Mizzou Alumni Association honors Rep. Nate Walker with Geyer Award

The Mizzou Alumni Association has announced that Rep. Nate Walker is one of two recipients of the 2017 Henry S. Geyer Awards.

Walker was recognized for his continued efforts to support higher education public policy.

Adjunct Professor Gary Smith, an advocate for higher education public policy, was the other recipient.

The awards were presented at a reception in Jefferson City on Jan. 16.

The alumni association’s Legislative Network Committee annually presents the awards to one state-elected official and one citizen who exemplify the dedication and spirit of Henry S. Geyer. As a state representative, Geyer believed education was the key to progress and prosperity in Missouri and introduced a bill to establish the University of Missouri in 1839.

“This year’s recipients are excellent examples of what it means to advocate for public higher education in our state,” said Jeff Montgomery, chair of the Legislative Network Committee.

Walker is a two-time graduate of Mizzou, with a bachelor of science degree in agricultural journalism and a master’s in regional and community affairs.

In a press release from Mizzou, Walker was praised for his opposition to House Bill 253 in 2013, a tax-cut bill that would have reduced state revenue collections and harmed K-12 and higher education funding.

“He has voted consistently against bills that would harm the University of Missouri and its AAU status,” the release said.
An accidental breakthrough: Lucky mistake leads MU researcher to double preservation time for transplant tissue

By Emily Hannemann

A cotton floor mop hangs above the door to Dr. James Cook’s office in the Missouri Orthopaedic Institute.

The mop’s handle holds signatures in black and gold marker and is signed by 11 members of Cook's research and surgical teams. They gave him the mop after the first transplant surgery using his breakthrough procedure.

The procedure doubles the time tissues can be preserved for transplant in knees, hips, shoulders and other joints. It is called MOPS – the Missouri Osteochondral Preservation System.

Cook, a William & Kathryn Allen Distinguished Chair in orthopedic surgery, developed MOPS to extend the time tissue can be viable before a transplant. He is also the director of Thompson Laboratory for Regenerative Orthopaedics & Mizzou BioJoint Center.

Cook began the project in 2011, when doctors had only 28 days after donated joint tissues were obtained before cartilage, bone and menisci were considered unviable and had to be tossed.

At least 14 of those days, Cook said, were used to determine whether the joint tissue was acceptable, based on donor and tissue screening. That drove the time doctors could use the tissue down to 13 or 14 days in a best-case scenario.

“That’s what stimulated us to go down that path,” he said.

MOPS stretches the time joint tissues can be preserved to 56 days, which gives doctors more donated tissue for joint restoration surgeries — athletic knee injuries, meniscal tears, trauma, hip malformation problems, shoulder disorders and ankle fractures, among them.

Looking closer at the cotton mop above his door, it’s hard not to smile.

It was the perfect gift for Cook — a mop to celebrate MOPS.
Problem identified

Six years ago, the procedure for preserving joint tissues was “suboptimal,” Cook said. When a donor died, joint tissues were sent to tissue banks to preserve for patients, but they didn't immediately go to those in need.

They were kept by tissue banks for about two weeks for testing. Then, with just 10 days or so for doctors to use the tissues, just a fraction of the donations could be used.

The narrow window wasn’t just wasteful. It was expensive. With banks throwing away 80 percent of their tissues as a result of the high turnover, Cook said, the cost was high.

So, having found a problem, Cook's team went to work to solve it.

They started with temperature. Current systems kept tissues at 4 degrees Celsius (about 25 degrees Fahrenheit). That was too chilly for Cook’s taste.

If cells could be kept at body temperature, he thought they might be kept alive longer.

“We wondered, is there a better way?” he asked. “After all, your cells are at body temperature. They don’t like to be too warm or too cold.”

Problem resolved

The team set off to see if there was a way to keep joint tissues viable at room temperature.

When one of his graduate students forgot to put preserved tissue into the body-temperature incubator after testing, it became a lucky mistake.

“He came to me and told me about it. I said, ‘Let’s see what happens,’” Cook said.

Those turned out to be the best grafts: They remained high quality for a longer period of time.

There was a lesson to be learned from the discovery, Cook said.

“Always tell the truth, and don’t automatically discard something you think is a mistake,” he said, laughing.

New procedure

In 2012, Cook and his team emerged with an entirely new method of preserving donor joint tissues for use in restoration surgical procedures. It keeps tissues at room temperature in a special “sauce” that keeps them viable for 56 days — double the time of the colder, older preservation method and more than triple the time to take them to patients in need.
Now they had to find a tissue bank willing to bring their idea from theory into practice. Of the five tissue banks in the U.S., only one — New Jersey’s Musculoskeletal Transplant Foundation — decided to pursue the new method.

“That wasn’t what we expected,” Cook said. He thought the banks would squabble for the ability to use his team’s discovery.

“We didn’t realize how ultra-conservative the banks were.”

**Patented system**

In 2013, the tissue bank in New Jersey funded a study to determine the usefulness of the system, which Cook said went “even better” than the initial tests performed in the lab. As a result, the New Jersey bank has exclusive rights to the MU-trademarked and patented system.

Now, Cook said, the other tissue banks have changed their tune.

“They all want it now, and while I felt like saying ‘I told you so,’ I am happy that the Musculoskeletal Transplant Foundation took the chance and believed in us and is seeing the benefits of their investment,” Cook said.

Although the tissue banks changed their attitudes about the procedure, there are still critics.

Dr. Edward Adelstein, chief of the laboratory at the Veterans Hospital in Columbia and a medical examiner, believes the procedure goes against medical knowledge of the body.

Adelstein said that when a person dies, their body is immediately flooded with bacteria from their intestinal tract. That bacteria, he said, would infect the joints and render them — and the media in which they are placed — useless.

"What they're doing is quite unique and, as far as I can tell, quite risky," Adelstein said.

**Successful surgery**

Jonathan Williams had no idea that his first month playing football for School of the Osage in 2013 would likely be his last.

“I was a defensive lineman, and it was my junior year of high school," he said. "I tackled the quarterback, and when I took him down with me, my teammate’s helmet was under my leg, and he landed on top of me. It was a bad deal.”

Williams remembers being taken to the Missouri Orthopaedic Institute and learning that his leg and his femur were broken. A year and a half later, his leg had healed, but a new problem presented itself: His knee was deteriorating.
“They told me about (the procedure that uses MOPS grafts) and how it was real blood and tissue and not metal and plastic," Williams said. "It sounded like the best choice."

After surgery, he spent four months in physical therapy, where he worked on exercises like stretching, leg lifts and stationary biking. He said it wasn’t an easy process, but it was worth it.

“I ran my first three miles the other day,” Williams said. “I almost threw up, but I didn’t stop.”

Now he works at the Missouri Orthopaedic Institute as a clerical assistant alongside Cook, the man who made his recovery possible.

"He’s doing some really cool stuff with preserving tissue, but he won’t brag about it," Williams said. "So I’ll brag about it for him."

Other breakthroughs

Cook’s breakthroughs haven’t been limited to MOPS.

He spent years working on a technique to help decrease complications in ACL surgeries. An ACL tear in the knee can be a devastating blow, especially to young athletes.

Cook has also made advances in “biomarkers,” which he calls the “fortune-teller” for detecting future joint-related medical troubles, like arthritis, before they occur.

“When arthritis is diagnosed by conventional methods, it’s end-stage,” he explained. “By the time people come in, it’s too late and they need to have joint replacement.”

The development is a useful technique, he said, because it gets patients inspired to change the factors in their control before arthritis sets in.

“Then you’re going to be motivated,” he said. "You can start swimming or biking. You can start taking nutritional supplements, with proven benefits. And joint-preserving surgeries are great options then, too.”

On the horizon for Cook is working with disc transplants, which he said can help patients with spinal problems. Though the procedure hasn’t yet been performed in human patients, he said it has been successfully completed in dogs.

Despite the work he’s done, he distributes the credit to his team.

“It’s not me,” he said. “I’ve had so many people support me, and everything we do is as a team. There’s nothing I’ve done by myself.”
Mizzou’s Martin wants to 'blaze a trail for all people'

By Dave Matter St. Louis Post-Dispatch

COLUMBIA, MO. • The latest issue of Sports Illustrated features a lengthy profile of Missouri basketball coach Cuonzo Martin and explores his arrival at Mizzou in the wake of 2015 and what unfolded on the Columbia campus and the aftershocks of student protests.

You can read S.L. Price’s story here.

On Tuesday, Martin said he hadn’t read the story yet, but he touched on some of the topics raised in Price’s piece. Martin downplayed the notion that he accepted the Mizzou job to heal any wounds lingering from the 2015 protests, but with some candid comments for local reporters, Martin made it clear he wants to make lasting contributions to his university, his community and society at large — contributions that transcend the game of basketball, race and politics.

“The most important thing is I took the job because it’s a tremendous opportunity,” Martin said. “Not so much to be close to home (in East St. Louis). It’s a great university. I wanted to be part of it. And not so much what took place in ’15. It’s a great opportunity first and foremost to be around a guy like (athletics director) Jim Sterk, who I think is an exceptional man. All those things matter.”

What else matters?

“Just doing your part in society,” he said. “I don’t know if color has anything to do with life; it’s just what we owe.”
“We have to give back,” he continued. “I don’t know if it’s in the article, but in everything we do, if we put our youth first in the decisions we make and we put our educational system first when it comes to youth, especially in the inner cities when they’re run down, if we make decisions based on that, I think we’ll have a great country. I think that’s the most important thing, when we put youth first and put all our differences aside, whatever it is we believe, whatever political views.

“That’s your choice as an adult. You have that right. But when you make decisions based on these kids (who are) walking around who don’t have a lot to eat, (and say), ‘I get my only meal at school, so when it’s summertime I have to find a meal to eat.’ If we can figure out how to make that work we can be a great, great country. I think we’re already exceptional as it is, but we can be where we’re supposed to be when we decide that. We’ve got a ways to go. That’s the most important thing to me.”

Asked if there was any significance that the story came out around Martin Luther King Day, Martin distanced himself from the civil rights leader but spoke to his ambitions for life after coaching.

“I’ll never be at the level of Martin Luther King, but I pray to God I can move in that area one day when I’m done doing this,” he said. “I’d like to blaze a trail for our people — and I mean all people. That’s very important. We all in this room should think the same way: Anytime our youth struggles, we all struggle. And we’ll pay for it at some point.”

“You guys didn’t expect all that, did you?”

Not exactly, but Martin is full of deep thoughts, worldly perspective and refreshing conversation that goes well beyond Xs and Os and typical coachspeak.

**Story continues:** [http://www.stltoday.com/sports/college/mizzou/mizzou-s-martin-wants-to-blaze-a-trail-for-all/article_7325dc0b-a30b-503a-9291-fcc3e83d80f6.html](http://www.stltoday.com/sports/college/mizzou/mizzou-s-martin-wants-to-blaze-a-trail-for-all/article_7325dc0b-a30b-503a-9291-fcc3e83d80f6.html)
Committee approves curator nomination

By Columbia Daily Tribune

JEFFERSON CITY — The Senate Gubernatorial Appointments Committee on Wednesday approved Julia Brncic, associate general counsel at Express Scripts, for a seat on the University of Missouri Board of Curators.

The committee held a brief hearing with Brncic, who was approved unanimously in a single vote along with more than two dozen other nominees. Brncic was asked her priorities for the university, which she said were to support UM System President Mun Choi’s efforts to have an open administration and to streamline administration at the university.

“We need to reclaim the reputation as the great academic institution in the state,” Brncic said.

A vote in the full Senate is expected Thursday to complete Brncic’s confirmation. No hearing date has been set for Jon Sundvold of Columbia, also appointed to the curators while lawmakers were not in session.

MU to soon hold open forum on hiring permanent provost

Watch video at: http://mms.tveyses.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=9d000b92-3594-4cac-abb5-73b31c231553
Are the federal government’s dietary guidelines making us fatter?

BY ELIZABETH PARKS

January 17, 2018 08:30 PM

Updated 11 hours 22 minutes ago

Elizabeth Parks is a professor in the University of Missouri’s Department of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology.

The rate of obesity in Missouri has nearly tripled since 1990. The Show-Me State is now the nation’s 10th-fattest state.

Along with obesity comes a host of health problems. Three in 10 Missourians have hypertension. One in 10 is diabetic. As of 2010, nearly 384,000 state residents had heart disease. Almost 100,000 had obesity-related cancer.

Missouri is not alone. Obesity rates, and their consequent health problems, are skyrocketing nationwide. For decades, the federal government has tried to combat this epidemic, largely through the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion’s Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which aim to help people choose eating patterns that improve health.

Paradoxically, over the past two decades, Americans have continued to gain weight, despite many following the government’s dietary advice.

One might assume that no one pays any attention to the government’s guidelines, but they actually have a huge influence on how we all eat. They shape the National School Lunch
Program, dictate military rations and provide advice for nursing-home meals. They also influence the doctors, nutritionists and dietitians who deliver dietary advice.

The guidelines were first released in 1980 as a simple, 20-page booklet. Today they total 144 pages, based on a larger report of 571 pages. Still, as the report has grown in length, Americans have grown in size. Thus, in 2015, Congress directed the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine to take a look at the process used to draft the guidelines. Its report found that the methods used to produce the guidelines “require increased rigor to better meet current standards of practice.”

That’s largely because new nutritional science research is constantly emerging. Saturated fat and salt offer two clear examples.

The guidelines long instructed people to eat fewer fats and more carbohydrates, so people banished butter and increased their consumption of breads and sweets. From 1970 to 2000, Americans’ average daily consumption of carbohydrates rose by 60 grams — or about 250 calories — while their fat consumption decreased.

But a number of studies now show that for many people, eating too many carbohydrates can drive weight gain. My own research at the University of Missouri has demonstrated how easily dietary sugars are transformed into fat in the body.

The guidelines also recommend reducing salt as much as possible. Yet numerous recent studies have challenged this advice.

The government isn’t purposefully doling out questionable recommendations. Indeed, its advisory panels are comprised of some of the nation’s leading scientists, and the experts pore over thousands of pages of data. But their process for evaluating research is in need of review.

Making matters even messier, federal officials open up the guidelines for comment after the scientists complete their job. This gives industry stakeholders — primarily agricultural and food
lobbyists — an opportunity to have their say, presenting yet another set of hurdles for good science to prevail.

To fix the guidelines, officials should appoint experts with a balance of opinions, especially on key contentious topics such as saturated fats and salt. They should also recognize that different people may need different diets. Science doesn’t support a one-size-fits-all approach to nutrition. Perhaps the government shouldn’t promote one either.

The Academies’ report noted that it’s critical to “enhance transparency, manage biases and conflicts of interest to promote independent decision making, promote diversity of expertise and experience, support a deliberative process, and adopt state-of-the-art processes and methods to maximize scientific rigor.”

That’s completely correct. Embracing sound science and removing politics from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans will require persistence and courage, but getting them right is critical for public health.

**School of Music building construction will cause four phases of closings on MU's campus**

By MARIE BOWMAN

COLUMBIA, Mo. - According to a press release, the Columbia City Council approved closures for the construction of the new School of Music building on MU's campus.

The closures will come in four phases. They are detailed below:
Phase 1 Jan. 10 - Aug. 3

Closure of the south sidewalk along Paquin Street between the intersection of Paquin Street and Mathews Street to Paquin Street and Hitt Street.

Phase 2 March 23 - April 27

Closure of the eastbound lane of University Avenue from Middlebush Hall to the intersection of University Avenue and Hitt Street.

Phase 3 May 14 - June 22

Closure of the intersection of University Avenue and Hitt Street.

Phase 3a May 14 - June 1

Closure of Hitt Street from the intersection of University Avenue and Hitt Street to the south entrance of the Hitt Street parking structure. Closure of the eastbound lane of University Avenue from the intersection of University Avenue and Hitt Street to a point 60 feet east of the intersection.

Phase 4 June 22 - July 6

Closure of the westbound lane of University Avenue at a point 60 feet east of the intersection of University Avenue and Hitt Street.

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Fire crews respond to alarm at Mizzou Arena

By JOE MCLEAN

COLUMBIA, Mo. - UPDATE - 4:00 A.M.: MU security workers told ABC 17 that a water leak in the pump room prompted the alarm at Mizzou Arena Thursday morning.
Repair efforts were underway soon after 2:30 a.m.

**ORIGINAL**: The Columbia Fire Department sent a crew to Mizzou Arena Thursday morning for a reported alarm.

The call came into dispatch just after 2:30 a.m., just hours after the MU Men's Basketball game against Tennessee wrapped up in the same building.

ABC 17 News crews on scene saw only one CFD truck on scene.

More information will be posted to this article, should any developments occur.

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**SANDY DAVIDSON: Trump's use of salty language reminds us that 'context is critical'**

By Sandy Davidson, professor in the Missouri School of Journalism

Warning: This piece contains offensive language. If you’re expletive-averse, please stop reading now!

A president using salty language is nothing new. Lyndon Johnson’s spicy language includes: “I do know the difference between chicken s— and chicken salad.” Richard Nixon’s language from the Watergate tapes can be summed up in two words: “expletive deleted.” No political party has exclusive claim to use of less-than-polite language.

Barack Obama called his political rival Mitt Romney a “bulls---ter” in a Rolling Stone interview, but print media aren’t regulated by the FCC. Salty language can be a problem, however, for over-the-air broadcasters who must follow FCC rules against “indecency.”

Vice President Joe Biden created some difficulties when he leaned over to President Obama, who was signing health care legislation, and said, “This is a big f---ing deal.” And now it’s President Donald Trump giving broadcast media problems with his alleged “s--hole countries” comment. Or maybe it’s “s—house.”

Could the FCC consider Trump’s alleged language indecent? This begs the question: “What’s indecency?”
Indecency isn’t the same as obscenity. In 1973, the Supreme Court devised a three-part obscenity test: Does material appeal to “prurient interest,” is it “patently offensive,” and does it lack “serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value”?

Indecency is sort of “obscenity lite.” It uses only the “patently offensive” part of the obscenity test. But indecency, like obscenity, must involve sex or excretory functions. Violence alone doesn’t count. That’s arguably a little strange, but that’s the law.

Here’s the FCC’s definition of indecency: “language or material that, in context, depicts or describes, in terms patently offensive as measured by contemporary community standards for the broadcast medium, sexual or excretory organs or activities.”

While obscenity can be restricted anywhere, cable, satellite and the internet can use indecency at will. Over-the-air broadcasters may air indecency, but only during “safe-harbor” hours, 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.

Credit George Carlin. In 1978, the Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that the FCC indeed could restrict broadcasting of the seven “filthy words” Carlin said broadcasters couldn’t say. The FCC was on a roll.

Some FCC fines for indecency were pretty ridiculous. In 1989, the FCC fined radio stations for playing silly songs such as “Walk With an Erection,” sung to the tune of “Walk Like an Egyptian.” Some fines targeted “shock jocks,” who arguably needed a little toning down. In the early 1990s, Howard Stern became king of FCC fines.

A decade later, music award shows drew fire. On Fox, award-winner Cher chirped, “People have been telling me I’m on the way out every year, right? So f--- ‘em.” Nicole Richie said “f---ing” and “s—.” The FCC found their statements indecent but didn’t fine Fox. Then on NBC’s 2003 Golden Globe Awards, Bono spontaneously exclaimed “f---ing brilliant!”

At first, the FCC said Bono’s “fleeting expletive” wasn’t indecent, but then came the shake-up — Janet Jackson’s infamous “wardrobe malfunction” during the 2004 Super Bowl halftime show. Justin Timberlake ripped off part of her bustier, exposing her breast. The FCC fined CBS $550,000. The month following “Nipplegate,” the FCC decided Bono’s expletive really was indecent. Still, NBC received no fine.

Here’s what was happening: The FCC was toughening its indecency policy by adopting a “first blow” theory. No longer would the FCC say “fleeting expletives” were acceptable. The first time an indecent word was used — the first blow — the use could garner a fine. “Could” is the operative word. The FCC was somewhat inconsistent. For example, the FCC decided it wasn’t indecent when a “Survivor: Vanuatu” contestant called another contestant a “bulls---ter” during a live CBS interview on “The Early Show.”
The inconsistencies seemed so bad that in 2007, the Second Circuit called the FCC’s first blow policy “arbitrary and capricious.” The court pointed out, for example, that the FCC said expletives in ABC’s airing of Steven Spielberg’s movie “Saving Private Ryan” weren’t indecent because deleting them “would have altered the nature of the artistic work.” But the FCC said expletives in Martin Scorsese’s PBS documentary about blues singers (who use blue language) were indecent because the documentary could have “fulfilled” its educational purpose without them.

The FCC appealed and won. In 2009, the Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that the policy change was “neither arbitrary nor capricious” but “entirely rational”: “Even isolated utterances ... can constitute harmful ‘first blow[s]’ to children.”

But in 2012, the FCC lost twice. The first case involved the music-awards expletives and seven seconds of nudity in a shower scene in ABC’s “NYPD Blue,” which got ABC a $1.2 million fine. The Supreme Court ruled 8-0 that FCC standards were vague and hadn’t given networks “fair notice ... that fleeting expletives and momentary nudity” could be deemed indecent.

Then the Court let stand a lower court decision tossing the $550,000 fine for Jackson’s Super Bowl fiasco. But Chief Justice John Roberts warned against “future ‘wardrobe malfunctions,’” saying, “It is now clear that the brevity of an indecent broadcast — be it word or image — cannot immunize it from FCC censure.”

In sum, broadcasters are on notice that the FCC now uses a “first blow” theory. Broadcasters might not be safe airing expletives or showing too much in shower scenes or halftime shows. On the other hand, indecency is “measured by contemporary community standards for the broadcast medium.” Could one argue that standards have lessened and crude language is now more acceptable?

At 10 a.m. on Friday, KBIA used the unbleeped word “s---hole” in a news report about Trump’s alleged remark. Could KBIA get fined for “indecent” news? KOMU, during the NBC news at 5:30 p.m., likewise aired an unexpurgated repetition of Trump’s alleged remark.

Newscasters appear to be OK. As the FCC’s website says, “context is critical” when determining if material is patently offensive. How strange if Ajit Pai, appointed FCC chair by Trump, presided over fining broadcasters for quoting Trump. Still, even if KBIA, KOMU and other broadcasters are safe, tender ears are not.