MAY 28, 2017 12:00 PM

University of Missouri struggles to rebuild image after hits to reputation, enrollment

BY SCOTT CANON
scanon@kcstar.com
AND MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS
mdwilliams@kcstar.com

COLUMBIA - Dennis Jones recalls the not-long-ago days when racially charged protests consumed the University of Missouri, when friends and family in his hometown of Dallas would call and ask, “How bad is it?” for him as a black man on campus.

“Absolutely, the reputation was harmed a bit,” the second-year law student said.

Since the events of 2015 — which included the toppling of two top administrators — he gives MU high marks for dealing more forthrightly with racial issues.

“But,” Jones said, “it’s going to take time for the image to change.”

Now, with state funding trimmed by a conservative legislature and ever fewer high school graduates headed to Columbia, the school is laying off people even as it pours money into promotion — and reputation repair — like never before.

“This is the worst enrollment performance of any flagship university in the country. That cannot continue,” Republican Gov. Eric Greitens said in a statement last week. “The University of Missouri has lacked strong leadership for far too long.”

MU’s bosses now need to appeal to prospective students of color after racist incidents — evidence of widespread problems or isolated incidents, depending on who’s telling the story. White kids may be reluctant to step into a place marked by fresh, if fading, racial controversy. Their parents, said people on and off campus, might resent university brass who they think “caved” to black athletes.
The day the football team threatened to skip a game scheduled for Arrowhead Stadium — the culmination of months, even generations, of simmering racial resentment at MU — virtually guaranteed that the heads of university brass would roll.

Last week, three-plus semesters after bullhorns blasted discontent at the administration, trustees finally found a permanent replacement for the deposed chancellor by naming State University of New York administrator Alexander Cartwright as the Columbia chancellor.

Still unfilled is the school’s position for a chief of diversity, equity and inclusion, a job created in response to the protests.

Many of the same actions taken to answer the complaints of protesters served to annoy legislators who already saw the school as a liberal sanctuary propped up by taxpayers.

All the while, would-be Tiger freshmen and their parents looked for a college with less drama.

It will take time, say people within and outside the ivory towers, to restore MU’s image.

**Staying away**

In the fall of 2015, while many high school seniors mulled which college they’d go to, the Columbia campus arose as the latest Rorschach test of whether racism still flourished in America or if political correctness kept the country arguing over the sins of history.

In the end, MU System President Tim Wolfe resigned and then-Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin moved aside. Death threats targeting black student protesters poured in, including one that prompted an arrest.

“The university made a number of mistakes … and it has cost it dearly,” said state Sen. Caleb Rowden, a Republican from Columbia. Conservative lawmakers thought that, in particular, the school played too soft with a communications professor who at one point called for “muscle” to shield protesters from a student journalist.

Meanwhile, those high school seniors started looking elsewhere.

Freshman enrollment has been dropping at universities across the country, partly because of the growing cost of higher education and partly because of a dip in the college-age population.

But “the University of Missouri sticks out,” said Thomas Lindsay, director of the Center for Higher Education. “Its cause, the MU story, (is) those events of 2015.”
The fall-off in 2016 was dramatic. The school suddenly had 1,419 fewer freshmen, a drop of nearly 23 percent. The enrollment decline was reflected in nearly every demographic subgroup. In the last two years, MU has opened two dorms and closed seven.

Notably, the school lost ground in bringing African-American students into the fold. Their numbers grew slightly from 2013 to 2015. But the following year, their portion of the student body fell from 7.2 percent to 6.9 percent.

School officials said in early May that 4,009 freshman had paid deposits for the 2017 fall semester. That would reflect another 16 percent drop from 2016, or more than a third fewer incoming freshmen than before the 2015 protests.

Turmoil on a campus, said Barmak Nassirian, director of federal relations and policy analysis for the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, could make students and families “do a double take” when looking for a suitable school.

“Being on the evening news for turmoil,” Nassirian said, “is definitely not a selling point.”

Recruiters have returned to campus with stories of families looking at Columbia anxiously after the 2015 protests.

“Prospective students are saying, ‘We want to go to college for an education and an eventual career. We don’t want to go to a place where people are fighting all the time,’ ” Lindsay said. “Students, when they decided not to apply to the University of Missouri, they knew in their bones that something is rotten.”

At the University of Missouri-Kansas City, officials saw an uptick in freshmen in 2016 that they attribute mostly to improved recruitment and a growing desire among students for an urban setting.

Jennifer DeHaemers, UMKC’s associate vice chancellor for student affairs and enrollment management, said a handful of families mentioned racial troubles in Columbia as a factor for looking at UMKC.

“Was there some impact for us? Possibly,” she said. “But it wasn’t significant.”

Money talks

The vanishing students hit the university where it hurts. With the monumental drop in new freshmen, overall enrollment for the just-finished academic year was off 7 percent. That meant a loss of $16.6 million in revenue.
Meanwhile, the Missouri General Assembly cut spending to state universities about 6.6 percent. So now the school administration is slashing 12 percent — roughly $55 million — from the budget for the fiscal year that starts in July.

MU plans to wipe out 400 jobs. At least half of that will come from leaving unfilled jobs empty. A fourth will evaporate through retirements and nonrenewed contracts. The last 100 or so will go away through layoffs.

At the same time, Mizzou aims to bring back roughly $7 million in revenue with a 2.1 percent increase in tuition approved last week.

Students appear willing to pay more to get back what slow funding has cost them. This year, students agreed to pay more fees to restore longer library hours.

Even the financial ledger offers hope. Despite the racial tensions of 2015, Mizzou set a single-year fundraising record the next year, more than $170 million.

Still, MU is feeling a budget pinch, and pain for gown means trouble for the town.

“Some of our restaurants and bars may be down a little bit. Nothing overly major, but it’s a small concern,” said Matt McCormick, the president and CEO of the Columbia Chamber of Commerce.

Across the Columbia economy, reminders pop up that the Tigers rule. Except when they don’t. The football team has struggled to compete in the Southeastern Conference. The basketball team has won more pity than games in recent years.

“For the first time in 14 years,” said Paul Huesgen, the bar manager for Flat Branch Pub & Brewing, “weekends without football are busier than weekends with them.”

**Academic PR**

In response to the turmoil, MU produced a TV ad with the slogan “Our Time to Lead.” The university now plugs itself in digital ads, on billboards and in airports.

In all, about $1 million has been spent marketing the university in the last 18 months. It’s too early to tell if the push will overcome anxiety about a campus with bad publicity over race.

“For many years … there wasn’t a need to invest in marketing,” said Jennifer Hollingshead, interim vice chancellor for marketing and communications. “After 2015, that changed.”
In the meantime, she said, the university is using focus groups, surveys and detailed interviews with its “stakeholders” to better understand the public perception of the school in the wake of the rotten headlines of 2015.

Administrators say they may yet hire an outside firm to guide them in restoring the school’s brand.

“We are continuing to tell our story,” said school spokesman Christian Basi. “We educate future leaders, do groundbreaking research, economic development and create jobs.”

New money is pouring in for a better football stadium, including an anonymous $1.2 million gift this month. In March, Mizzou landed a hot-ticket basketball coach. In April, the hoops team signed a top high school prospect.

Some students say that tensions have faded and they’re pleased with campus life. But they’re still concerned.

“I feel like things are OK,” said Jenny Dashner, a sophomore from St. Charles. “I worry about (the school’s) reputation and that people will not want to come here.”
Editorial: Long list of challenges awaits MU’s new chancellor

By The Kansas City Star editorial board

Leading a large public land grant university is a challenge even under sunny circumstances.

And then there is the challenge of leading the University of Missouri-Columbia, a campus that has been clouded by controversy and setbacks.

The university has found itself in a white-hot national spotlight in recent years, contending with highly publicized racial tensions, declining enrollment, a dwindling budget and the disdain of many state lawmakers.

The latest headlines have chronicled the loss of 400 jobs at the state’s flagship campus, the result of a $55 million budget cut, which was followed by a 2.1 percent hike in tuition.

Welcome to Columbia, Alexander Cartwright.

He’s the new MU chancellor and the former provost and executive vice chancellor of State University of New York.

Cartwright’s arrival should bring stability to the campus. He’s accepting the reins from an interim leader who stepped in after the resignation of the last chancellor during the racial turmoil of 2015.

In his introduction of Cartwright, University of Missouri System President Mun Choi set the right tone. He said “very little daylight” would come between him and the new chancellor, promising a shared vision and “bold decisions.”

Cartwright will need a wide range of skills to recalibrate MU’s future. He must lead the charge to ensure that MU is a place where all students are valued, convince legislators of its importance so adequate funding is restored, regain the support of alumni and prospective students and cement its stature as a respected research institution that is focused on preparing students for an increasingly complex world.
Cartwright’s unique background and experience offer hope that he’ll be nimble and multitalented enough for the task.

He grew up in the Bahamas, so expect an appreciation of diverse cultures. But he also has firm roots in Iowa. He knows the work ethic of a rural life, having cleaned hog pens to pay his way through community college after earning a GED. Faculty members encouraged Cartwright to aim for graduate school, and he eventually earned a doctorate in electrical and computer engineering.

Cartwright also has relevant experience that could help the university navigate the aftermath of the 2015 student protests. Then, African-Americans staged sit-ins, calling out racial incidents, a lack of diversity among faculty and campus intolerance. Cartwright has been praised for his work as co-chair of the SUNY Diversity and Inclusion Task Force.

Adversity can be a potent motivator. In the future, we may look back at this juncture and see the arrival of Alexander Cartwright as a crucial moment for MU.

COLUMBIA DAILY TRIBUNE

Editorial: Alexander Cartwright

By Hank Waters

Admittedly it is a bit early to predict success for a brand new arrival at the helm of our beloved MU, but I am willing to express happy first impressions regarding Alexander Cartwright.

I like his face. A picture of him and his wife Melinda displays happiness and confidence. You can almost see the Iowa showing through. Photos of Cartwright standing alongside UM President Mun Choi show two faces exuding confidence and intent. Choi says not much “daylight” will exist between the two — a good omen. It will take two relaxed, competent leaders pulling together to meet the challenges they face. They should like each other a lot.

I like his background. I’ve spent my share of time in Nassau, Bahamas, where Alexander grew up. I don’t know whether he descended from the “Bay Street boys” and haven’t heard whether he has a hint of that distinctive British lingo, but coming from the Bahamas is an interesting start.
(After all, Alexander Hamilton was born on the island of Nevis just down the road.) Then to become rounded out in Iowa and the wilds of New York state, he’s bound to have rough edges smoothed off and innards toned for the fray.

What does he see here at Mizzou after having been in a similar executive position at the State University of New York system with its 64 campuses and 1.3 million students? Once again I operate here without benefit of first-hand testimony from the man himself, but he says he likes the Midwest, I’ll bet he was intrigued with the challenge here at MU and taken with the prospect of working without daylight alongside President Mun.

One of the great attributes of a good top leader is the ability to attract similarly gifted lieutenants. In the case of a UM system president I’ve always thought if he or she could bring in the right chancellors at the four campuses the top management job was largely done. For reasons I can’t prove I have high hopes for Choi, Cartwright & Co.

It’s nothing more than atmospherics on my part, a pudding-headed optimism that may earn the disdain of my most conservative friends, but when personnel assessment is the issue, immediate impressions matter. In the case of Alexander Cartwright, even though I have never come face to face with the fellow, heard the sound of his Bay Street voice nor felt the shake of his hand. I’m happily out on a limb not fearful of an embarrassing fall.

Welcome to Alexander and Melinda as they ponder their August 1 arrival in our midst. We gotta big chore here and I’m betting you can take a bite of it right away.
Opinion

Curators, lawmakers missed golden opportunity

Carl W. Kenney II

There will be a lot of empty seats this fall at the University of Missouri at Columbia. It’s hard to imagine my alma mater returning to what it was before the protest of 2015. In my mind, that wouldn’t be a good thing.

Officials, at the state’s flagship school, report only 4,009 first-time freshman deposits for the upcoming academic year, a 35 percent decline from the 2015 class of 6,191 students. The student population is shrinking at a rate that has forced the closure of seven resident halls and the elimination of 400 positions.

There’s a lot of blame to go around. Fewer students are graduating from high schools in Missouri while the University of Illinois aggressively recruits students born in Missouri. Missouri didn’t have a plan. Administrators took growth for granted.
Sure, there are other reasons, but most people blame the reduction in student enrollment on protests led by members of Concerned Student 1950 (a group of black students who called for the ouster of the University of Missouri System President), a hunger strike and a boycott by members of the football team.

If you live in Missouri, and read comments on editorial pages in local newspapers, you will sense the bitterness among residents. As a former columnist for the Columbia Missourian, the daily newspaper run by the school of journalism at the University of Missouri, and adjunct instructor at the school of journalism, I learned to avoid those comments.

They were brutal. Readers blasted me for promoting a racist agenda and participating in the demise of the university. None of that is new. It comes with being a column writer.

What is useful, related to what is happening at the University of Missouri, is how the politics involving race impacted the ability of those on campus to improve race relations. It was the meddling of members of the Board of Curators, combined with threats from alumni and members of the state General Assembly that complicated efforts to move forward.

Most of it is fueled by perceptions involving race among those who live in Missouri.

In Missouri, the University of Missouri at Columbia is distinguished from other state schools due to its international influence. Its top rated school of journalism draws students from around the world. It's a research institution that generates interest from students in medicine, the sciences and a bevy of liberal arts programs.

The students who attend the University of Missouri are unlike the people who live in other parts of the state. Missouri is vastly rural with large populations of blacks in St. Louis and Kansas City. Columbia is a city with a small black population suffering from substantial economic disparity.

Black students who attend the University of Missouri come from communities more engaged in addressing implications involving the history of race and racism. Those students are faced with the reality of the university’s inability to confront the lack of diversity, inclusion and equity. Student protest exposed what has always been there.

The response of those outside the university made it difficult to build relationships aimed at repairing division on campus. While members of the faculty, administrators and students promoted listening sessions, members of the Board of Curators pushed for the termination of Melissa Click. While members of the faculty supported the rights of student protesters, members of the General Assembly threatened to reduce the budget while creating bills to prevent future protests. Rather than protect academic freedom and celebrate the power of First Amendment rights, critics of student protest concentrated on a false narrative regarding student protesters. Many failed to honor the legitimacy of the demands students made based on their limited perspective.

Why would a parent send their child into a climate that fails to honor their passions? More than the role of student protest in fostering declines in enrollment, it's the insensitivity of those outside the university that stirs disinterest in attending.

The University of Missouri could have become a model campus regarding how to deal with racial tension. It was the high road that could have led to massive change.

Members of the Board of Curators and the General Assembly took the low road. They blamed black students for compromising the integrity of their happy home.

Why would you want to attend there?

Carl W. Kenney II is an award-winning columnist and novelist.
MU Veterinary Hospital uses motion analysis to treat arthritis

This story was generated by an MU News Bureau press release: Veterinary Motion Analysis Lab Could Lead to Better Treatments for Small Animals, Orthopedic Procedures in Humans

By John Saltzman

COLUMBIA – The MU Veterinary Health Center recently added a new section - the Motion Analysis Laboratory - to track the movements of animals needing joint or muscle treatment.

The lab comes equipped with sensors, cameras and weight sensor plates, all designed to read the animals' movement and provide a more accurate diagnosis. Doctor Bryan Torres is the lead researcher who works in the MAL and said accurate diagnosis is a huge step in the treatment of animals.

“Our patients can’t tell us where it hurts, so it is vital that we use every technique at our disposal to pinpoint where the problem is,” Torres said.

The new technologies are designed to be useful for pets that suffer from osteo-arthritis conditions. The way the animals walk, such as favoring one side of their bodies or one leg in particular, can show up in the readings the weight sensor plates and cameras capture.

“Rehabilitation after surgery is a huge step for pets that come through the MU veterinary Hospital and the rehabilitation is greatly aided by the new system,” vet technician Stephanie Gilliam said.

The information the sensors and cameras pick up is recorded and stored through computer software designed to track each movement. The software then sets points on the joints to help doctors target treatment to the areas that need it most.
“Before we basically just had to use our eyes for gait analysis and to look and so now we have this equipment that like I said will be able to bring out more subtle deficits and give our clients information, it’s going to be cool,” Gilliam said.

The technology is also expected to be able to help treat humans with more accuracy and success than before.

“Luckily enough, both on the human side and the veterinary side, many of the treatments we use and different therapies, both medical and surgical, many of the diagnostic tests we use can translate from one species to the other (humans),” said Torres.

He added the techniques used and the technology are all very low maintenance. According to Torres, the information the technology yields are the key, not the gathering process itself. It allows for a less invasive process, which can be better for both animals and humans during treatment.

**OPINION**

**HOW JOHN F. KENNEDY REDEFINED THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY**

BY STEVEN WATTS ON 5/28/17 AT 4:00 AM

*This article was originally published on The Conversation.*

*Steven Watts is Professor of History at University of Missouri-Columbia.*

Even at John F. Kennedy’s centennial on May 29, 2017, the 35th president remains an enigma. We still struggle to come to a clear consensus about a leader frozen in time—a man who, in our mind’s eye, is forever young and vigorous, cool and witty.

While historians have portrayed him as everything from a nascent social justice warrior to a proto-Reaganite, his political record actually offers little insight into his legacy. A standard
“Cold War liberal,” he endorsed the basic tenets of the New Deal at home and projected a stern, anti-Communist foreign policy. In fact, from an ideological standpoint, he differed little from countless other elected officials in the moderate wing of the Democratic Party or the liberal wing of the Republican Party.

Much greater understanding comes from adopting an altogether different strategy: approaching Kennedy as a cultural figure. From the beginning of his career, JFK’s appeal was always more about image than ideology, the emotions he channeled than the policies he advanced.

Generating an enthusiasm more akin to that of a popular entertainer than a candidate for national office, he was arguably America’s first “modern” president. Many subsequent presidents would follow the template he created, from Republicans Ronald Reagan and Donald Trump to Democrats Bill Clinton and Barack Obama.

**A cultural icon**

JFK pioneered the modern notion of the president as celebrity. The scion of a wealthy family, he became a national figure as a young congressman for his good looks, high-society diversions and status as an “eligible bachelor.”

He hobnobbed with Hollywood actors such as Frank Sinatra and Tony Curtis, hung out with models and befriended singers. He became a fixture in the big national magazines — Life, Look, Time, The Saturday Evening Post — which were more interested in his personal life than his political positions.

Later, Ronald Reagan, the movie actor turned politician, and Donald Trump, the tabloid fixture and star of “The Apprentice,” would translate their celebrity impulses into electoral success. Meanwhile, the saxophone-playing Bill Clinton and the smooth, “no drama” Obama — ever at ease on the talk show circuit — teased out variations of the celebrity role on the Democratic stage.

After Kennedy, it was the candidate with the most celebrity appeal who often triumphed in the presidential sweepstakes.

**A master of the media**
Kennedy also forged a new path with his skillful utilization of media technology. With his movie-star good looks, understated wit and graceful demeanor, he was a perfect fit for the new medium of television.

He was applauded for his televised speeches at the 1956 Democratic convention, and he later prevailed in the famous television debates of the 1960 presidential election. His televised presidential press conferences became media works of art as he deftly answered complex questions, handled reporters with aplomb and laced his responses with wit, quoting literary figures like the Frenchwoman Madame de Staël.

Two decades later, Reagan proved equally adept with television, using his acting skills to convey an earnest patriotism, while the lip-biting Clinton projected the natural empathy and communication skills of a born politician. Obama’s eloquence before the cameras became legendary, while he also became an early adopter of social media to reach and organize his followers.

Trump, of course, emerged from a background in reality television and adroitly employed Twitter to circumvent a hostile media establishment, generate attention and reach his followers.

**The vigorous male**

Finally, JFK reshaped public leadership by exuding a powerful, masculine ideal. As I explore in my book, “JFK and the Masculine Mystique: Sex and Power on the New Frontier,” he emerged in a postwar era colored by mounting concern over the degeneration of the American male. Some blamed the shifting labor market for turning men from independent, manual laborers into corpulent, desk-bound drones within sprawling bureaucracies. Others pointed to suburban abundance for transforming men into diaper-changing denizens of the easy chair and backyard barbecue. And many thought that the advancement of women in the workplace would emasculate their male coworkers.

Enter Jack Kennedy, who promised a bracing revival of American manhood as youthful and vigorous, cool and sophisticated.

In his famous “New Frontier” speech, he announced that “young men are coming to power — men who are not bound by the traditions of the past — young men who can cast off the old slogans and delusions and suspicions.”
In a Sports Illustrated article titled “The Soft American,” he advocated a national physical fitness crusade. He endorsed a tough-minded realism to shape the counterinsurgency strategies that were deployed to combat Communism, and he embraced the buccaneering style of the CIA and the Green Berets. He championed the Mercury Seven astronauts as sturdy, courageous males who ventured out to conquer the new frontier of space.

JFK’s successors adopted many of these same masculine themes. Reagan positioned himself as a manly, tough-minded alternative to a weak, vacillating Jimmy Carter. Clinton presented himself as a pragmatic, assertive, virile young man whose hardscrabble road to success contrasted with the privileged, preppy George H.W. Bush. Obama impressed voters as a vigorous, athletic young man who scrimmaged with college basketball teams — a contrast to the cranky, geriatric John McCain and a stiff, pampered Mitt Romney.

More recently, of course, Trump’s outlandish masculinity appealed to many traditionalists unsettled by a wave of gender confusion, women in combat, weeping millennial “snowflakes” and declining numbers of physically challenging manufacturing jobs in the country’s post-industrial economy. No matter how crudely, the theatrically male businessman promised a remedy.

So as we look back at John F. Kennedy a century after his birth, it seems ever clearer that he ascended the national stage as our first modern president. Removed from an American political tradition of grassroots electioneering, sober-minded experience and bourgeois morality, this youthful, charismatic leader reflected a new political atmosphere that favored celebrity appeal, media savvy and masculine vigor. He was the first American president whose place in the cultural imagination dwarfed his political positions and policies.

Just as style made the man with Kennedy, it also remade the American presidency. It continues to do so today.
Blunt, colleagues should support STEM education
By Karen King, May 28, 2017

President Donald Trump’s fiscal year 2018 budget cuts to STEM education would gut the nation’s ability to train high-quality science teachers, thereby limiting young Americans’ opportunities in STEM careers and putting the nation’s global competitiveness at risk.

STEM-related disciplines are expected to be some of the best-paid and fastest-growing jobs during the next decades. Companies such as Bayer and Boeing are just a couple of the businesses that rely on employees with technical talent to provide world-class products and services.

Therefore, I urge U.S. Sen. Roy Blunt, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee of Labor, Health & Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, to make the right decision and fully fund Titles II and IV in the Every Student Succeeds Act. Last year, the Senate passed the legislation in an overwhelmingly bipartisan fashion — and rightly so. Ensuring that our children receive the best education possible is a goal we all should strive for. That is why I am requesting that Sen. Blunt and his colleagues again show their support for STEM education as Congress begins to make decisions about the president’s budget.

Why are Titles II and IV important? States can use Title II funds for programs to train and prepare high-quality STEM teachers. Title IV funds can be used for STEM-related afterschool programs to go beyond the classroom. The ESSA legislation is critical in helping the nation strengthen its global competitiveness at a time when few American students are completing STEM degrees. One possible reason: exposure to STEM disciplines is limited during high school.

In the introductory physics courses I teach at the University of Missouri, the value of effective high school preparation is clear. Our future engineers, doctors, pharmacists, architects, physical therapists and scientists need to succeed in these physics courses to earn
their degrees; a strong secondary physics background prepares them for success in their university courses.

In European and Asian countries, high school students often take four or five years of physics. But in the United States, only about 40 percent of students take as much as one year. Missouri is faring better, with more than 50 percent of students enrolled in physics. From 2007 to 2011, high school physics enrollment increased by 49 percent in the state, and in the 2014-15 school year, Missouri ranked sixth out of 29 states for number of students enrolled in physics.

Yet, with 35 percent of school districts in Missouri offering no physics course, there is still a lot of progress to be made. Finding well-prepared teachers to lead these classes is challenging. Fewer than half of physics courses across the country will be taught by a teacher who majored or minored in physics. In Missouri, secondary physics has been on the list of teacher shortage areas for two decades.

To address the growing demand, physics faculty at the University of Missouri have led multiple efforts to prepare and recruit teachers. For example, A TIME for Physics First, directed by Meera Chandrasekhar, provided professional development to 123 ninth-grade physics teachers from 53 school districts from 2006 to 2015. This effort was initially supported by state funds and later by the National Science Foundation.

In 2012, we launched a recruiting and training effort supported by the Physics Teacher Education Coalition, a project of the American Physical Society and the American Association of Physics Teachers. The program dramatically increased the number of new teachers who earn physics degrees. After five years of recruiting efforts, we are now graduating nine times more physics teachers per year than we did before the program was started. Similar programs like this one could be funded in Missouri and other states as “teacher preparation academies” through ESSA Title II.

Missouri can only continue its good work with the support of Congress. Our state and others across the nation need Sen. Blunt and his congressional colleagues to do their part to ensure that students are ready to compete in a highly technical workforce. And that means fully funding
Titles II and IV in ESSA. Their success depends upon them being taught by highly qualified teachers who have degrees in physical science. Posterity is depending on us to make the prudent decision. Let’s not let them down.

Karen King is an assistant teaching professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Missouri and a former high school physics teacher; she has worked on several projects to improve and expand K-12 physics education.

COLUMBIA DAILY TRIBUNE

TOP DRAWER

May 28, 2017

Generated by MU News Bureau direct pitches

KUDOS

Ethan Zars, of Columbia, has been selected as one of 12 Cherng Summer Scholars within the Honors College at the University of Missouri. This program provides $8,000 to selected undergraduate students to fund research projects or artistic endeavors during a 10-week summer course. Zars is one of the first student researchers in the program. As a Cherng Summer Scholar, Zars will research how a chemical reaction that moves or swings back and forth can be performed using molecules common in biology. Results from Zars’ research might help explain various phenomena in biology.

The State Library of Kansas is pleased to announce the 12th annual selection of Kansas Notable Books. The fifteen books feature quality titles with wide public appeal, either written by Kansans or about a Kansas-related topic. Ioway Life: Reservation and Reform, 1837-1860 by Greg Olson, of Columbia, was selected for inclusion as a Notable Book. It’s about the Ioways, an indigenous people who had called most of present-day Iowa and Missouri home. They were suddenly bound by a treaty with the U.S. government to restrict themselves to a 200-square-mile area west of the Missouri River. Forcibly removed to the newly created Great Nemaha Agency, the Ioway men, women and children, numbering nearly 1,000, were promised that through hard work and discipline they could enter mainstream American society, as long as they give up everything that made them Ioway.
The Mizzou Alternative Breaks Program has been recognized by NASPA, the leading association for student affairs professionals. MU’s program received a NASPA Excellence Award SILVER Honoree in the Student Union, Student Activities, Greek Life Leadership and related category. Founded in 1991, Mizzou Alternative Breaks sends groups of students on service trips during weekend, Thanksgiving, spring, summer and winter breaks. Participants enter communities with the mindset of “Serve, don’t help” — one of the program’s guiding principles. During MU’s most recent spring break, approximately 700 students participated in the program, traveling to 44 communities across the United States, from Yellowstone National Park to Washington, D.C.

How to Guard Against Wire Grill Brush Dangers

By Lindsey Feingold
Last updated: May 29, 2017

With the summer season kicking off, your grill might be getting regular use. But before creating your next batch of burgers, take stock of your grill brush.

If you use a stainless steel or brass wire brush to remove stuck-on food from grill grates, be aware of this surprising downside: Small, sharp bristles can break off as you're cleaning and get stuck to your grill's cooking surface. The next time you grill, the stray bristles can adhere to food and be accidentally ingested.

An estimated 1,700 Americans went to an emergency room between 2002 and 2014 after having ingested wire bristles in grilled food, according to a study published in 2016 in the journal Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery. One in four of those with grill brush injuries had to be admitted to the hospital.

Those are not large numbers, but C.W. David Chang, M.D., a senior study author and associate professor of otolaryngology at the University of Missouri School of Medicine, says the study might underestimate the frequency of such accidents. That’s because the findings are based only on ER visits. It “does not account for cases presenting at urgent care facilities or other outpatient settings,” he notes.

According to the study, injuries from grill brushes have been reported most often to the mouth and throat. But in rare instances, people have sustained stomach and intestinal injuries after swallowing a bristle that's hidden in food.
Clean Your Grill Safely

Consider alternative cleaning tools. Depending on what type of grill you have (check your owner’s manual for recommendations), you might try cleaning warm grill grates with a tool such as a pumice stone or a coil-shaped bristle-free brush. You can also brush loose food particles off a warm grate with a wad of crumpled-up aluminum foil. Make sure grill grates are not hot enough to burn you.

If you use a stainless steel or brass wire grill brush, take extra precautions. Check your grill for any bristles before cooking, and your grill brush and its bristles before using it. If some areas of the grill brush have fewer bristles than others or the brush is worn or warped, toss it. And if you use an electric grill brush, such as the Grillbot, replace brushes every grilling season or after 100 uses.

Get the right stuff for deep cleaning. When grill grates need an occasional big cleaning, “treatment with liquid grill cleaners (in spray and foam form) can help loosen debris,” Chang says. You might need to pair a liquid cleaner with abrasive pads, which have a coarse texture similar to pumice stones, to get rid of really stubborn food residue.

Columbia City Council might end licensing requirements for cats

KATHERINE HERRICK, May 27, 2017

COLUMBIA — Columbia is littered with unlicensed cats, and the City Council is trying to determine whether to drop the licensing requirement.

Data from the past seven years estimates that only about 2 percent of cats and 11 percent of dogs in Columbia have been licensed, according to the city's Board of Health.

A city ordinance requires all owners who keep cats and dogs on their premises to license them once they are at least 3 months old. The Board of Health recommended in an April 27 letter to council members that cat licensing be discontinued but dog licensing remain.

The council discussed the recommendations at its May 15 meeting.
To support its recommendations, the board explained that cats are generally indoor pets. Dogs often interact with other animals and people when their owners walk them, so it is more important for dogs to be licensed in case of a bite that could potentially pass on a disease.

"Surveys indicate that around 74% of cat owners do not let their cats roam," the board noted. "As a pet, this is similar to ferrets, rabbits and guinea pigs which are not licensed."

In its letter, the Board of Health also addressed the current procedure for at-home impoundment requirements.

The current ordinance says pet owners must impound a cat or dog after it bites a person, and the animal is to be observed by a veterinarian for 10 days. This procedure must be followed even if the animal has a rabies vaccination since there is no guarantee the vaccine will be effective.

If animals are licensed, vaccinated and at low risk for escape, they may meet requirements for being impounded at home — otherwise they are taken to a veterinary clinic. Eliminating the licensing requirement would give more pet owners the option of at-home impoundment.

The low number of cats licensed may be tied to a lack of public awareness of licensing requirements. The public also may not understand the benefits of licensing pets or where revenue from the licenses go.

“I don’t know what the purpose of licensing is,” said Nina Johnson, a local cat owner.

The funds that come from the purchase of licenses go into the general fund for the city, which is mostly spent on resources for the fire or police departments, according to Second Ward Councilman Michael Trapp.

Trapp believes cats should continue to be licensed.

“Even though a small subset of cats get out, what they do when they’re out under their own supervision is far more likely to encounter rabies than dogs, who are mostly on leashes or going to parks,” Trapp said during the May 15 council meeting.
Trapp said he believes it would be more beneficial to promote pet licensing and use the revenue to help other animals in need. Then the city would not have to take money out of the general fund for animal welfare.

“I feel like that’s better than exempting cats from the licensing process,” Trapp said.

Johnson said she would be in favor of keeping cat licensing if the money were directed toward animal welfare. Otherwise, she said she hopes cat licensing will end.

It can be difficult to enforce the licensing of cats since many residents of Columbia feed “community cats” without claiming ownership of the animals.

“It makes it really slippery about who is responsible for the licensing of those cats,” said Amie Burling, an assistant teaching professor of shelter medicine at MU.

Burling said while she generally supports dog and cat licensing regulations, she hopes the city would continue to allow cats collected by animal control to be vaccinated, spayed or neutered, and marked with a clipped ear if they are eligible to be released back into the community to roam.

Trapp said the next step for the council is to make the licensing process "friendly and streamlined."

“It doesn’t seem like it’s a welcoming, inviting or easy process to engage in, so I think making it so would be a good first step and then seeing what we can do to expand it,” Trapp said.

Additional comments about this issue can be found on the ColumbiaMo subreddit page. The letter with the Board of Health recommendations is with the agenda for the May 15 council meeting.