

APR 05 2011

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Mizzou hire of Miami coach takes fans by surprise

COLUMBIA | At precisely 9:28 Monday night, Missouri athletic director Mike Alden confirmed contract approval for the Tigers' fourth men's basketball coach in 13 seasons, and easily the most controversial hire of the four.

Frank Haith — a man some Mizzou fans had never heard of until late Sunday night — will be officially introduced at 10 this morning at Mizzou Arena.

Missouri will pay Haith a guaranteed \$1.5 million a year for five seasons. He has experience in the Big 12 as an assistant and is known as a strong recruiter.

In seven seasons as the head coach at the University of Miami, Haith's teams had an overall record of 129-101 and reached one NCAA Tournament.

Haith, 45, follows MU coaching legend Norm Stewart, who was ousted by Alden following the 1999 season, Quin Snyder and Mike Anderson. Last month, Anderson left Missouri for Arkansas after leading the Tigers to three straight NCAA Tournaments.

Alden acknowledged his reputation is on the line more than if he had made a safer hire of a coach with better credentials.

"I think so," Alden told reporters Monday night at Mizzou Arena. "That's part of my responsibility, is to make those decisions.

"Sure, that's going to reflect back on you."

While many MU fans questioned Alden's choice, others were willing to wait before judging Haith.

“This is my school and I’m going to support my team,” said Paul Blackman, a Kansas City attorney and past president of the Kansas City Tiger Club.

“Let’s at least give the guy a chance. He’s the coach now so (darn) it, I want him to do well. I hope that he does great. But I don’t think Alden has much wiggle room here.”

Members of the University of Missouri system Board of Curators — meeting in closed session just a short jog across Providence Road — approved the agreement Alden and Haith reached on Sunday evening. Haith will also receive \$100,000 in annual deferred compensation and an automatic one-year extension in May 2012.

Haith made about the same salary at Miami, where he had two years remaining on his contract. Anderson’s salary at MU was \$1.55 million per year.

There was no comment from any curator Monday, despite the earlier assurance of one of them, David Wasinger, that Alden would have to answer tough questions and that curator approval of the contract could be a 50-50 proposition.

Tim Hyder, an MU alumnus from Kansas City, said the selection of Haith — in contrast to Missouri’s ill-fated courtship of Purdue coach Matt Painter last week — was like “going from a Mercedes to a Prius.”

Alden said Monday he had not offered the Missouri job to another candidate. But his perceived willingness to offer big money — up to \$2.3 million a season — to Painter raised the expectations of many Missouri fans.

“I thought we were stepping up,” said Dennis Harper, founder of the iconic Harpo’s bar and grill franchise. “It sounds like we’re stepping down.”

At Miami, his first job as a head coach, Haith reached the postseason five out of seven seasons, four of those in the National Invitation Tournament. His teams never had a winning record in the Atlantic Coast Conference and his best finish was 23-11 overall and 8-8 in the ACC in 2007-08, which was the year Miami reached the NCAA Tournament.

“Frank Haith has been a steady leader and made a positive impact on the University of Miami men’s basketball program,” said Tony Hernandez, Miami’s acting athletic director. “We want to wish him well at Missouri.”

Haith is the son of a New York City bus driver who grew up in North Carolina and spent one year playing football at Elon, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in physical education in 1988.

Before he came to Miami, Haith spent 15 years as an assistant, most notably under Rick Barnes at Texas and with stops at Texas A&M, Penn State and Wake Forest. He led the recruitment of three McDonald’s All-America players at Texas: Daniel Gibson, LaMarcus Aldridge and Mike Williams. At Wake Forest, Haith recruited ACC player of the year Josh Howard.

Haith's reputation as a prime recruiter will be tested right away at Missouri, which has three unfilled scholarships and could have seven seniors on its roster who will need to be replaced after next season. Haith will also have better facilities at Missouri, including a modern arena with its own practice facility, than at Miami, where support for basketball isn't as high.

On Monday Haith flew from Houston, where he and Alden hashed out their agreement, to Miami, where he resigned and spoke to his former players. He then flew with Alden aboard a private airplane owned by a Missouri booster to Columbia, landing shortly after 7 p.m.

An email sent to The Star and others on Monday said some MU students were considering staging a protest outside the curators meeting as a "peaceful but adamant rejection of Frank Haith." But when the curators convened that meeting around 7:45 p.m., the only people in the parking lot were reporters.

Alden said it was "absolutely understandable" that fans had an unfavorable reaction to the hire because they had limited knowledge of Haith before it was reported late Sunday that he was MU's choice.

On March 23, Alden and MU juniors Kim English, Marcus Denmon and Laurence Bowers tried to explain their feelings as Anderson left Missouri for Arkansas. It was then that Alden acknowledged some of his thoughts strayed back to March 26, 2006, when the Board of Curators met in closed session considering whether to fire Alden for his handling of Snyder's ouster and the hiring of Anderson without formal curator approval.

Alden said he did not have the same kind of feelings on Monday as the curators discussed approval of the contract with Haith.

"No, it was not an awkward day for me," Alden said.

The question now is what lies ahead in an uncertain future. Haith will be expected to return Missouri to the NCAA Tournament for a fourth straight season.

"If Alden brings in Painter and Painter does not work out, people would not slam it," Blackman said. "It was a great hire, it just didn't work out.

"In this case, the margin for error isn't as great. If this team isn't really, really good, then Alden is going to catch it. His neck's on the line.

"He rises or falls with how Haith does."

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ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Mizzou's choice of Haith stirs concern

BY VAHE GREGORIAN | Posted: Tuesday, April 5, 2011 12:25 am

COLUMBIA, Mo. • With many Mizzou fans chafing over the hire and a member of the University of Missouri Board of Curators declaring beforehand, "The board is going to have a lot of questions," curator approval of a deal to bring Frank Haith to Mizzou appeared less than a rubber stamp Monday night.

But less than two hours after the telephone meeting of the board began, Mizzou athletics director Mike Alden arrived for a news conference at Mizzou Arena to deliver the news that a five-year, \$7.5 million deal, with an automatic one-year extension, had been approved for Haith.

Even as he extolled Haith's virtues, Alden said the hire was a snug fit for the seven criteria he had in mind for the job. With Haith taking his Miami teams to just one NCAA Tournament in seven seasons, Alden acknowledged the unrest.

Alden attributed the initial resistance to a passionate fan base that he believed was struggling with the surprise nature of the hire and Haith's relatively low profile after a coaching search that had focused on Purdue's Matt Painter.

Perhaps availing himself of semantics, he also said Haith "was the only person this job was offered to."

Still, Alden acknowledged that such measures as Haith's 43-69 record in Atlantic Coast Conference play means Alden's own reputation was all the more at stake after a move that has been almost universally perceived as curious at best.

"I think so; I think it's safe to say," Alden said. He added that hadn't given him pause because the decision wasn't about doing the popular thing but doing what he believed was right in terms of fit for MU's values.

It's fortunate for Alden that he wasn't banking on popularity when he chose Haith, who was seen as a rising star when he recruited four McDonald's All-Americans as an assistant coach at Texas before taking the Miami job.

"Missouri just made a great hire," Texas coach Rick Barnes said in a statement. "Frank is one of the primary people responsible for the rise of our program here at Texas.

"He has all the skills necessary to build a successful program at the highest level."

At Miami, he was just 129-101 overall, part of a record Alden said reflected a deficiency of resources at Miami.

"We believe that he's going to win at a very high level at our institution," he said.

That faith in Haith wasn't immediately taking hold. Many national media members had ridiculed the move. And as of 6 p.m. in an STLtoday.com poll, for instance, only 8 percent of 5,560 participants chose "thumbs up!" on the hire. Fifty percent voted "thumbs down" and 41 percent clicked "no opinion, because I don't know a thing about him."

That also was the point raised by Missouri curator David Wasinger, who said that he had no knowledge of Haith or the fact that he had been offered the job until reading it in the Post-Dispatch on Monday morning.

Wasinger added that he was aware of disappointment and disapproval being expressed around the state over Haith.

Wasinger, a St. Louis-based attorney, suggested fans and alumni let whatever their feelings were be known to board members around the state before the meeting. Sources said several curators were inundated with feedback, most of it resistant to Haith.

Wasinger said he looked forward to hearing Alden explain the rationale for choosing Haith and hoped for a happy outcome.

Just how the meeting proceeded was unclear. Curators were not immediately available to comment, and Alden said, "That's not something that would be appropriate for me to talk about."

Adding uncertainty and angst to the day were the intentions announced Monday of juniors Laurence Bowers and Kim English to test their credentials for the NBA draft, a non-binding move unless either retains an agent or doesn't remove his name from the draft by the May 8 deadline.

While it's believed that each already had been considering the draft and that neither would be a cinch to be chosen this year, the timing sharpened the appearance of instability and left to question whether either would have allowed it to be announced had it been a different coach.

"I think for anyone who plays college basketball, having a chance to play in the NBA is a dream," Bowers said, according to the MU statement. "I had a chance to talk with my family and other loved ones, and this is something I want to do. This rule is in place to allow guys like us to explore their options and make an informed decision."

English, whose Mizzou bio says he received a scholarship offer from Miami among other schools, essentially echoed Bowers in the statement.

A news conference to introduce Haith is scheduled for 10 a.m. today at Mizzou Arena. Perhaps unaware of the immediate feedback, Haith said in a statement, "The support of the students and

administration is second to none, and the tradition is outstanding. I'll tell you this, Mizzou Nation, we are going to win and win big!"

He added, "Now with that being said, I also understand this is the Show-me State."

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU names Haith new men's basketball coach

By Ben Frederickson

April 4, 2011 | 10:37 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — Missouri athletics director Mike Alden looked like a man who needed sleep. Later, even he would admit that the past few days have been running together. But as tired as he was, a smile stayed on his face as he made his announcement.

“We are excited that Frank Haith is our new basketball coach at the University of Missouri,” Alden said.

Alden sat alone as he laid out the rough parameters of the five-year, \$7.5 million contract that Haith agreed to before resigning as the head coach of the Miami men's basketball team on Monday. The announcement called the curtain on the search for Missouri's 17th men's basketball coach that started when Mike Anderson left for Arkansas on March 23.

Before taking questions, Alden mentioned the qualifications that made Haith the only candidate to whom Missouri officially offered the position, despite last week's speculation about Matt Painter, who signed a new contract with Purdue.

First, Alden stressed academics.

“Graduating 21 out of 22 student athletes at the University Miami. That's an unbelievable number and certainly exciting,” Alden said.

Then, he mentioned the need for a strong recruiter. Missouri has three open scholarship spots next season and will have six more the season after that. Haith proved his recruiting ability throughout his years as an assistant. He has recruited six McDonald's All Americans over his career.

“I think with his work ethic, his connections and the experience he has, whether it's in the Big 12 footprint or nationally, he's got to transfer that to the state of Missouri,” Alden said.

As Alden continued to work his way through his list, he noted a need for a strong mentor, a public face to the program and other key traits. Then he ended with his final qualification, the ability to win.

“Certainly with Frank, we believe we have found that,” Alden said. “No question about that.”

Cue the questions.

The questions were the same ones that had been flying since late Sunday evening when reports came out that Haith, a coach who was not expected to be on Missouri's radar, had agreed to accept an offer from Alden and his search committee.

Alden said some of the negative backlash surprised him, but he attributed the reaction to a lack of information about Haith.

“When someone comes to the forefront that perhaps people weren't looking at or identifying, it becomes a surprise to folks,” Alden said.

The reason for the concern is the record that follows Haith from Miami to Missouri: He went 129-101 overall at Miami and was 43-69 in the ACC.

According to Alden, Missouri can offer better resources and more options than Haith had as the coach of the Hurricanes. Combine that with the experience Haith has gathered during his seven year's as Miami's coach, and Alden said Haith should thrive.

“We believe that with all those skill sets, we put him in an environment with the type of resources we have, I think that there's not a doubt he is going to be able to do that,” Alden said.

Alden said he knows his reputation is more on the line than Haith, a coach that many fans knew nothing about, but Alden seemed to shoulder the load confidently, saying he thinks it could be the last basketball coach he hires during his career.

He trusts his system of hiring. The same system, he will remind you, that produced Missouri football coach Gary Pinkel and softball coach Ehren Earleywine.

But Alden also understands those who want results, not promises. He told Haith the same thing.

"I told him this is the Show-Me State, and it is," Alden said. "This is who we are as a state."

Haith won't have to wait long for his first chance. He will be introduced as Missouri's coach during a news conference at 10 a.m. Tuesday at Mizzou Arena's Clinton Club.



Curators approve Haith's hiring New MU coach agrees to six-year contract worth \$1.5 million annually.

By [Steve Walentik](#) Published [April 4, 2011](#) at 10:35 p.m. Updated [April 5, 2011](#) at 3:13 a.m.

Missouri Athletic Director Mike Alden seemed caught off guard Monday night as he sat in the interview room inside Mizzou Arena fielding questions from media members after officially unveiling Frank Haith as the 17th head coach in Missouri men's basketball history.

One inquisitor wanted to gauge Alden's confidence that it would be the last time he would make such an announcement after doing so twice previously in a 12-year period.

"My confidence level is high," Alden said. "Good question. But it's high."

The last basketball coach he hired, Mike Anderson, resurrected the program and led it to three straight NCAA Tournaments but opted to leave after five seasons to take the same position at Arkansas. He was pulled there by a sense of attachment that had grown during 17 years as an assistant coach in Fayetteville, Ark.

Alden sounded certain that 45-year-old Haith, who has spent the previous seven seasons as the head coach at Miami, truly wanted to be in Columbia long-term when he agreed to a five-year, \$7.5 million contract with an automatic one-year extension that will kick in on May 1, 2012. The deal also will give Haith \$100,000 in deferred annual compensation and the possibility to earn more with various performance bonuses.

"Frank Haith, Pam, his wife, their family, they are committed to that," Alden said. "They are excited about moving to our community, raising their family and developing not only our basketball program but our entire team and their family right here in the state of Missouri."

But when news of Haith's hiring broke late Sunday night, it was immediately met with far more concern that he was destined to meet the same fate as Alden's other basketball coaching hire, Quin Snyder, who resigned under pressure near the end of his seventh season. That turned out to be the third of five in a row in which the Tigers failed to make the NCAA Tournament.

Haith's track record wasn't overflowing with results. He compiled a record of 129-101 — a .561 winning percentage — in seven seasons in Coral Gables, Fla., and went 43-69 in Atlantic Coast Conference play. His teams never finished with a winning league record and only once made the NCAA Tournament. That was in 2008 when the seventh-seeded Hurricanes went 23-11 and were bounced out of the second round after losing to Texas.

In four other seasons, including the just completed one, Miami participated in the National Invitation Tournament, and many thought Haith would enter next season on the hot seat with only two years remaining on his contract.

For many fans, it all added up to make his hiring come as a shock. Or maybe a letdown after Missouri's very public flirtation with Purdue Coach Matt Painter, a three-time Big Ten Coach of the Year, who last

week agreed to an eight-year contract and a sizable raise to remain at his alma mater after meeting with Alden to discuss the MU job.

The fans made their displeasure known on message boards and in Twitter posts as well as by calling into radio shows.

Some also contacted members of the UM Board of Curators, who were required to approve Haith's contract because it was for longer than five years. Curator David Wasinger of St. Louis said in public comments Monday that he would have "a lot of questions" for Alden when the board convened its special meeting on Monday night and even suggested it might only be a 50-50 proposition that Haith's proposed contract would win board approval.

Alden declined to share what was said during the closed session, but it turned out it took the curators less than two hours to sign off on the deal.

That freed Alden up to explain his decision to hire Haith, who will be formally introduced at a press conference at 10 a.m. Tuesday in the Clinton Club at Mizzou Arena. Alden praised Haith's work ethic and character and also pointed to the fact that 21 of 22 Miami players who exhausted their eligibility during Haith's tenure graduated.

Alden was impressed by Haith's reputation as a strong recruiter, which he earned not only during his time at Miami but also in three seasons he spent as an assistant coach under Rick Barnes at Texas. He was the Longhorns' lead recruiter and helped them land a top-ranked recruiting class led by future NBA players LaMarcus Aldridge and Daniel Gibson in 2004.

Recruiting will be critical to Haith's success with a total of nine scholarships to be filled over the next 13 months.

"That's a lot of scholarships, a lot of recruiting that's going to need to take place, so you needed to make sure you were identifying someone that could hit the ground running, with national connections, Big 12 connections and to be able to move us forward," Alden said. "Certainly, Frank is able to do that."

"Frank has always stayed on top of that," Barnes said in a phone interview on Monday. "I don't care, when you're at a BCS school, you know the players, you know where they are. We're all in the same places recruiting and evaluating players. He's obviously going to come in there and lock down the state. That's everybody's first priority."

Even if Haith can attract talented players to Columbia, he still must prove he can effectively mold them into a cohesive team that can compete with the best in the Big 12.

"Certainly he has had some success at Miami, and he's going to have a lot more success when he's here at Mizzou," Alden said. "We have resources that allow us to be competitive in the highest levels. That isn't always the case, and I don't think that that necessarily was the case for Frank. When he comes here to have access to that with his skill set, we believe he's going to win at a very high level."

Alden said he talked to Haith about some of the skepticism that is greeting him as he takes over the MU program, and the coach seemed to allude to it in a prepared statement Monday.

"The support of the students and administration is second to none, and the tradition is outstanding," he said. "I'll tell you this, Mizzou Nation, we are going to win and win big!"

"Now with that being said, I also understand this is the Show-me State."

MU's Alden faces controversy again over coaching hire

A little more than five years ago — March 26, 2006, to be exact — the University of Missouri system's Board of Curators gathered in a special session at the Columbia campus' University Hall.

On the agenda was discussion about MU athletic director Mike Alden's handling of the ouster of Tigers basketball coach Quin Snyder, as well as Alden's intention to reveal Mike Anderson as Snyder's replacement later that day at Mizzou Arena. And whether the curators would vote to fire Alden.

Monday night, another set of curators will meet — largely by teleconference at the same place. to put another set of hard questions for Alden about the man he has picked to succeed Anderson, a coach from the University of Miami who few Missouri fans or even officials had heard of until the Sunday night revelation of Alden's selection of Frank Haith.

"The board is going to have a lot of questions," St. Louis curator David Wasinger told the St. Louis Post-Dispatch on Monday morning.

The curators must approve the contract offer to Haith, who Miami announced on Monday afternoon had resigned as the Hurricanes basketball coach. While they could refuse to do so, that option is not considered likely to be exercised.

Laura Confer, student member of the board, declined to comment on that possibility.

"I would like to respect the University's tradition and not comment publicly about personal and/or performance issues," Confer said.

An email sent to Missouri media outlets — including The Star — on Monday said some students were considering staging a protest outside the curator's meeting, "a peaceful but adamant rejection of Frank Haith."

Tim Hyder, an MU alumnus from Kansas City, described the selection of Haith — in contrast to Missouri's ill-fated courtship of Purdue coach Matt Painter last week — was like "going from a Mercedes to a Prius."

“Where is our commitment to being the best we can be?” Hyder said in an email to The Star.

Aside from the surprise of Alden selecting Haith, a coach who has guided Miami to only one NCAA Tournament in seven seasons, has a losing record in Atlantic Coast Conference games and merely a 129-101 record overall with the Hurricanes, most of the angst seemed to have settled not on the proposed new coach but upon the man who would hire him.

“This is my school and I’m going to support my team,” said Paul Blackman, a Kansas City attorney and past president of the Kansas City Tiger Club.

“Let’s at least give the guy a chance. I’m one of those. He’s the coach now so damn it, I want him to do well. I hope that he does great. But I don’t think Alden has much wiggle room here.”

Alden’s willingness to offer big money — up to \$2.3 million a season — to Painter raised the hopes and expectations of many Missouri fans.

Alden’s hiring of Haith — no matter Haith’s reputation as a great recruiter for Rick Barnes at Texas and in two stints as an assistant at Texas A&M — quite honestly let the air out of the balloon.

“If Alden brings in Painter and Painter does not work out, people would not slam it,” Blackman said. “It was a great hire, it just didn’t work out.

“In this case, the margin for error isn’t as great. If this team isn’t really, really good, then Alden is going to catch it. His neck’s on the line.

“He rises or falls with how Haith does.”

It does not help that Haith — who was to address his Miami players in Coral Gables, Fla., late Monday afternoon and then board an aircraft furnished by one of Missouri’s top boosters bound for Columbia on Monday evening — was waved goodbye with some glee on Monday morning.

An article in the South Florida Sun-Sentinel put it this way:

“Frank Haith sure made things easy for the University of Miami and himself.

“He got the job at Missouri.

“Problem solved.

“This looks like a win-win for both. Haith gets a better job and doesn’t have to wonder if he’ll be fired after next season. And Miami gets a fresh start to decide what kind of basketball program it really wants.”

It is a generally accepted theory among college basketball sources who know Frank Haith that fan apathy and the need for better facilities made Haith's job at Miami tougher than what he should face at Missouri.

Mizzou Arena is a modern, 15,061-seat arena that includes its own practice facility, up-to-date treatment and training areas, and a luxurious team area. For the fans, Mizzou Arena features something few other college facilities have: luxury suites and the Clinton Club for high-dollar boosters and their friends.

One longtime MU booster told The Star on Monday he believes the Tigers are getting a better coach in Haith than the one they lost in Anderson.

Anderson, after two years rebuilding the program following Snyder's departure, coached Missouri to three straight NCAA Tournament appearances, including one Elite Eight run in 2009.

Anderson left, however, after Missouri lost 10 of its final 19 games, including to Cincinnati in its first game of the NCAA Tournament. Worse, Anderson left only weeks after saying he wanted to retire at Missouri. As they have throughout the search for Anderson's replacement, Alden and other MU athletic sources have refused to comment. Monday was no different, despite direct requests.

The Star emailed all the curators seeking comment as well, but only Confer responded as of Monday afternoon.

Dennis Harper, founder of the iconic Harpo's bar and grill franchise and long a familiar face at MU basketball games, did not know of the Sunday night hubbub until contacted on Monday morning by The Star.

Harper chose his words carefully, choosing not to respond at all to some questions, but admitted the falloff from Painter to Haith certainly seemed a precipitous one.

"I thought we were stepping up," Harper said. "It sounds like we're stepping down."

Harper, too, said MU fans needed to give Haith a chance.

But in the midst of it all, words from Alden delivered on the evening of Anderson's resignation at Missouri, echoed throughout the first 24 hours of what will be the Frank Haith Era of Missouri basketball.

Shortly after 9 p.m. on March 23, Alden acknowledged that some of his thoughts strayed back to March 26, 2006.

"Wow, what an awkward situation for all of us at Mizzou for lots of things," Alden said. "We went and recruited a guy out of the University of Alabama-Birmingham to come here and be our head basketball coach at Mizzou. And we were so excited about that.

“And with all the turmoil and turbulence that was taking place here, whether it surrounded me personally or our program and our institution, it was a tough time.

“And I think about that now, and I think to myself that there was no doubt at that time, Mike could have turned around and ran right back to UAB and said, ‘Wait a minute, man. I’ve got something really good going on here.’

“But you know what, he didn’t. He said, ‘No, I’m committed toward doing something special at Mizzou. I’m going to do that.’

“And he came and he just knocked it out of the park.

“We’re a better program because of that.”

But one that at least as a matter of public perception, seems back at a similar crossroads with Aiden in the crosshairs of another coach-hiring controversy.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Burwell: Same old craziness with MU curators

BY BRYAN BURWELL | bburwell@post-dispatch.com 314-340-8185 | Posted: Tuesday, April 5, 2011 12:30 am

HOUSTON • Well, this is certainly familiar territory, isn't it? Five years ago when Mike Alden was on the verge of hiring Mike Anderson, the Missouri director of athletics was the unfortunate co-star of an embarrassing theater of the absurd. Where else but Missouri would they take the rare occasion and relatively simple process of hiring a basketball coach to create a semi-comical political sideshow?

Remember the mess that they almost made of that? Remember the jaw-dropping insanity and the slapstick comedy act when the Board of Curators were willing participants in a dysfunctional carnival? There was the zany possibility of multiple news conferences where no one was sure if they would be announcing the hiring of a new coach, the firing of the athletics director or the release of the new coach from a contract that he had just inked with the guy the school just fired.

So here we were again Monday, with Mizzou hours away from hiring Frank Haith, and the same crazy behind-the-scenes nonsense seemed to be upon us. There was a lot of talk floating around that five years later, another coup d'etat was afoot, with several curators who barely know how to do their jobs trying to tell Alden how to do his. Some of the same folks who were a part of the failed '06 Alden overthrow were now pandering to the angry and uninformed fan base. They were talking publicly that they would certainly consider an attempt to block the hiring of Haith during an emergency board meeting Monday night.

Ah, yes, no place but Mizzou.

"Is this real or just some wild and elaborate hallucination? Why does Missouri keep doing this to itself? Why do we continue to have all these warring factions who are so busy trying to fight for control of the athletic department that they fail to see that they're destroying the very thing they've been fighting over?"

I wrote those very words five years ago, and they still apply today.

While sanity ultimately prevailed and Alden got his man, for the life of me I just don't understand why it always has to be so complicated with Mizzou. What is it about this school that so many people find so many ways to embarrass themselves and make a laughingstock of their university? I keep hearing people complain because they don't know who Frank Haith is.

So what? It's not your job to know the credentials of every potential head-coaching candidate in America. You weren't in the interview room, didn't sit down with the man and evaluate his X's and O's, his recruiting track record, his knowledge of the way you balance basketball and books.

That is Alden's job, and he has established a lengthy track record of knowing how to do his job quite well.

I don't know what Alden said to the curators behind closed doors, but I hope it was something like this:

Do your job and let me do mine. As a curator, it isn't your job to be up on all the coaches in the land. So stop acting like you are.

If Alden says this is who he wants to hire, approve the guy and get out of the way. And if it doesn't work out, hold him accountable.

But until then, shut up and get out of the way.

Down here at the Final Four, where there are plenty of people who are qualified to offer an opinion on Haith, the consensus among the educated class in college basketball circles is that he has an outstanding reputation in the business. Class individual. Intelligent man. Knows how to recruit. Understands the Big 12 landscape as well as anyone who was honestly available (and truly interested) for the job.

As one former coach with a national championship pedigree told me Monday night. "The smart thing you have to do sometimes is find a guy who is grateful to have your job. Too many people go after guys who are ambivalent about it. Give me a guy who truly wants it, that you don't have to convince to take the job. That's a good starting point."

Haith is one of those guys who is going to be grateful after leaving a job at Miami where he was coaching a sport that no one in town was particularly interested in. What he did at Miami was little shy of miracle working. Several very knowledgeable athletic directors characterized the job at Miami as a bad one and said that under the circumstances, what Haith accomplished - even with a sub.500 record in the ACC - was actually quite impressive.

If there's a shortcoming in his résumé it is his in-game coaching, but the good news is Haith is old enough and experienced enough to know what he doesn't know. Several sources say that he is going to bring former Oklahoma coach Jeff Capel along as his top assistant. Capel has a good reputation in the business for his bench work and X's and O's.

This reminds me of when Kansas State hired Frank Martin to replace Bob Huggins, and the entire K-State fan base grumbled because they didn't think Martin was a good hire. Well, how did that work out?



Campus Chatter

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Not curators' job to hire coach, Goode says

By [Janese Silvey](#) Posted April 4, 2011 at 1:12 p.m

So let me start by saying I'm in no way, shape or form a sports journalist. Couldn't even pretend to be. But the MU basketball coach hire that's expected to happen tonight has brought up an interesting question about the UM Board of Curators.

So all over Twitter, Mizzou fans are calling on curators to vote "no" if asked to approve a contract with Frank Haith, a basketball coach in Miami. I know nothing about the man (or basketball for that matter) and have absolutely zero opinion on his hiring, in case I didn't make that clear earlier. But apparently there are quite a few folks not happy with the pick.

Curators are meeting via teleconference at 7:45 p.m. David Wasinger -- who isn't even supposed to be on the board because his term expired Jan. 1 -- told the Post-Dispatch the board will have lots of questions. Curator Wayne Goode, though, explained to me that it's not really the job of the board to pick basketball coaches. It's coming to curators for a vote because the collected rules say contracts for head coaches should not exceed five years unless approved by the board. Athletic Director Mike Alden, apparently, is seeking to give Haith longer contract. There's language about buyout clauses, too; here's the rule:

Contracts, Stipulations and Exceptions —Contracts for Directors of Intercollegiate Athletics and Head Coaches are subject to all applicable rules and regulations of the UM Board of Curators and executive orders issued by the President pertaining to employment contracts. In any event, contracts shall not at any point in time exceed five (5) years and shall not include buyout clauses calling for the individual to receive more than the balance of the annual base salary the individual would have earned under the remaining terms of the contract. Exceptions to the rule on employment contracts must be approved by the UM Board of Curators upon the recommendation of the President.

The board's job is to look at that aspect of it, not to delve deeply into Haith's qualifications, he said.

"Having said that, I know this is not the highest profile candidate that was out there, and that may concern some people," he said, adding that he's had to read up on Haith's background, too.

"That probably is what has some people, involved fans, concerned but you know Mike Anderson wasn't a high profile person when he came to the campus in Columbia and he did a very good job in my opinion," Goode said. "From what little I've read this candidate very likely can do that, too. You never know until they get in the job."

And Goode, a former state Senator, knows you can't make everyone happy. He'd expect criticism if Mizzou were offering a bucketload of money for a higher-profile candidate, too.

"The other side of the coin would be to get in a bidding war for some of the highest profile coaches out there and try to pull them away from somewhere else," he said. "I imagine there would be an equal number of people -- maybe not all basketball fans, per se -- but people that wouldn't like to see that happen. It's a tough choice."

I also called Craig Van Matre, a Columbia attorney appointed to the board but who is still waiting to be confirmed by the Senate. Since he's not officially on the board, he won't be at tonight's meeting and has little say over the matter. In fact, Columbia has no representation on the Board of Curators right now at all since Bo Fraser resigned in December.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Advisers nudge low-income families toward college

BY TIM BARKER • tbarker@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8350 | Posted: Tuesday, April 5, 2011 12:30 am

STORY RAN ON FRONT PAGE

CARBONDALE, Ill. • Darren Powell is trudging across campus, part of a group of 40 high school freshmen and sophomores from Riverview Gardens, trying to describe what he plans to do with his life.

It's a little fuzzy, but he's almost certain he wants to do something involving either criminology or zoology. And somehow, wrestling needs to fit in along the way.

"This college is nice," Powell says, as the group makes its way toward lunch at the student center at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. "But they don't have wrestling."

Regardless, the sophomore seems intent on carrying out his family's wishes: "They want me to be the first boy in our family to go to college."

And that, more than anything, is why he and his classmates are here today.

Among the adults watching over this small army of high schoolers is Khadija Tejan, who is part of a young nationwide effort that's using recent college graduates to persuade children of low-income families to go to college.

She works for the Missouri College Advising Corps but is based at Riverview Gardens High School, where she spends her days taking some of the mystery out of higher education. She helps students and parents navigate the complicated financial aid process. She finds scholarships and grants. She organizes campus tours. And at age 22, she's about as close to these students' age as you can get while still having a college degree.

This is not a long-term job for Tejan — advisers can stay no more than two years — but she sees it as a chance to make a difference.

"When you have a degree, you have an obligation to help someone else get a degree," Tejan said.

The advising corps, based at the University of Missouri-Columbia, got its start in 2008 after Mizzou was selected as one of 10 schools nationwide to expand upon a 2005 pilot program at the University of Virginia.

It is, in many ways, the type of program that needs to grow and prosper if the nation is serious about meeting President Barack Obama's call to increase the pool of young people with college degrees to 60 percent from 40 percent in the next decade.

While the program is still young, there have been early signs of success, said Beth Tankersley-Bankhead, executive director of the Missouri group that is now one of 14 nationwide.

They have tracked a 6.3 percent increase in students going to college from high schools where an adviser has worked for at least two years. For many of these students, it's simply a matter of changing perceptions, Tankersley-Bankhead said.

"They've been told they aren't college material," she said. "For a lot of them, honestly, it's a matter of someone telling them they can do it.

That's also why advisers such as Brandon Guthrie, who is based at Soldan High School, are so valuable to the corps.

Guthrie, a 2009 Mizzou graduate who plans to become a high school principal, is a St. Louis native and a first-generation college student.

"When I was in high school, there really wasn't anybody there," Guthrie said. "I had to figure everything out on my own."

The Mizzou program got its start through a \$1 million grant, paid over four years, from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation. In its third year, the program has expanded its funding sources and now has more than half a dozen sponsors, including AmeriCorps, Bank of America and Sprint Foundation.

And this week, Mizzou announced the program has received a \$400,000 grant through the Pathways Fund, a public-private partnership. The money will help the program nearly double in size, adding 10 new advisers, divided evenly between the St. Louis and Kansas City areas.

While all of the advisers are Mizzou graduates, they make no effort to steer students to Columbia. That explains why Tejan and other advisers take their kids to places such as the University of Missouri-Kansas City, Southeast Missouri State University, Tennessee State University and the University of Arkansas Pine Bluff.

Leading her group across the Carbondale campus, Tejan laughed off the suggestion she might be viewed as a traitor to her Tigers.

"In my heart, I bleed black and gold," Tejan said. "But my job is to make sure they get into college."

That's certainly a job with its challenges, considering that Tejan and her peers are sent into schools populated by children of low-income families. Many of them would be the first in their families to pursue college.

The fact that these counselors are young and better able to relate to the students has been a major part of their success, said Traci Nave, the college and career coordinator for the Riverview Gardens District.

Both women talk about the challenges of creating a "college-bound" culture at a school where students don't always have a lot of support at home — at least not the kind they need to navigate the complicated process of college applications. Often, it can be a battle just to convince parents why they need to surrender their income tax information as part of the financial aid process.

And sometimes, they simply need to be educated about the opportunities in front of their kids.

"Because it wasn't a reality for them, they think it's not a reality for their children," Nave said. "We show them that their children have that capability."

Of course, some of those hurdles are smaller than others.

Kim Dunn, also a sophomore at Riverview, already knows she wants to pursue a career in health care. She wants to be a nurse.

She says her parents have been supportive, though they are concerned about the cost. And it has been suggested that she needs to make sure she isn't doing it just because everyone else is.

"I'm going because I want to," Dunn said. "I just feel that if you go to college, you are preparing yourself for the world."

Kemper award surprises professors

By Janese Silvey Monday, April 4, 2011



Photo by Parker Eshelman

From left foreground, Kemper Foundation Chairman Jim Schatz, University of Missouri Arts and Science Dean Michael O'Brien and Chancellor Brady Deaton award Bethany Stone as a 2011 William T. Kemper fellow Monday morning. The teaching award, one of five to be given out this week, comes with a \$10,000 prize.

Plenty of employees and students at the **University of Missouri** probably were dreading returning to class this morning after a week off for spring break.

Bethany Stone wasn't one of them. "Monday means nothing to me," the assistant teaching professor of biology said. "I love what I do."

That love of teaching paid off this morning when Stone snagged the first 2011 William T. Kemper Fellowship for Teaching Excellence award, a top teaching honor that comes with a \$10,000 prize.

Stone was in the middle of a lesson on stem cells in her Biology 1010 course at Middlebush Hall when Chancellor Brady Deaton and a posse of administrators and reporters showed up in her room with the news.

"She's been selected by the best teachers on campus as one of the best teachers on campus," Deaton said, explaining the award to her students.

Each year, MU selects five Kemper fellows. The award was established 20 years ago with a \$500,000 gift in honor of William Kemper, an MU graduate and civic leader in Kansas City.

Stone earned her doctorate from MU and teaches introductory courses to non-majors. She has been at the university since 2002.

John David, director of the division of biological sciences in the College of Arts and Science, described her as energetic.

“Bethany is quite simply the kind of teacher that we all want to be and that every student dreams of having at least once in his or her career,” he said in a statement.

Frank Moton, a sophomore who hopes to pursue a sports marketing career, appreciates Stone’s style. Biology 1010 is a lot of work, he said, but Stone makes it interesting. “She understands that we aren’t in the field,” he said. “She’s very concerned about her students and helps students stay on track.”

Stone also is different from other instructors, he said. She plays music in class — this morning’s selections included “Rodeo Clowns” by Jack Johnson and “All the Right Moves” by One Republic — and lets her students text questions to her cell phone if they’re too shy to ask in class.

Being recognized for her teaching is an honor, but Stone said her real reward is her students.

Stone was one of two Kemper honorees this morning. Three more will be presented this week. The names are kept secret so awardees can be surprised.

Stone said she was “shocked,” but as soon as her unexpected guests left, her attention was back on the students.

Later on, Mike McKean was clearly surprised when Deaton and company showed up in the editing lab in the Reynolds Journalism Institute.

“Oh, my God,” he said, even before Deaton had a chance to explain the award. Later, McKean said he’s “rarely speechless, but this might be one of those times I come close.”

McKean, an associate professor, has worked at MU for 25 years and created the convergence journalism emphasis area in the School of Journalism six years ago. He, too, praised his students, saying they make it easy to come to work.

As with Stone, the celebration was short-lived. Camera crews were barely out of his classroom when McKean returned to teacher mode. “Now,” he said, \$10,000 richer, “on with class.”

Reach Janese Silvey at 573-815-1705 or e-mail jsilvey@columbiatribune.com.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Three MU faculty members receive Kemper Fellowship Awards

By Michael Davis

April 4, 2011 | 5:53 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — Three MU faculty members were left with smiles on their faces after a visit from Chancellor Brady Deaton on Monday.

Deaton surprised Bethany Stone, Mike McKean and Etti Naveh-Benjamin with the William T. Kemper Fellowship for Teaching Excellence.

The fellowships are given annually to five outstanding educators and include a \$10,000 award. They are funded by a \$500,000 gift from the family of William Kemper, an MU graduate and Kansas City civic leader.

The three fellowship winners will be joined by two more to be announced Tuesday and Friday. The names of the winners are kept secret until Deaton makes the announcement live in a classroom.

Bethany Stone, an assistant teaching professor in the division of biological sciences, said she was shocked when she saw the cameras come into her class.

Stone, who teaches introductory biology courses, said she works to make biology as applicable to the lives of her students as she can.

"I think about how they are going to be using biology in five, 10 years when they are starting to have kids, and in 30 years when medical problems pop up," Stone said.

John David, director of the division of biological sciences, applauded Stone as a teacher.

"Bethany is energetic, excited and clearly understands her students and wants them to do well and reach their full potential," David said in a news release.

Just two hours later, Deaton surprised McKean, associate professor of convergence journalism in the School of Journalism, while he was conducting class in the Reynolds Journalism Institute.

"I'm rarely speechless, but this might be one of those times I come close," McKean said.

He has been part of the MU School of Journalism for 25 years and led in the creation of the convergence emphasis area six years ago.

McKean said that coming into work every day is made easy by the quality of students in the Journalism School. He said that he hopes receiving this award is as reflective of his students as it is of himself.

McKean earned a bachelor's degree from the Missouri School of Journalism and a master of arts in political science from Rice University.

The final award handed out Monday was given to Etti Naveh-Benjamin, a visiting teaching professor in the department of psychological sciences and lecturer in the department of German and Russian Studies.

"I am very proud to be a part of this great university, and I am very proud of my students," Naveh-Benjamin said.

Since 2002, Naveh-Benjamin has taught cross-cultural psychology and Israeli culture courses at MU.

"Etti is very enthusiastic about the material she is teaching, and her enthusiasm makes students want to learn," said Alan Strathman, director of undergraduate studies in the department of psychological sciences, in a news release.

Naveh-Benjamin earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from Eastern Michigan University.



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ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

MISSOURIAN
COLUMBIA'S MORNING NEWSPAPER

Posted on Mon, Apr. 04, 2011

MU closer to becoming smoke-free campus

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA | It will be harder to find a place to smoke on the University of Missouri's Columbia campus this summer.

Starting July 1, smoking will be allowed only in designated areas. The smoking areas aren't final yet, but they are likely to be in parking lots and on the top floors of parking garages.

The Columbia Tribune reports that the stricter rules are a step toward the university's goal of being entirely smoke-free by Jan. 1, 2014.

The university's current policy prohibits smoking within 20 feet of doors, windows and fresh air intake systems on campus. The Tribune reports that the policy is not strictly enforced, with campus administrators mostly leaving it to students and employees to police each other.