MU faculty council 'denounces' UM System audit, calls for greater transparency

By Alyssa Toomey


UPDATE: A spokesperson for the UM System told ABC 17 News they don't have any comment at this time, but added that Dr. Choi will address the resolution Friday.

ORIGINAL: The MU faculty council is denouncing the recent state audit of the University of Missouri System.

As ABC 17 News previously reported, the audit said more than $2 million in hidden incentives was paid to top university leaders, including funds for vehicle allowances, retention bonuses and housing.

Just days after the release of the scathing report, the MU faculty council has drafted a resolution in response. It says the council "denounces these hidden bonuses and payments given to officials of the UM System during a period of severe austerity encountered by the four campuses of the university."

The resolution goes on to call the "complete disregard for the students faculty and staff of the University of Missouri," as well as Missouri taxpayers, "appalling." It also says the faculty council endorses the state auditor’s conclusion that "all compensation" must be "presented in a transparent manner."

This comes just one day before UM System president Dr. Mun Choi is scheduled to address the media for the first time since he began his position on March 1.

The faculty council is also expected to discuss the resolution at their meeting Thursday afternoon. ABC 17 News will have a crew attending and will update this post.
MU faculty council denounces incentive pay

Resolution describes audit findings as ‘appalling’

By Megan Favignano
Columbia Daily Tribune

The University of Missouri Faculty Council passed a resolution Thursday that described incentive payments UM System officials received during a two-year period as "appalling."

In a recent audit, Missouri State Auditor Nicole Galloway questioned the legality of incentive money paid to UM System administrators since July 2014. The $1.2 million in incentives is part of $2.4 million in off-payroll compensation given to administrators over the past three years.

She noted "transparency concerns" with the compensation provided, as the additional compensation was not included in the published salaries of those people.

During a heated discussion Thursday, one faculty member described administrators accepting the incentives during difficult budget years for the institution as "disheartening." Multiple faculty members said the incentive payments take away the credibility the university has with the entire state.

In the resolution passed Thursday, the faculty council denounced these hidden bonuses and payments given to officials of the UM System during a period of severe austerity encountered by the four campuses of the university.

During the current fiscal year, which began July 1, 12 system administration employees received $210,000 in incentive payments, which were paid out a few weeks after UM curators learned $3.8 million in state budget cuts would eliminate 20 jobs in the central office. And this week, interim Chancellor Hank Foley sent a campuswide email explaining that MU would need to use reserve funds to cover a roughly $20 million shortfall to address state cuts.

Art Jago, a management professor who helped write the resolution, said he would have liked to include even stronger language.

"I think the University of Missouri System was shameful in its absolute total disregard" of students, faculty, staff and taxpayers, he said.

The UM System said in a statement this week that incentives don't surpass the market median, adding that the university's peer institutions also provide incentive payments.

"If the University believes that administrators deserve a certain amount of compensation, it should be prepared to defend the amount and to make appropriate public disclosures of the compensation, just as the University does for faculty and staff salaries," the resolution said.

In the resolution, the Faculty Council endorsed Galloway's conclusion that "ensuring all compensation earned by executives and administrators is presented in a transparent manner is in the best interest of the UM System and the public."

Because the resolution was introduced Thursday, the council typically would have waited until its next meeting to vote. However, the Faculty Council voted to suspend its rules and approve the resolution Thursday after faculty members expressed the need to make a statement on the audit sooner rather than later.
More than a year after the University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe was ousted after a semester of protests, it was revealed that he had received more than $100,000 in inappropriate payments. And he wasn't the only one. In total, the university doled out more than $2 million of hidden payments to administrators over the past three years.

That’s according to a report released Monday by Missouri State Auditor Nicole Galloway. All in all, the university paid its administrators about $2.3 million in a manner that was concealed from the public. About $1.2 million of that total came in the form of incentives, given to administrators without being tied to specific criteria. The rest, more than $1 million, was given in the form of luxury vehicle allowances and retention bonuses.

Another top administrator who resigned during the protests in November 2015 — R. Bowen Loftin, former chancellor of the Columbia campus — was given about half a million dollars after he resigned, although he had “no work responsibilities or work product due,” the report said.

Loftin continued to receive his chancellor’s salary for six months after he resigned, and he was allowed to keep additional compensation. That compensation included a $100,000 retention bonus, an annual luxury vehicle allowance, a $35,000 stipend and a $50,000 travel budget. In June 2016, he began receiving a salary for his new position as the director of a research center at the university.

In a statement, University of Missouri spokesman John Fougere argued that the university did nothing wrong: “The program includes incentives that are used among peer higher education institutions, and generally do not exceed the median of the market. Under the UM System’s executive compensation program, executive leaders earn a portion of their annual salary based strictly on performance.”
But three recently appointed members of the university’s Board of Curators condemned the practices.

“This audit revealed some disturbing things,” Daryl Chatman, an attorney and former Mizzou football player, told the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. “We do know something is broken.”

The report was published one month after Missouri’s new Gov. Eric Greitens (R) proposed cutting the state’s higher education budget by $40 million.

*Morning Clips continue onto the next page...*
MU to use reserve funds to cover $20M shortfall

University announces first ‘Mizzou Giving Day’

By Megan Favignano
Columbia Daily Tribune

The University of Missouri’s flagship campus will use reserves to address a roughly $20 million budget shortfall after Gov. Eric Greitens restricted state funding from higher education institutions in January.

In a campuswide email Wednesday, interim Chancellor Hank Foley said that given the short timeframe, funds will need to come from MU’s reserves, which constitute hundreds of accounts on campus. Christian Basi, MU spokesman, said some of the funds won’t physically come from reserve accounts, but from money set aside for projects or equipment purchases.

“The intent is that, yes, this will come from money that is currently on hand and that we expect there will be certain projects or purchases that may have to be delayed or not completed because of this action,” Basi said.

In his first month on the job, Missouri’s newly elected governor restricted $31.4 million in UM System spending for fiscal year 2017, which ends June 30. Lower enrollment this school year has caused an additional revenue crunch for MU.

The office of the vice chancellor for finance is using a set of “budget guiding principles,” which Foley included in his email, to calculate how much each school, college and division will contribute to fill the $20 million gap. The principles include a formula to determine how much each area of campus will chip in, based on reserve balances and general revenue in each area.

Basi said he expects those calculations to be complete in the next couple of weeks. In his email, Foley said the campus will have difficult decisions to make, which will be a “challenging process.”

“These calculations will represent real programs and projects, real initiatives, and in some cases, real people who are part of our university family,” Foley said in his statement. “At the same time, it is important that you know we as a campus team are working diligently everyday to identify areas where we can avoid duplication of services, enhance efficiencies and realize cost savings.”

Basi said auxiliary departments, which generate revenue and include athletics and residential life, will be included in those calculations and treated the same as academic units.

MU Health also will help the university cover its shortfall. However, the hospital’s contribution will be determined through conversations with hospital officials about how much support it can provide given the industry’s demand to have cash on hand.

The office of the vice chancellor for finance will tell each college, school and division on campus how much of the shortfall it is responsible for covering, and leaders in each area will choose where that money will be drawn from, Basi said.

Also this week, MU’s Office of Advancement said it will hold the first “Mizzou Giving Day” from noon Wednesday through noon Thursday. It is the university’s first daylong campaign, according to a news release, and will seek to raise money for all areas of the university.

Foley sent another campuswide message earlier this week, saying he has sought input from several campus groups as the university plans for further budget reductions next fiscal year. The governor proposed cutting $40.4 million from the university system’s basic appropriation for fiscal year 2018, which starts July 1. His proposal gives the UM System $408.2 million, which is the lowest state appropriation since 2014 fiscal year.
Interim Rikoon is new dean of MU College of Human Environmental Sciences

CRystal DuAn, 19 hrs ago


COLUMBIA — The MU College of Human Environmental Sciences has a new dean. After being interim dean since August 2015, J. Sanford Rikoon officially took the permanent position Thursday, effective immediately.

"I've become really invested in the people and programs of this college," he said. "I learn something awesome every week, and I now feel part of the HES family."

Known as “Sandy,” Rikoon has been with MU since 1987, when he joined the Department of Rural Sociology in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. He went on to be dean of research at the College of Human Environmental Sciences in 2009, and he found that the connection between rural sociology and the disciplines of Human Environmental Sciences is "pretty close."

Rikoon didn't initially apply to be considered as permanent dean after his interim run but soon changed his mind, he said.

"I was originally pretty intent on returning to rural sociology," he said. "But every month that went by I became more and more invested in this college. It has exceptional faculty, staff and students, and that made the decision a heck of a lot easier to me."

Rikoon said that while the day-to-day work will be much as it has been, he can now make more long-term decisions.
"What changes is you have a longer horizon," he said. "You can get a little more involved in beginning initiatives and look forward two to five years instead of worrying about making too many changes before the college hires another person."

Rikoon filled the vacancy left after Stephen Jorgensen retired in August 2015. Jorgensen left a strong mark: He oversaw a 160 percent increase in his college's endowment, while the number of credit hours taken in the college doubled since he worked at MU in 2001, according to previous Missourian reporting.

In 2004, Rikoon founded the Interdisciplinary Center for Food Security, which combines national research, training and outreach in the field of food security. He has received awards such as Southeastern Conference Academic Leadership Development Fellowship, the Vice Chancellor’s Award of Distinguished Faculty in CAFNR and the William T. Kemper Fellowship for Teaching Excellence.

In his new position, he will be paid $230,000 annually.

The College of Human Environmental Sciences oversees the School of Social Work, the departments of architectural studies, human development and family studies, nutrition and exercise physiology, personal financial planning and the textile and apparel management program. The college has more than 1,800 students.

"We are excited that Sandy will be continuing to lead the College of Human Environmental Sciences," MU Provost Garrett Stokes said in a news release announcing Rikoon's appointment.

"As a renowned researcher and educator with comprehensive knowledge in food security, political ecology and environmental sociology, as well as a passion for mentoring students, faculty and staff, he is the perfect fit to lead the College of Human Environmental Sciences at Mizzou," Stokes said.
Rikoon named MU dean of Human Environmental Sciences

J. Sanford "Sandy" Rikoon, University of Missouri curator professor of rural sociology, has been promoted to dean of the MU College of Human Environmental Sciences, effective immediately. Rikoon has been serving as interim dean of the college since August 2015.

"As a renowned researcher and educator with comprehensive knowledge in food security, political ecology and environmental sociology as well as a passion for mentoring students, faculty and staff, he is the perfect fit to lead the College of Human Environmental Sciences at Mizzou," Garnett Stokes, MU provost and executive vice president for academic affairs, said in a news release.

Rikoon joined the MU faculty in 1987 in the department of rural sociology in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. In 2004, he led the effort to establish the Interdisciplinary Center for Food Security, the first center of its kind to combine national research, training and outreach in the field of food security.

Rikoon said in the news release that everyone involved in the college is committed to making a difference in things most basic to people's lives, including food, clothing, health, family and community.

"The College of Human Environmental Sciences has a long history of excellence and a very promising future in all of the university's missions," he said.
Something (not emotion) links epilepsy and religion

Researchers may have uncovered a link between religiosity—a disposition for spiritual experience and religious activity—and epilepsy.

This connection between epilepsy and heightened religious experience has been recognized since at least the 19th century.

“Past research has indicated that humans might have a distinctive neurological tendency toward being spiritually oriented,” says Brick Johnstone, a neuropsychologist and professor of health psychology at the University of Missouri. “This research supports the notion that the human propensity for religious or spiritual experiences may be neurologically based.”

“The end goal of this research is to understand if some type of connection exists between the brain and spiritual experience,” says Daniel Cohen, coauthor and assistant professor of religious studies. “If a connection exists, what does it mean for humans and their relationship with religion?”

In their study, the researchers asked individuals with epilepsy to take two surveys. The first survey assessed behavior characteristics specifically associated with epilepsy. The second survey measured religious activities and spiritual orientations.

The average participant was 39 years old, the majority of participants were white; 32 percent identified as Protestant, 10 percent as Catholic, 5 percent as Buddhist, 5 percent as atheist, 38 percent as other, and 10 percent did not indicate any religious affiliation.

“We found a strong correlation between philosophical religious thoughts and epilepsy, but no correlation between emotional thinking and epilepsy,” says Greyson Holliday, coauthor and undergraduate student studying psychology. “This study suggests that people may have natural
neurological predispositions to think about religion but not in a way that is necessarily associated with emotion.”

Based on the findings, future research from Johnstone, Holliday, and Cohen will examine religious experiences before and after brain surgery to help determine the specific nature of religiously oriented neuropsychological processes.

The work appears in the journal *Mental Health, Religion and Culture*.

#31 Radio Market in the U.S.

**Mizzou Researchers Discover Neurological Link Between Religion and Epilepsy**

**Story generated from MU News Bureau press release:** [Researchers Find Neurological Link Between Religious Experiences and Epilepsy](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=572298e1-322d-40ca-ba23-8cbe33833271)

AAU Research Magazine and Website; 1.5 million unique visitors per month
Infection of pregnant women by the Asian strain of Zika virus has been linked to brain abnormalities such as microcephaly in their infants. It’s not clear, however, at what stage of pregnancy the human fetus is most susceptible to the disease.

A new study shows the human fetus may be most vulnerable to Zika infection very early in pregnancy. In addition, the lesser-known African strain of Zika might possibly cause nearly immediate death of the placenta. Researchers say the findings could lead to the development of stronger defenses in the global fight against Zika.

“Although the placenta is an effective barrier to the transmission of certain diseases and pathogens, the Asian strain, which has been linked to microcephaly in humans, is generally thought to cross through the placenta,” says R. Michael Roberts, professor of animal science and of biochemistry at the University of Missouri.

“Spread mostly by infected mosquitos, incidences of the virus can be found throughout US states and territories where more than 3,100 cases in pregnant women, mainly travelers from countries where the disease is widespread, have been reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.”

For the new study, published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, researchers created placental cells from an approved line of pluripotent stem cells that were similar to early stage placentas. These placental cells were then infected with an Asian and African strain of Zika virus to determine how the placental cells were affected by the viruses.

“Zika enters its target cells in a complex, multistep process,” says Megan A. Sheridan, a graduate student in Roberts’ lab. “We found that the Asian strain of the virus infected and replicated in the cells; however, it didn’t kill the cells as readily.

“Our research suggests that the Asian strain infects the placenta in the early stages of pregnancy and essentially ‘lies in wait’ where it is then transmitted to the fetus causing neurological disorders in infants such as microcephaly.”

The team noticed substantially different results when placental cells were introduced to the African strain of the Zika virus. When exposed, placental cells were killed within days, indicating that African strain of Zika could possibly cause miscarriages in infected mothers.
“The results from our testing of the African strain were unexpected,” Roberts says. “The cells were killed within 40-48 hours meaning that African Zika, while less prevalent, could be much more deadly during early pregnancy.

The findings suggest that the developing fetus could be most vulnerable to infection by Zika virus and other pathogens during a relatively narrow window within the first trimester of pregnancy.”

The National Institutes of Health and Fundação de Amparo a Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo funded the work. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the funding agencies.

MU researchers: Zika virus strain kills babies in the first trimester


Story generated from MU News Bureau press release: Zika in Pregnant Women: Researchers Determine Susceptibility, Possible Infection Mechanisms

By Shaletta Norwood

COLUMBIA - MU Researchers discovered the lesser-known strain of the Zika virus, African strain, can end womens' pregnancies in the first trimester.

The Zika virus is a virus people contract from mosquitoes and is prevalent in places like: Central America, South America, Brazil, Puerto Rico and southern North American states.
Pregnant women who travel outside of the U.S. are more likely to get infected.

Unlike the African strain, the Asian strain of the Zika virus is the most common strain, and women can experience it anytime throughout their pregnancy. The Asian strain affect infants' brains and can cause abnormalities like microcephaly.

MU Curators' Professor Michael Roberts said the African strain of the virus is worse because it is deadly for unborn children.

"We suspect that the African strain, should a pregnant woman be infected, that she will lose her baby because at that stage it will be very early," Robert said. "She might not even be aware she was pregnant when she lost it. In other words, her period might be a day or two late, but it will go unnoticed."

MU Research Assistant Megan Sheridan studies problems that can happen during pregnancies.

Sheridan said in the early stages of the pregnancy, the African strain of Zika attacks the placenta and the baby.

"The African strain is so destructive that it infects the placenta and kills the placenta, and therefore causes pregnancy loss," Sheridan said. "Because without the placenta no pregnancy would be supported."

Sheridan said pregnant women can contract the virus from their sexual partners as well.

"It is possible for the male partner to carry Zika and then sexually transmit it to the mother," Sheridan said. "So that causes other concerns."

Roberts said a little more than 100 African strain of Zika cases have been reported sporadically in the U.S.

The Zika virus doesn't affect womens chances of getting pregnant after it aborts the fetus during the infection.
Dr. Mun Choi scheduled to speak with media

By Elizabeth Duesenberg

On Friday, Dr. Mun Choi is scheduled to meet and speak with the media for the first time since taking office.

**Choi has been the University of Missouri's system president since March 1, 2017.**

This comes after the system went more than a year with a interim leadership.

According to curators our ABC17 crews talked with, Choi is set to speak on the audit which calls out certain leaders as well as identifies how much they make.

ABC17 revealed more than $2 million in hidden bonuses were paid to top university leaders.

The council has passed a resolution on the audit.

It denounces those bonuses and asks for more transparency.

Another topic Choi may address is the current search for a new chancellor for the Columbia Campus.

Hank Foley has been the interim chancellor for more than a year.

ABC17 also hopes to find out what Choi's plans are to improve enrollment after a drop in numbers following campus protests in 2015.

Our crews will be at the news conference to hear what he has to say about these concerns and what his plans are for the future.

ABC17 will live stream the meeting.
UM System President to address media

By Stephanie Hirata

COLUMBIA — University of Missouri System President Mun Choi will address the media Friday at MU for the first time since taking office on March 1.

His press conference comes days after an unsettling audit of the UM System was released, stating more than 2 million in hidden bonus pay was uncovered.

The audit reviewed management operations for the Board of Curators and system administration. Missouri State Auditor Nicole Galloway Galloway described inappropriate bonus payments to top executives, including incentive payments, luxury vehicle allowances and other compensation not included in published salaries.

Choi will give his remarks at 12 p.m. in the President's Conference Room at 321 University Hall in Columbia.

MU police report shines light on student anti-Semitic remark investigation


By Taylor Petras
COLUMBIA, Mo. - ABC 17 News received a copy of the police report Thursday involving the investigation into two students accused of making anti-Semitic remarks and harassing another student.

MU Police arrested Noah Rogers, a sophomore, and Erich Eastman, a freshman, on Feb. 27 after responding to a call at McDavid Hall around 8 p.m.

The victim, a freshman student and of Jewish faith, told police Eastman posted anti-Semitic quotes on the ceiling of their dorm room.

According to the police report, Eastman and the victim were roommates in McDavid Hall.

The victim told police Eastman and Rogers had been referring to him as an anti-Semitic nickname since the beginning of the semester.

The victim also told police about an incident in October in which Rogers allegedly threw a full or half-full plastic water bottle at him from car and yelled the anti-Semitic nickname.

Conversations with Eastman and Rogers were redacted from the police report.

Eastman and Rogers were both arrested on suspicion of first degree harassment. Rogers was also arrested on third degree assault charges motivated by discrimination.

As of Thursday afternoon, neither Eastman or Rogers had been formally charged in Boone County Court.

MU spokesperson Christian Basi said he couldn't comment on whether the university has taken any disciplinary action due to federal student privacy laws.

MARCH 9, 2017 6:31 PM

Kim Anderson receives $650,000 in separation agreement with Mizzou

tpalmer@kcstar.com
Missouri will pay outgoing men’s basketball coach Kim Anderson $650,000, according to terms of a separation agreement released Thursday to The Star.

Anderson, who signed a five-year deal worth $1.1 million annually on April 30, 2014, will receive $450,000 for “liquidated damages in the negotiated lump sum” and $200,000 “for meeting or exceeding the academic accomplishment and social responsibilities” laid out by the Tigers’ athletic directors during the last two years.

In addition, Anderson is entitled to $300,000, which Mizzou has deposited into an annuity account for each year he coached the Tigers.

The agreement was signed March 6 by interim MU chancellor Hank Foley and Anderson after the parties agreed “their mutual best interest would be served by Anderson stepping down as Head Men’s Basketball Coach,” according to the separation agreement.

Anderson will remain employed at his current salary until April 4, but it can be terminated earlier if he takes another job.

Mizzou, Anderson agree to $650,000 buyout

By Dave Matter St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 7 hrs ago

Missouri has agreed to pay departing basketball coach Kim Anderson $650,000 for firing him with two years left on his original five-year contract. Mizzou finalized Anderson's separation agreement on Monday. The Post-Dispatch obtained the document Thursday through an open records request.

The buyout in Anderson's original contract was his base salary ($300,000) for every year left on his deal if he’s fired without cause. By the industry standard, that's a cheap buyout for a major conference college basketball coaching contract. MU and Anderson agreed to a lump sum of $450,000 plus $200,000 for meeting or exceeding the academic accomplishment and social responsibility incentive clause in his contract. Anderson's guaranteed salary at MU was $1.1 million.
His separation agreement also includes the money deposited into his university-managed annuity fund. As part of his contract, MU annually put $100,000 into a fund that he can withdraw at the end of his term at MU. That leaves him with $300,000 for his time in the head-coaching position.

According to the separation agreement, Anderson's time as Mizzou's head coach ends after the team's final game of the season though he'll remain employed by the university and eligible for benefits through April 4, unless he accepts a new job before that date. In that position he'll report to athletics director Jim Sterk to work on "such matters as they may be assigned."

After Wednesday's dramatic overtime victory over Auburn, the Tigers play Ole Miss in the second round of the SEC tournament on Thursday with tip-off set for approximately 8:30 p.m. The Rebels swept the two-game regular-season series, winning 75-71 in Columbia and 80-77 in Oxford, Miss.

Anderson earns a $50,000 bonus if the Tigers win the SEC tournament, which would require four more wins in four days. That would give Mizzou an automatic spot in the NCAA Tournament, which earns Anderson another $50,000 bonus.

Details of Kim Anderson's separation agreement are released

RON DAVIS, 13 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Once Missouri and head basketball coach Kim Anderson officially part ways April 4, he will receive $450,000 in a negotiated lump sum buyout, plus an additional $200,000 for meeting or exceeding an academic standards and social responsibilities incentive.

Anderson will also receive $300,000 — $100,000 for each season as head coach — from his annuity fund.
Anderson was in the third year of his five-year contract, which he signed in 2014 after taking over for Frank Haith. He received a base salary of $300,000 and an annual guaranteed salary of $1.1 million.

GEORGE KENNEDY: MU journalism grads make us proud
GEORGE KENNEDY, 1 hr ago

You’ll agree, I suspect, that there has been almost too much bad news this week.

In addition to the usual kerfuffle emanating from Washington, we learned that our university has fired its loyal and decent basketball coach. He wasn’t surprised, I’m sure. He didn’t win. Attendance dropped. In the major leagues of college athletics, the bottom line is the bottom line.

Then came the state auditor’s report criticizing the university for employing some classic capitalistic incentives to reward executives in what is, in many ways, a socialistic institution. Those folks didn’t have a won-loss record on which they could be judged. Nor, the auditor found, were there other reliable standards for determining their bonuses.

And, of course, a couple of anti-Semitic teenagers have reminded us that just because you get to college doesn’t mean that you’re really grown up or even a decent human being.

There was, however, a positive development that made the inside pages of the newspapers. That was an informal little gathering down at the Courthouse last weekend in support of our free press. I wasn’t there, and I’m guessing you weren’t, either.
But the very fact of it inspired me to think about a few of the journalists I’ve helped introduce to our craft. The work they have gone on to do — and the work they have yet to do — is cause for continuing celebration.

You probably haven’t met Karen Dillon or even seen her work since her days as a Missourian reporter. She finished her master’s degree a while back. In Jefferson City this month, the legislature is following up her investigation that revealed how the state Department of Corrections has paid out millions to staff members victimized by discrimination and harassment. That work was published by the Pitch weekly in Kansas City.

You’re more likely to have seen Major Garrett. That’s because he is the lead White House correspondent for CBS News. Over the years, he has put his degrees in journalism and political science to use reporting for newspapers, magazines and now television. He broke the story recently about a Trump appointee’s decision to drop out. He also chairs the Missourian’s advisory board.

Ben Hallman’s name doesn’t appear in bylines any more, but he is second in command of one of the most important new journalistic organizations to have emerged in the online age. The Trace is devoted to reporting on the politics, the economics and the devastation of guns. If you haven’t seen thetrace.org, you owe it to yourself.

Steve Fainaru won journalism’s highest award, the Pulitzer Prize, for his coverage of the Iraq war for the Washington Post. Now with ESPN, he and his brother (who attended another journalism school but has overcome that handicap) wrote the definitive book on the National Football League’s mainly successful resistance to the science explaining the brain injuries that destroy so many players.

(Now that I’ve read “League of Denial,” I intend to try to dissuade my 6-year-old grandson from his fascination with football. His father played soccer, I’ll tell him.)

I haven’t mentioned Sara Bondioli, now deputy politics editor for the Huffington Post; or David Nakamura and Damian Paletta, who compete with Major as White House reporters for the Washington Post; or Nik Deogun, who puts his economics and journalism degrees to work as senior vice president of CNBC, the business network; or Alonso Soto, now reporting from Brasilia for Reuters.
I could go on, but I wouldn’t want to appear to be bragging on our school or our graduates, though they are really good.

In times like these, they’re also really important.

**MU Health Care to provide free fall-risk screening**


By Jared Koller

COLUMBIA – Experts from MU Health Care’s trauma center will lead a free fall-risk screening Friday to evaluate patients for risk of falls.

Assessments include blood pressure screenings, physical therapists evaluating proper balance and conducting a hand-grip strength test, occupational therapists talking about home safety and audiologists conducting hearing screenings.

Kassie Campbell, a nurse physician for trauma services and the injury prevention and outreach coordinator, said falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries in older adults.

“We see about 1,500 trauma patients every year with 600 related-to-fall incidents,” Campbell said. “This doesn’t include the patients that come in the ER and may not have a significant injury.”

Campbell said every 11 seconds the emergency room treats an older adult for a fall, with an older adult dying every 19 minutes from a fall.
Through practical lifestyle adjustments and evidence-based fall prevention programs, the goal of the screening is to reduce the number of falls among seniors.

“We talk to people about potential hazards that they may have. People often don’t even realize the things they have at home that can cause a risk for falls,” Campbell said. “Home safety is really important to look at because they are often simple things that we can change very easily at a low cost.”

Recommended precautions include the removal of throw rugs, addition of handrails on both sides of stairways and bath tubs, checking your eyes once a year with up-to-date glasses, avoid uneven steps and avoiding bifocals when doing outside activities, which could limit depth perception.

Campbell also recommended doing exercises that improve leg strength and balance, maintaining sufficient vitamin D, keeping enough light in your house with a bathroom light on at night and keeping a phone on the ground of a main room or bedroom in case of an emergency.

“I think we need to be in a mindset where we’re preparing, thinking about things that we can do and just being proactive,” Campbell said. “We never think that something’s going to happen to us but in fact it is, it is going to happen to us whether that’s a motor vehicle crash or a fall.”

As patients get older, bone density and medications change, which impacts balance and increases the chance of a broken bone.

“In the trauma world we see a lot of patients that fall, and they don’t get adequate treatment or go to see a provider soon. And then they have a fatal injury that maybe could have been prevented had they came in and seen someone,” Campbell said.

The screening is open to the public and will take place Friday from 9:30-11:30 a.m. at South Providence Medical Park.

Employers weigh in on worker misuse of opioids

By Madeline Odle

COLUMBIA - Amid a rise in prescription drug abuse, employers are often hit hard.

A survey released Thursday by the National Safety Council looked at U.S. employers' experiences with and perception of prescription drugs, as well as the policies they have in place to deal with them.

Results revealed more than 70 percent of U.S. employers feel the direct impact of prescription drug misuse in their workplaces.

It also found 71 percent of employers agree that prescription drug misuse is a disease that requires treatment. However, 65 percent feel it is a justifiable reason to fire an employee.

Nikki Ogle, an employee at D-Tap, a Columbia drug screening site, said most of the screening it gets is for illegal drugs, but that has been changing.

"There has been a rise in prescription drug tests just because there is that rise in people abusing them," Ogle said.

Employers in Columbia have different ways of handling the issue.

Some large employers in Columbia don't even have drug screening policies. The University of Missouri main campus does not screen for drugs unless it is specially required by state or federal law, like in the case of commercial licenses.

On the contrary, MU Hospital does screen for those drugs. It sent KOMU 8 News this statement:

“University of Missouri Health Care has conducted a comprehensive drug screening as part of our employee application process for more than 10 years. The screening tests for illegal drug use as well as opioid use, and always has. If a potential applicant tests positive for an opioid, then our third-party testing company conducts a further investigation to ensure that the opioid has both been prescribed to that specific individual by a physician, and that it is medically necessary.”

The vice president of Human Resources for Missouri Book Services (MBS), Jerome Rader, said the company uses a five-tiered system of drug screening for new employees.

"We are looking at the illegal drugs that we use, and opiates are a part of that," Rader said.

If someone's test comes back positive for an opiate, Rader said, they do have the chance to explain themselves.
"We ask, inquire, if they have prescriptions for that to evaluate that to see if that would be a valid response," Rader said. "If they do have the prescriptions we're fine. If not, then that becomes the issue for us."

National Safety Council president and CEO Deborah Hersman said it's not just abuse of prescription drugs that's the problem.

“Even when they are taken as prescribed, prescription drugs and opioids can impair workers and create hazards on the job,” Hersman said.

At MBS, there is a policy to address this.

"We ask employees that if they are taking a prescription that may affect the ability to do their job that they notify us at work so we can evaluate if they're able to do those jobs safely," Rader said. "So that is a little dependent of that individual notifying us of that usage, but that is a part of the policy."

Rader said the company has not had much trouble with people abusing prescription drugs, or failing to report the use of prescription drugs.

"We do the initial screening at the time of employment," he said. "We do screening after work-related injuries, and we do screenings on a for-cause basis but that's really rare, honestly."

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**Survey Results Say … There’s a Disconnect**

MU IS PICTURED IN PHOTO WITH STORY; NO MENTION IN BODY OF STORY
Protests (clockwise from top left) at U of Missouri, Claremont McKenna College, U of Iowa, Amherst College and Ithaca College

By Kevin Kruger March 10, 2017

The most recent Inside Higher Ed survey of college and university presidents illustrates a disconnect between what presidents believe is occurring at their institutions and what is actually happening just below the surface among our student populations. Despite presidents’ impressions of the day-to-day experiences, all is not rosy, and student affairs administrators can provide presidents with a reality check when it comes to the good and the not-so-good circumstances and events that are transpiring.

Some of the issues that concern presidents most -- and those that we who work in student affairs believe should, in fact, concern presidents the most -- are often related to student behaviors and experiences outside of the classroom. Those are the areas of knowledge and responsibility housed in student affairs offices, and we can assist with the topics most associated with our field -- including equity and diversity initiatives, promoting anti-bias on campus, student engagement, and issues tied to student success, recruitment and retention.

The key to mining our expertise, however, is to have a realistic understanding of our areas of responsibility, and a plan for best accessing our expertise and our close connections throughout the institution. This allows presidents to make the strongest and best-informed decisions possible for their campus communities.

For example, the Inside Higher Ed survey found that “the vast majority of presidents describe the state of race relations at their college as either excellent (20 percent) or good (63 percent). More than three-fifths of presidents describe race relations at American colleges in general as fair.”
I’ve used the analogous data points from last year’s presidential survey when speaking to members of NASPA, the leading association for student affairs professionals, over the past year — data that, the survey notes, are relatively unchanged from last year to this year. Not surprisingly, I’ve received a mix of gasps and chuckles, with many student affairs professionals hoping their presidents can realistically assess the status of race relations on their own campuses. NASPA’s survey of senior student affairs officers has consistently shown that diversity and race relations are among the top issues and concerns. It would be fascinating to see how students -- especially students from diverse backgrounds -- would rate their institutions, but I can safely bet that the “vast majority” would not rate them as “excellent” or “good.”

It is important to note that a lack of protest on a campus does not mean students and other community members are satisfied about race relations there. We shouldn’t be lulled into a false sense of security that we are meeting students’ needs solely because we haven’t faced protests. The absence of activism may simply mean those students aren’t activated yet. Student affairs administrators can help their presidents proactively engage with all students so that they have an accurate picture of the true state of the student body and its general satisfaction with the current campus climate.

The ways in which student affairs professionals can contribute counsel to a president are not limited to race relations or underlying diversity unrest. The survey shows that presidents are also worried about attracting and retaining all students, including underrepresented ones, and making dollars from tuition and state appropriations stretch farther than ever before. With only 52 percent of presidents “confident about their institution’s financial health over the next 10 years,” higher education will likely face additional cuts in the future.

If presidents are considering reducing support for student affairs functions, they do so at the potential peril of their retention efforts and to the detriment of their student satisfaction and graduation rates. When cutting costs, presidents should prioritize efficiencies and preserve the core opportunities and experiences associated with a college degree. They should turn to data to determine which experiences are contributing to students’ success and refrain from wholesale elimination of the programs and services that keep students moving toward graduation. Presidents should make changes to increase impact and maintain personal contact and engagement, which are key parts of the institutional experience. Story continues.