



MU News Bureau

Daily Clips Packet

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Former MU employee accused of misappropriating funds is under investigation

By MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS

Story generated by an MU News Bureau press release: [Investigation of Possible Misappropriation of Funds](#)

A former University of Missouri employee accused of misappropriating funds is being investigated by university police.

On Tuesday afternoon, MU officials referred a case of possible misappropriation of funds by a former staff member to the MU Police Department for further investigation.

University officials said MU would not know how much money is involved until an investigation is complete. The university did not name the former employee and declined to say whether the staff member involved had been terminated.

Police Maj. Brian Weimer said his department is just beginning to look into the case, and he had no details about what may have happened.

In a news release, MU said, “The case involves the suspected misappropriation of funds from student organization accounts affiliated with Greek Life.” But officials were unable to say which Greek organizations were involved.

“These are not university accounts, but instead are external to the university,” the news release said.

MU officials said the university is cooperating fully with police investigating to determine whether a crime occurred. If a crime was committed, the university “will encourage prosecution of these crimes to the fullest extent possible,” the release said.

As a result of this case, the university is reviewing policies and changing the way external accounts affiliated with student organizations are managed.

University of Missouri investigating possible embezzlement

By RUDI KELLER

The University of Missouri is investigating another potential case of employee embezzlement.

The university said Tuesday in a news release that the MU Police Department was investigating “suspected misappropriation of funds from student organization accounts affiliated with Greek Life.” The money was held outside of normal university accounts, the university said.

The news release indicated a single former employee was responsible.

“The university is cooperating fully with the MU Police Department as they begin their investigation to determine whether a crime occurred,” the statement said.

The amount of money involved is unknown at this time, MU spokeswoman Liz McCune said. No one has been arrested, she said.

The university has been stung several times by major embezzlement scandals.

In June 2016, Carla Rathmann pleaded guilty in federal court in Springfield to submitting false invoices and making improper purchases over 15 years while working as an office assistant at the Southwest Research Center in Mount Vernon. She was sentenced to four years in federal prison and ordered to pay \$781,670 in restitution.

In 1994, Christy Tutin confessed to stealing almost \$700,000 from the university by submitting false travel vouchers.

The university also announced Tuesday that it would implement new protocols requiring two approvals for spending money held on behalf of student groups. A directive from interim Chancellor and Provost Garnett Stokes and Chancellor-designate Alexander Cartwright orders employees with authority to sign checks on student organization accounts to have all spending approved by their supervisor and the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

The university isn’t releasing any information about the particular student accounts involved or whether the former employee responsible was laid off as part of budget cuts, retirement or because the potential theft was discovered.

“If police determine misappropriation of funds by a former staff member occurred, the university will encourage prosecution of these crimes to the fullest extent possible and will work with affected groups to address the situation appropriately,” the news release said.

MISSOURIAN

MU Police investigating potential misappropriation of funds by former staffer

GINA BALSTAD, 13 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — **MU handed a case of potential misappropriation of funds by a former staff member over to the MU Police Department, according to an email sent to MU students, faculty and staff.**

The email was sent Tuesday afternoon by Chancellor-designate Alexander Cartwright and Provost Garnett Stokes, who is acting as interim chancellor until Aug. 1.

The case involves suspected misappropriation of funds from student organizations affiliated with Greek Life. They are external accounts, not university accounts, according to the email.

MU officials did not disclose the amount of money or identify the accounts involved.

Information about the former staff member also was not provided Tuesday evening, MU spokeswoman Liz McCune said.

Stokes and Cartwright announced that MU will now require employees with authority to spend money from such accounts to obtain approval for all expenditures from their supervisor and the vice chancellor for student affairs. Policies and practices for managing external accounts are also being reviewed, according to the email.

MU is cooperating with the police and considers the misuse of funds very serious. If it is determined that a crime occurred, MU will push for full prosecution, according to the email.



[MU investigating possible misappropriation of funds](#)

Watch the story <http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=086de1c1-58c8-4d8c-9147-f6a6f6ac581c>

COLUMBIA - The University of Missouri referred a case of possible misappropriation of funds by a former staff member from student organization accounts affiliated with Greek Life to the MU Police Department for further investigation. The news came in an email to students, faculty and staff.

These accounts are external to the university, not university accounts, the email said. The university is cooperating with the MU Police Department as it begins its investigation to determine whether a crime occurred.

Chancellor-designate Alexander Cartwright and Interim Chancellor Garnett Stokes signed the email.

"The university takes this possible misappropriation of funds seriously," the email said. "If police determine misappropriation of funds by a former staff member occurred, the university will encourage prosecution of these crimes to the fullest extent possible and will work with affected groups to address the situation appropriately."

The university said it is making immediate changes to how external accounts affiliated with student organizations are handled.

Any university employee who holds authority on an external student organization must now receive approval from their supervisor and the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs for all expenditures from that account, the email said.

MU is also reviewing the policies and practices for proper management and oversight of external accounts.



(United Press International; global news website, more than 5.8 million unique visitors per month)

Global warming, rising seas may encourage parasites

By [Brooks Hays](#)

Generated from News Bureau press release: [Ancient Italian Fossils Reveal Risk of Parasitic Infections Due to Climate Change](#)

July 20 (UPI) -- A study of ancient clam fossils suggests rising seas could once again encourage parasite infestations in brackish water ecosystems.

Trematodes, commonly known as flukes, infect mollusks, usually snails, and make their way into the insides of vertebrates who consume infected mollusks. They can cause disease in humans, and blood fluke infections kill an estimated 200,000 people every year.

The bodies of the parasitic flatworms don't fossilize, but their presence can be found on the surface of fossil clam shells. Clams form tiny crater-like deposits on their shells at the site of the attempted trematode infestation. The defense mechanism serves as a barometer of the prevalence of the parasite.

Recently, researchers analyzed dozens of clam fossils excavated in sediment cores drilled from floodplains of the Po River in Italy. Researchers compared the frequency of attempted trematode infestations with historic records of sea level and salinity.

Scientists found a strong correlation between rising seas and an increase in parasitic infections.

"We found that pulses in sea-level rise occurred on the scale of hundreds of years, and that correlated to rises in parasitic trematodes in the core samples," John Huntley, an assistant professor of geological sciences at the University of Missouri, [said in a news release.](#)

Huntley and his colleagues suggest the prevalence of harmful parasites could rise as global warming accelerates sea level rise.

"What concerns me is that these rises are going to continue to happen and perhaps at accelerated rates. This poses grave concerns for public health and ecosystem services," Huntley said. "These processes could increase parasitism in not only estuarine systems but also in freshwater settings."

Huntley and his research partners published their latest results this week [in the journal Scientific Reports.](#)

MISSOURIAN

Fulton Medical Center closing will force Callaway residents to go elsewhere for emergency services

By: Edward McKinley

FULTON — The expected closure of Callaway County's only hospital will force many of Fulton's residents to go elsewhere for primary or emergency care.

Emergency services will be the biggest loss when the Fulton Medical Center closes, said Fulton Mayor LeRoy Benton. The hospital announced Monday it would close no later than Sept. 22 because of a low number of patients, the high cost of upkeep and an inability to expand the center, according to a hospital news release.

The closest locations offering emergency care after a shutdown would be either St. Mary's Hospital in Jefferson City or one of Columbia's hospitals.

John Keener, who has worked as a pharmacist in Fulton for 27 years, said the distance could become a matter of life or death. “That doesn’t sound like a long distance, but for a true emergency you’d like to have somebody five minutes away rather than 25 minutes away.”

Ironically, the high amount of use of emergency services also contributed to the hospital's poor financial standing, Benton said, because many of those patients did not pay.

The medical center does not possess facilities to perform major surgeries, and [a \\$36.1 million initiative to address that failed at the vote of a state review board in 2015](#). Benton also said the hospital failed to attract talented specialists or surgeons to work there. The medical center was unable to perform certain key specialties, such as delivering babies.

“Nobody wants to drive 30 minutes to go to a hospital,” said Kimberly Davis, a Fulton resident. “If I’m having a baby, I’m going to have it in the car.”

Callaway County Commissioner Gary Jungermann said that the importance of the emergency services offered at the Fulton Medical Center lay in the ability to stabilize patients and prepare them for transport to one of the nearby trauma centers. Even though the medical center could not perform major surgeries or help deliver babies, the hospital still helped save lives, he said.

The Fulton Medical Center's closure represents a continuation of a nationwide trend of rural hospitals failing financially. [Eighty rural hospitals](#) — including three in Missouri — closed between 2010 and 2017.

Although some residents criticized the hospital, they lamented its imminent loss. Davis said the hospital didn't offer enough services, wait times were too long and it was poorly managed — but it’s still a shame it will be closed.

“Fulton needs the hospital,” Davis said. “Every town should have a hospital.”

The 158 jobs lost at the medical center also represents a sizable blow to the economy of the city of Fulton, and it will have a very negative effect, Benton said. In 2016, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated the population of Fulton at 13,103.

Fulton residents Larry and Joyce Ward, 77 and 73, said they go to Columbia hospitals for serious medical issues and only go to the Fulton hospital for routine blood work. Jim Craig, an 83-year-old who has lived in Fulton since 1962, also said that he leaves town when he needs to see a doctor, choosing to go to St. Mary's in Jefferson City.

"When people are sick, they don't like to wait," Keener said.

The loss of the hospital's outpatient clinic across the street, called Fulton Medical Clinic, which provided primary care for patients needing regular appointments or periodic checkups, is also important, Keener said. Together, the Fulton Medical Clinic and the hospital make up Fulton Medical Center.

Rezwan Islam was the primary doctor at the Fulton Medical Clinic and provided care for many of Fulton's residents. One of his patients, Tracy Hook, a 45-year resident of Fulton, said the biggest loss for her is Islam, her personal doctor, who will lose his job. She said the clinic asked her where she'd like to have her medical records forwarded, but she didn't have an answer.

"I don't go to the doctor often, but when I do I just pop in here," Hook said. The sign outside the facility reads, "Quality Care Close to Home."

Fulton has several other primary care facilities, but Keener said he doubts they'll be able to take on all the patients who will no longer be able to go to Fulton Medical Center. Some will be forced to drive 30 minutes to Columbia or Jefferson City every time they want to see a doctor.

Jungermann said that the county is still exploring options to try and keep the facility open.

MU Health Care invested in the medical center in 2014, buying 35 percent of the medical center. Since then, the UM System has experienced severe revenue declines due to enrollment declines and a drop in state funding. These issues forced a series of budget cuts. Tens of millions of dollars in cuts were needed for the 2017 fiscal year; more was needed for the 2018 fiscal year.

[MU Health Care announced last week it was selling its stake](#) in the Fulton Medical Center.

NueHealth, which controlled the remaining 65 percent, bought back MU's share in accordance

with the 2014 agreement. MU Health Care invested over \$1.6 million in the center since acquiring its stake. It will be reimbursed by NueHealth, which owns the \$6 million hospital building.

Jungermann and Benton both said that MU Health Care's decision to end its stake in the medical center was a contributing factor to the closing. The hospital and accompanying clinic became even more of a financial liability to NueHealth, so the decision to close them down was suddenly much easier.



Suspended Mizzou football player expected in court Wednesday

By Zachary Farwell

Watch the story: <http://www.abc17news.com/news/crime/suspended-mizzou-football-player-expected-in-court-wednesday/593050740>

COLUMBIA, Mo. - Suspended University of Missouri football player Nate Howard, is expected to appear in a Boone County courtroom Wednesday morning on a drug charge.

According to public records, the MU defensive lineman is scheduled to appear in court for a plea hearing at 9 a.m.

He's charged with a class D felony drug possession after he was arrested by University of Missouri police on June 14.

Officers said marijuana and mushrooms were found inside Howard's vehicle.

Right now, it's unclear if Howard is going to enter into a plea agreement.

If he does enter into a guilty plea on the felony charge, Howard would not be allowed to return to the MU football team. However, if the charge is dropped to a misdemeanor, Howard could possibly rejoin the Tigers.

Howard was expected to contribute and add depth to Mizzou's defensive line.

ABC 17 News plans to have a reporter at the Boone County Courthouse to cover the latest in Howard's case.

T COLUMBIA DAILY TRIBUNE

50th District candidates promise focus on education

By RUDI KELLER

In 2005, Missouri lawmakers appropriated \$2.6 billion for the foundation formula, the basic aid program for public schools.

That same year, they rewrote the formula after 12 years of a plan that rewarded school districts with strong local support by tying state funding to local tax levies. Instead of funding equity, with each district receiving the amount it would have if the taxes were collected in a district with high property values, the goal became funding adequacy, with a target per-pupil amount intended to provide an adequate education.

The result was a smaller demand on the state treasury, but even that plan proved too expensive. The recession, rising Medicaid costs and tax cuts squeezed the budget. Lawmakers revised the formula again last year, when the law indicated \$3.7 billion was the right amount to spend for fiscal 2016 but the state could only provide \$3.27 billion.

This year the formula is fully funded at \$3.4 billion to support general school needs. The foundation formula is generally off-limits for cuts in actual spending, but other education budget lines have not fared as well. The state spends less today than it did in fiscal 2006 on transportation, vocational education and teacher development.

Higher education has not fared much better. The University of Missouri, for example, had a \$400.9 million appropriation for fiscal 2006 with another \$41.9 million in dedicated spending. Lawmakers allocated \$419.1 million to the UM System for the current year, which has been cut by Gov. Eric Greitens to \$408.2 million. Greitens also withheld almost \$8 million in earmarked spending for UM projects.

Republican Sara Walsh and Democrat Michela Skelton, candidates in the Aug. 8 special election in the 50th Missouri House District, both promise to make education spending a priority.

The district's educators hope they can deliver on those promises.

The 50th District includes portions of Boone, Cole, Cooper and Moniteau counties and nine school districts draw pupils from within its boundaries. Some of those districts are among the

smallest in the state, where the schools create a sense of community and provide good jobs. In Boone County, the University of Missouri is the largest employer, with Columbia Public Schools second.

Since 2007, local tax levies have increased in six of the nine districts. The largest increase, 57.5 percent in the Southern Boone Public Schools, resulted from construction debt to make space for increasing enrollment and an operating levy increase of 13.3 percent.

“Funding is the most critical thing right now that we are having to deal with,” said Chris Felmlee, Southern Boone superintendent.

Over the past five years, enrollment has increased 9.8 percent in the Ashland-based district. Felmlee hired the school’s eighth first-grade teacher this summer and expects enrollment, which exceeded 1,600 for the first time in 2016, to increase again this fall.

The cuts to school transportation are especially hard on a district like Southern Boone, which covers 124.7 square miles. The state is supposed to pay up to 75 percent of transportation costs.

“For us, it is a \$700,000 expenditure and we are lucky to get \$100,000 from the state,” Felmlee said. “Making sure we are able to provide those services comes at a cost and it means we are having to take it from other things.”

Gretchen Guitard, superintendent of Jamestown Schools in Moniteau County, said she worries about whether teachers will be lured away by better pay elsewhere. The operating tax levy for the district of 224 students is 14 percent higher than in 2007.

“We have teachers who have a longevity here that is admirable,” Guitard said. “They have been here for many, many, years. They are a big part of their student’s lives and I feel compelled to be their champions.”

Each district receives a different amount from the state based on factors that include how much local revenue is generated and how many students live in poverty. When lawmakers change the formula, how much a district is entitled to receive changes. To protect small districts and districts that would have lost money, lawmakers inserted “hold harmless” provisions — districts with 350 or fewer students could not receive less in total aid and districts above that threshold could not have their amount per pupil reduced.

Three of the nine school districts in the 50th District — Jamestown, Prairie Home and Cooper County R-IV Schools in Bunceton — have fewer than 350 students. There are 193 school districts statewide with fewer than 350 students, said Roger Dorson, deputy commissioner of education for financial and administrative services.

CANDIDATES’ VIEWS

Republicans have been in control of the General Assembly since 2003 and they have not met the state’s obligation to public schools, Democratic candidate Michela Skelton said in an interview. The foundation formula is fully funded under the law only because the law was changed to reduce the money needed, she said.

“It is not really funding the foundation formula as intended,” Skelton said. “And we are not meeting our transportation costs.”

State revenue grew 2.6 percent in the year that ended June 30. Skelton blames anemic revenue growth on corporate tax cuts and other revenue cutting measures that should be revisited. Corporate income tax collections were \$435.1 million last fiscal year, down \$123 million in two years.

“The vast majority of those benefits went to big, multinational and multistate companies,” Skelton said. “If you look at Wall Street, they are doing all right, they are doing just fine.”

Walsh said she did not have any specific goals for education funding if elected.

“I am not down there yet, so I don’t have all the details,” Walsh said. “When I do get down there I will look at all those things. I am campaigning and I can attest to the fact that I am going to be fighting to make sure children in our district have access to a quality education.”

The financial health of the University of Missouri must be the top priority for area lawmakers, Skelton said. The UM System cut \$101 million and 474 jobs to cover state funding cuts and declining tuition revenue while freeing cash for program investments.

One way to help the university is to be a booster, cheering success and making criticisms quietly, she said.

When former assistant professor Melissa Click became a lightning rod for criticism after the Concerned Student 1950 protests, some of the loudest condemnations came from former state Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, and former state Rep. Caleb Jones, R-Columbia. Jones held the 50th District seat until he resigned in January to work for Greitens.

Jones at one point tweeted that he “wouldn’t send his dog” to MU.

“It damaged the reputation of the university much beyond what was deserved,” Skelton said.

Walsh said she recognizes the economic importance of MU in the region and wants to help it receive the largest appropriation possible, she said.

“I am going to work to fight for funding for the University of Missouri but at the same time I realize we operate within a balanced budget,” Walsh said.

Visits promote agritourism down on the farm

By TESS VRBIN

BOONVILLE — When Bruce Arnett started a peach orchard about 30 years ago, he did not envision it as an agritourism site.

Over time, he added a pumpkin patch, a petting zoo, a straw maze and hayrides to the farm. Some years go by without peach crops, so Arnett started hosting school field trips at the farm to keep money coming in. He said 27 schools visit the farm regularly and 18,000 people visited the farm last fall. Agritourism typically starts small and develops over time in this way, said Martha Glass, founder of the National Agritourism Professionals Association.

Agriculture is the number one industry in Missouri and tourism is number two, said Kelly Smith, the Missouri Farm Bureau director of marketing and commodities.

“When you put those two things together underneath agritourism, it adds to the economic engine,” he said.

According to a 2010 study by the University of Missouri Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, almost two-thirds of Missouri farms turned a profit after developing agritourism. The study also showed that agritourism operations come in a wide range of sizes. Some farms made less than \$10,000 in gross sales in 2008, and others made more than \$250,000. The Missouri Division of Tourism has a list of 234 agritourism sites statewide, such as wineries, farmers markets and equestrian sites.

Agritourism is the fastest-growing sector of agriculture for two reasons, Smith said. Farmers want to diversify their services and increase their revenue without buying new land, he said, and people are looking for activities in rural areas.

“Old folks are being nostalgic, and young folks are trying to educate their children,” Smith said.

Glass agreed that agritourism serves as an educational tool. Farmers who provide fun activities like pumpkin patches and corn mazes should also provide information for visitors to know that the site is not just a place for recreation but also a farm that produces food.

“Good agritourism farms market what they do all year round in addition to the fun and education that they provide visitors during their agritourism season,” Glass said.

Arnett’s farm sells peaches from June to September and offers the additional activities only in October. On Monday, the farm was the second stop on a bus tour of Central Missouri businesses as part of the fifth annual Missouri Agritourism Conference. Agribusiness owners from all over the state attended the conference, which started Sunday and ended Tuesday, to learn how to

make the most of their businesses. Other sites on Monday's bus tour included Show Me Farms in Columbia, Blue Bell Farm in Fayette and Serenity Valley Winery in Fulton. The Missouri Farm Bureau and the state Department of Agriculture's AgriMissouri program sponsored the conference.

MISSOURIAN

Church to host movie night focusing on injustice towards Native Americans

MICHAEL CALI, 15 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Olivet Christian Church will host a theological movie night focusing on injustice against Native Americans on Friday, July 28 at the church's Fellowship Hall, [1991 South Olivet Road](#). The event will be free to the public, according to a press release.

The church will open the hall at 6:30 p.m. for two films — 500 Nations and United Shades of America — as well as a discussion led by a guest panel, according to the release. **The panel will include Native issues advocate Laura Wacker, MU geography professor Mark Palmer and Maza Tipi Ovate founder Robert A. Horse, who will be speaking via phone from a South Dakota prison.**

The theological movie nights were started by Olivet Pastor Wes Knight as a way for the community to engage with and discuss issues that affect social justice, according to the release.

"Through education we know we can help close the economic, social and educational gaps that divide us and look to a future that does not include social injustices and poverty for this vital part of our American population. It is time to reach out and build bridges," Olivet member Fran DeMaster said in the release.

Arnett said one of his main messages to the conference attendees was to know how to cater to a target audience. His customer base is Columbia, and a farmer in a more sparsely populated area would have to run a business differently than he does, Arnett said.

A major benefit of the conference is having those who have built their own businesses there to share their ideas.

"Ideas are a wonderful thing," Arnett said. "If it works for somebody else, it might work for you, and a good idea is worth big bucks."

The prospect of spreading ideas drew Pam Dudley to the conference. She is the director of the Mt. Vernon Area Chamber of Commerce, and she said she wanted to bring ideas for generating agritourism back to the collection of small towns between Joplin and Springfield. Lawrence County farms produce beef, dairy, corn and soybeans, Dudley said, but the region's only

example of agritourism is Mt. Vernon's Apple Butter Makin' Days on the second weekend of every October.

"In these tough economic times for tourism dollars, we're trying to research new ways to get people interested in coming to southwest Missouri," Dudley said.

Glass said an economic benefit of agritourism is the fact that it does not require local municipalities to spend money on infrastructure such as new roads, bridges and sewer systems. Tourists visiting farms and wineries spend their money on food, gas and hotel stays in addition to agritourism services, she said.

Show Me Farms, the penultimate stop on the tour, is not as much of a tourist site as the other locations, operational manager Jerome Grethen said. However, the farm has made a name for itself selling beef, pork, chicken and turkey products. The Columbia Farmers Market, Hy-Vee and the Missouri State Fair sell meat from Show Me Farms.

Grethen said he hopes the visit to his farm taught the conference attendees how to use niche marketing to add value to their goods. He said his business, like any in the agriculture industry, involves long hours and low pay, but he believes both are worth it.

"The fact that we're providing a healthier product for people, we get some satisfaction from that, and the fact that we're unique in what we do," Grethen said.