent of Democrats who said they liked George W. Bush right after he was elected. Overall, just 42 percent of Americans said they had a favorable view of Trump — a figure that’s more than 15 points lower than the previous three presidents before their inaugurations, and one that makes him the least popular incoming president in at least 25 years.

The call to “resist” also embodies some liberals’ refusal to accept Trump’s win as legitimate. Many argue his win was only possible thanks to Russian meddling before Election Day and the last-minute intervention of FBI Director James Comey. Trump’s incoming White House staffers and even some Democrats have chided this refusal to acknowledge Trump’s win. “It’s over,” Vice President Joe Biden told some House Democrats who attempted to stop Trump’s Electoral College vote tally last week.

But others in the “resist” movement say the point is not to dispute Trump’s win but to organize around stopping his agenda. “He is the president, and people should not try to deny the fact that he had won fair and square in the Electoral College, but that doesn’t mean that Democrats or a majority of Americans that deemed him unfit should suddenly acquiesce to principles of his that are completely out of step with our core values,” said Brian Fallon, a former spokesman for Hillary Clinton’s presidential run.

In the idea of “resistance,” liberals also see a call to embrace new opposition tactics over the next four years, tactics that are needed because they say Trump’s campaign promises — building a wall along the entire U.S.-Mexico border, mass deportations, and banning Muslims from entering the country — fall outside the boundaries of acceptable political debate.

“The most important thing we’re trying to signal is these are not normal political debates,” Tanden said. “These are not normal times. It’s not that we’re having disagreements about one thing or another. We believe he wants to change the rules of the game and that calls for stronger opposition across the board.”

It remains to be seen whether the left will mobilize into a sustainable protest movement of “resistance” as it has in previous decades.
“The language that’s being used — resist, resistance — is notable, it says that there is a lot of controversy about where the Trump administration proposes to take the country, but it’s also not the first time the country has entered into these phases of intense political conflict,” said Alasdair Roberts, professor of public affairs at the University of Missouri and an expert in protest movements.

The antiwar protests and opposition to President Richard Nixon in 1968 were far more intense than the level of grassroots mobilization against Trump so far, Roberts added. Protests against President Herbert Hoover ahead of the 1932 election were also more extensive. “They had to call troops and tanks out in the streets of Washington to break up protests of veterans demanding better treatment from the federal government,” he said.

Amy Ard, a political organizer in religious communities who started a Facebook group called “Swamp Revolt” after Trump won to suggest ways to fight his agenda, said she is seeing liberals who never participated in protests before start to become activists.

“People are just getting used to what it feels like to resist, and probably never in a million years would have called themselves resistors,” Ard said.

Ard suggested the newly minted activists call their members of Congress to complain when House Republicans scaled back their internal ethics watchdog last Monday night. The outpouring of protest pressured the Republicans to reinstate the ethics office.

“It’s lucky for us that ‘Star Wars’ put out a new movie and ‘The Resistance’ sounds like the team you want to be on,” Ard said.

Cracking the books in 2017: What you need to know about education

BY MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS
mdwilliams@kcstar.com

As students return to classrooms and campus lecture halls from the holiday break, they face a host of new expectations.

Here are a few things — in no particular order — that students, parents and educators can expect in Missouri and Kansas education for 2017.
• **New leaders for two flagship institutions could be hired in each state. Both the University of Kansas and the University of Missouri in Columbia have launched nationwide searches for new chancellors.**

Bernadette Gray-Little, 71, KU’s first black and first female chancellor, announced last year that she will step down this summer after eight years leading the institution.

Missouri has been led by interim chancellor Hank Foley since November 2015, when R. Bowen Loftin stepped down after controversial, race-related, student protests on the campus.

• **Colleges in Kansas will see guns on their campuses this year. The Kansas Legislature’s passage of the Personal and Family Protection Act in 2013 allowed for lawful gun owners to carry concealed handguns on all Kansas college campuses and in their buildings, beginning July 1. How will the schools carry out safety measures?**

• This could be the year the University of Missouri-Kansas City gets a state match on the $48 million it raised to build a $96 million downtown performing arts campus in the Crossroads Arts District. Supporters of the campus have turned to the state General Assembly for a 50-50 financial match through a program that helps fund capital projects at public colleges and universities through public-private partnerships.

The University of Missouri System Board of Curators approved the UMKC request for state funds in June 2016.

• **Two- and four-year college campuses across both states will continue to struggle with how best to handle the rising number of sexual assaults being reported and the Title IX cases that come with them.**

Consider that Kansas State University has four federal investigations into how it handled Title IX complaints, KU has two and Washburn University has one. Missouri University of Science and Technology and William Jewell University each have one.

Haskell Indian Nations University, which is being sued by a former student who alleges she was raped by football players on campus, is in the midst of a potentially precedent-setting Title IX case. The Lawrence university, which falls under the U.S. Department of Interior and part of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, is arguing that Haskell is actually a federal agency and not subject to the controls that the gender discrimination law imposes on schools.

• **In Kansas elementary and secondary school leaders along with Gov. Sam Brownback and the Republican-controlled Legislature should finally get a court ruling on whether enough money is being spent to educate every student in the state’s public schools.**
School funding has long been an issue in Kansas. This case — on which the court heard arguments in September — stems from a lawsuit filed in 2010 by four districts that said $4.1 billion a year in Kansas education funding was about $800 million short of what the state constitution requires.

▪ This could be the year that Kansas City public schools complete the work that earns the district full accreditation status from the state.

For the first time in nearly 30 years, the district in 2016 scored at full accreditation level on the state-issued report that measures progress in the specific performance areas. State education officials have told district leaders that the school district would be considered for full accreditation status if it could keep up the good work for another year.

With so much on the line, Kansas City will be looking closely at how the school district’s new superintendent, Mark Bedell — who arrived in Kansas City from Baltimore in time for the start of the current school year — navigate the district toward accreditation.

▪ In August, Lee’s Summit will open a new Summit Technology Academy/Missouri Innovation Campus approved by voters in April 2015. The new $40 million school is a partnership with the University of Central Missouri and will house a school-to-career program praised by President Barack Obama in 2013 as a model for the nation.

▪ Students in Blue Valley schools will begin a new world language program with Chinese language immersion being implemented in the district’s new elementary school, opening in August. In addition, Chinese immersion is to be offered as an elective course at Aubry Bend Middle and Blue Valley Southwest. These changes are the first of many new world language offerings coming to district classrooms over the next several years.

▪ New elementary school buildings dot the map in the Shawnee Mission School District — Crestview and Benninghoven. A rebuild on Brookwood Elementary School is still in the design phase, but a groundbreaking will occur sometime this year. The district will also see the first dirt turned in construction of a new $17 million Lenexa Hills Elementary in the Shawnee Mission West area of the district.

▪ While there are no new charter schools opening in the city this year, Kansas City will be watching to see how the two that opened their doors in 2016 — Citizens of the World Charter School and Kansas City Neighborhood Academy — progress. Both will be adding grade levels in the fall 2017.
Over 800 Programs Fail Education Dept.’s Gainful-Employment Rule

(News Bureau note: MU’s Public Health program was assessed and received a “pass” rating.)

More than 800 programs failed the U.S. Department of Education’s accountability standards for its new gainful-employment rule, and risk losing federal student-aid funds, the department announced on Monday, and about 98 percent of those programs were offered by for-profit institutions.

To view the programs and their institutions that failed the standards, click here. For a sortable, searchable version, click here.

Monday’s announcement represented the first time the department had measured career-training programs against the debt-to-earnings benchmarks set out in the new rule. It’s unclear whether the Trump administration will continue to enforce the regulation.

Institutions that ran afoul of the rule fit into two categories:

- Over 800 programs failed the standards by having graduates with annual loan payments that exceeded 12 percent of their total earnings or 30 percent of their discretionary income.
- Some 1,239 programs received a “zone” rating, a slightly lower level of concern, meaning their graduates’ annual loan payments were 20 to 30 percent of discretionary income or 8 to 12 percent of total earnings.

Programs that fail in two of three consecutive years or are given “zone” ratings for four consecutive years are ineligible to receive Title IV student-aid funds, according to department guidelines.
The specifics of gainful employment were long debated after the department introduced the rule, in 2011, but in 2014 regulations were made final. According to the rule, a program passes if the estimated annual loan payments of graduates do not exceed 8 percent of total earnings or 20 percent of discretionary income.

For-profit colleges largely lobbied against the gainful-employment regulations.