

Ellis Library to reopen Tuesday after Saturday morning fire

By Jared Grafman

September 11, 2011 | 5:22 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA – Ellis Library will remain closed Monday as crews continue to clean up the damage caused by a fire started on the second floor early Saturday morning.

Christopher C. Kelley, 25, was arrested Saturday on suspicion of second-degree arson, second-degree burglary, two counts of second-degree tampering and seven counts of second-degree property damage in connection with the Ellis Library fire, according to a previous Missouriian report.

MU police Captain Brian Weimer said Kelley was employed with the MU Police Department before Saturday's events. Weimer was not able to comment further on details of Kelley's arrest, other than that he turned himself in to MU police and was taken to Boone County Jail after the arrest was made.

Kelley's bond for the charges against him total \$13,500, and the Boone County Sheriff's Department's website records indicate that bond has been posted.

The early morning fire Saturday in MU's Ellis Library was contained to the second floor, said Columbia Fire Department Battalion Chief Steven Sapp. Most of the fire's damage was limited to the library's circulation windows facing Lowry Mall because of the automatic sprinkler system.

"I can't even calculate the damage that would have been done without the sprinkler system," Sapp said. He also said video footage from the library's security cameras played a significant role in the investigation.

Because of the ongoing investigation, Sapp was unable to confirm how the fire began or whether an accelerant was used. Investigators are still looking into the extent of the damage.

According to previous *Missourian* reporting, an automatic fire alarm alerted the Columbia Fire Department and firefighters were dispatched to Ellis Library at about 3:30 a.m. Saturday.

An investigation by MU police also revealed damage to computer screens, Weimer said. Police found fecal matter on a table in the fourth floor of the library during their investigation, Weimer said.

MU spokesman Christian Basi said in an email that approximately three dozen books were damaged due to the location of the fires. Most of the books were in the inter-library loan, reserve and circulation areas, and none of the books in the general stacks, offices or carrels were harmed.

A damage estimate will hopefully be available by Tuesday, Basi said.

Crews have made significant progress in cleaning the damage from the fire and water, Basi said. The library will reopen at 7:30 a.m. Tuesday.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Police arrest Columbia, Mo., man in Mizzou library fire

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS | Posted: Sunday, September 11, 2011 1:06 pm

COLUMBIA, MO. • University of Missouri police arrested a 25-year-old Columbia, Mo., man in the fire reported Saturday at the Ellis Library on the university campus.

The man was being held on suspicion of burglary and arson, police said.

Police said informants identified the suspect after the fire was reported, and he surrendered to police Saturday.

Firefighters discovered the fire after an alarm went off at 3:30 a.m. Saturday, according to the Associated Press. Authorities said the building's sprinkler system suppressed the fire.

School officials told the Associated Press that the State Historical Society of Missouri, which has a facility on the ground floor of the library, also sustained some smoke and water damage.



Small fire damages MU's Ellis Library

11:00 PM, Sep. 10, 2011 |

COLUMBIA -- An early morning fire has resulted in moderate smoke and water damage to a library on the University of Missouri campus.

The university says an automatic fire alarm sounded at 3:30 a.m. Saturday in Ellis Library. Firefighters found a small fire that was being contained by the building's sprinkler system.

School officials say the State Historical Society, which is located on the ground floor of the library, also sustained smoke and water damage.

-- The Associated Press

UPDATE: Columbia man charged with arson in connection with library fire

By Elizabeth Gallaway, Matthew Schacht

September 10, 2011 | 6:04 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — A Columbia man turned himself in to MU Police about noon Saturday in connection with a fire at MU's Ellis Library.

The man, Christopher Curtis Kelley, 25, was arrested on suspicion of second-degree arson, second-degree burglary, two counts of second-degree tampering and seven counts of second-degree property damage.

MU spokesman Christian Basi said no damage estimate was available yet, but he had been in the library and seen moderate water damage to the lobby area that faces Lowry Mall and more damage to the floor below it.

Gary Kremer, director of the State Historical Society of Missouri, said no artwork was damaged or in danger.

"All things considered, it could have been much worse," he said.

Kelley was a student at MU and graduated in 2009. He worked for MU Police as a part-time events assistant at the time of the fire, Captain Brian Weimer of the MU Police said.

The fire started at about 3:30 a.m. Saturday, and an automatic fire alarm alerted the Columbia Fire Department.

No one was injured, according to an MU Police news release.

Truckloads of wet carpet, ceiling tiles and cardboard boxes were carried from the library Saturday morning.

Ellis Library was to remain closed Sunday, and Basi said MU would assess when to open the library on "a day-by-day basis."



Police make arrest in Ellis Library fire

Updated September 10, 2011 at 5:48 p.m. Original September 10, 2011 at 2 a.m.



Christopher Kelley

A Columbia man was arrested yesterday on suspicion of starting a fire at Ellis Library.

At 11:58 a.m., Christopher C. Kelley, 25, turned himself in to the MU Police Department and was arrested on suspicion of one count of second-degree burglary, one count of second-degree arson, two counts of second-degree tampering and seven counts of second-degree property damage.

Firefighters were called to the University of Missouri library at 520 S. Ninth St. at 3:30 a.m. yesterday. Crews found a fire on the second floor that was being kept under control by sprinklers. Firefighters used fire extinguishers to finish putting it out. Moderate smoke had spread to the first and second floors.

The library was closed yesterday and will remain closed today. The library also could be closed for part of tomorrow, said Capt. Brian Weimer of the MU Police Department.

Video images released yesterday show Kelley in the library at the time of the alleged incident, Weimer said. Several computer screens were damaged on the fourth floor and human feces was found on a table. Investigators believe Kelley acted alone.

Weimer would not comment on other damage or how the fire was started because it is an ongoing investigation. Fire personnel have yet to estimate damages or disclose the origin or cause of the fire.



Faculty say MU's mission might not fit Nixon's plan

By **JANESE SILVEY**

Missouri State Journal-Record

Some University of Missouri faculty members fear a state funding model based on performance won't take into consideration the complexity of campus.

After all, MU researchers are routinely working on breakthroughs in medical treatments, providing policy reports used by state and federal agencies, and coming up with ways to improve native crops — to name a few. MU Extension provides assistance to Missouri farmers and small-business owners across the state.

MU Health Care treats thousands of patients.

"The problem would be if the metrics don't take into account unique missions," MU Provost Brian Foster said.

Under the plan pitched by Gov. Jay Nixon, increases in state funding would depend on a university's ability to meet state targets, and those goals relate mostly to undergraduate academics such as graduation rates.

Associate Professor Leona Rubin outlined that plan yesterday to MU Faculty Council members.

"I'm bothered about a couple of things," Chairman Harry Tyrer said, adding his primary concern is a measurement system that would ignore a "robust research institution."

If another state's performance funding model is any indication, MU could be in trouble. Massachusetts has begun using a model that doles out state grants to colleges that meet undergraduate academic targets. The result? Eight of the 13 four-year schools received grants but not the state's flagship campus. The University of Massachusetts Amherst received no state grants this year, the Boston Globe reported this week.

Nixon and other governors implementing performance funding models are basing their plans on a recent report from the National Governors Association. In the NGA report, the group describes how certain fields of study are supposedly worth more than others. Under its model, for instance, an associate degree in math is worth more than a bachelor's degree in business. That's because those with associate degrees in science, technology, engineering or math see a median income of \$51,737, the report said, while those with a bachelor's degree in non-STEM fields earn \$36,662. Under NGA's sample funding formula, colleges awarding associate degrees in STEM would earn 1.41 points per degree toward an overall score

that would determine state funding, and universities awarding non-STEM bachelor's degrees would receive one point per degree.

"There are a lot of problems with that report," Foster said. "It's all based on one core idea, which has to do with getting jobs and how much money you make. It's a narrow viewpoint."

Rubin said faculty members are opposed not because they don't want to be accountable but because the plan could spawn unwanted consequences such as grade inflation or changes to the way students are assessed so they appear better on paper.

She already has come up with a way to do the latter. Rubin suggested MU establish a way to give credit to undergraduates who help with research — "something that means something to the bean counters."

MU selects interim chief diversity officer

By Melissa Gilstrap

September 9, 2011 | 6:44 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — After training officers in the armed forces and police in cultural competency, **interim Chief Diversity Officer Noor Azizan-Gardner will now do the same with MU students, faculty and staff.**

Azizan-Gardner was appointed Sept. 7 to lead the chancellor's diversity initiative by deputy chancellor Mike Middleton.

"The reality of living in the U.S. is that we are an increasingly diverse nation," Azizan-Gardner said. "We are all globally connected to the rest of the world."

She has worked with the initiative since its creation in 2006 and in the fields of diversity and teaching cultural competence for more than 18 years.

"She's so passionate, and she's like a mentor," student coordinator of "You in Mizzou," Yuan Gao, said. "We (the initiative) are thinking about how to reach across and let more students know about our programs."

Azizan-Gardner previously taught U.S. Air Force colonels how to deal with diversity issues in Montgomery, Ala. She works with the Columbia police chief on a committee for reducing bias in the police force.

Interim chief diversity officer is her second position with the initiative; her first and continuing position is director of diversity programming and professional development.

Azizan-Gardner succeeds Roger Worthington, who stepped down as in June. Worthington will return from leave in January to continue teaching in the College of Education's department of educational, school and counseling psychology.

Programs in the initiative include "Difficult Dialogues," a discussion series on complex diversity issues, and "Cultural Competency and Leadership," a series of workshops meant to develop leaders' skills in handling diverse work environments.

A recent campaign in the the initiative is to continue encouraging students and faculty to "See-it, Hear-it, Report-it."

Students should report hate incidents or anything that falls under the umbrella of bias to the bias incident report form, Azizan-Gardner said. "We need to make more people aware of it."

A campus climate study will be conducted this fall, which will be the third time the initiative has surveyed MU students. The study measures how students perceive the climate of diversity on campus and how many have experienced harassment or have heard or been called derogatory remarks.



MU's latest ice cream science packs double punch

By **JANESE SILVEY**

Friday, September 9, 2011

Can't decide whether you're in the mood for vanilla or something a little fruitier? Someday, you might not have to make that choice — a University of Missouri student has invented an ice cream that changes flavors in your mouth.

Liz Fenner has been working on a so-called "flavor-release" ice cream for two years alongside Ingolf Gruen, associate professor and chair of food sciences. At one point, after several failed tests, she thought about giving up.

"I finally came up with the right way to do this a year ago," she said.

Sure enough, a spoonful of vanilla ice cream transitioned into a cherry flavor in a Tribune reporter's mouth yesterday.

Fenner won't disclose her trade secrets, other than to say she coated a cherry-flavored liquid with powder, then sealed the tiny balls and mixed those with traditional vanilla ice cream.

The casings keep the cherry flavor sealed slightly longer than the vanilla flavor melts, releasing a burst of cherry seconds after the initial bite.

The process is known as micro-encapsulation and is commonly used in long-lasting chewing gum and microwavable foods to delay flavor release.

Fenner's research shows encapsulated ice cream also has the potential to last twice as long in original taste than traditional ice cream that starts breaking down after about six months.

Vanilla-to-cherry-flavored ice cream has been a hit with the few who have tried it so far. In taste tests with faculty, staff and students, most ranked it 7 or 8 on a 1-to-9 scale, with 9 being extremely tasty.

"A lot of people came back to purchase it at Buck's" Ice Cream Place, Fenner said.

But the ice cream isn't yet available, even at the campus shop that debuts new flavors. That's because creating it is hard work. It takes a week to make 3 quarts, Fenner said.

Still, although there are no immediate plans to make the product commercially available, "that possibility is always open," said Gruen, the researcher behind the "healthy" probiotic ice cream that debuted at the Missouri State Fair last month.

Fenner expects to graduate with a master's degree in food sciences in December and hopes to land a job where she can develop new products, preferably dairy-related.

She also is hoping a future graduate student builds on her research to get the flavor-changing ice cream closer to being marketed. She is considering filing for a patent to share in profits in case it does end up on grocery shelves.

"I think Mizzou would make a lot of money off of it, and that's OK with me," she said. "They've helped me through this research."

MU food scientists experiment with dual-flavored ice cream

By Harriet White

September 9, 2011 | 6:18 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA – Researchers in MU's College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources have developed an experimental ice cream that provides two flavors in every bite.

Graduate-level food science student Elizabeth Fenner used a process called "micro-encapsulation" to create an ice cream that changes flavor after being in the mouth for one to two seconds. Fenner spent a year developing the product.

Micro-encapsulation, a 20-year-old process, involves covering flavor compounds in miniscule wax gelatin or protein casings, according to a release from the MU News Bureau; it's typically used in long-lasting chewing gums and microwave cooking, Fenner said in the release.

Fenner did encounter some difficulties, because the micro-encapsulation process hasn't been used successfully in foods that are cold or swallowed instantly. She said the experimental ice cream must rely on heat from the mouth to break down the casings to release the second flavor.

Ingolf Gruen, Fenner's research advisor, came up with the idea for this type of ice cream. Gruen, an associate professor and chair of food sciences at MU, described food scientists as "opportunists." He said he was inspired by chewing gum that changes flavors in the mouth and that he thought applying this principle to another food – like ice cream – would be "a nice, unique challenge."

It was Fenner who ultimately brought Gruen's idea to life. But the graduate student's invention is still in the testing stages. Without a large-scale process of production, this food can't yet be sold commercially.

"Manufacturing micro-capsules is small-scale," Gruen said. "It takes about half a day to make enough of them to make a quart of ice cream."

In addition to the dual taste, encapsulated ice cream has a longer shelf life than the traditional dessert, the news release stated.

Gruen described the feeling of finally finding the right process of making this two-flavor ice cream as one of "relief and elation."

Fenner added: "It's a good thought that I am going to be making people happy with something I invent."

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU bells to ring as tribute to 9/11 victims

By Rikki Byrd

September 9, 2011 | 1:46 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — Anyone within earshot of the MU campus Sunday morning will hear the sounds of bells marking the 10th anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks.

The bells of Memorial Union, Switzler Hall and the Reynolds Alumni Center will ring at the exact times the four attacks occurred — 7:46 a.m., 8:03 a.m., 8:27 a.m. and 9:03 a.m., according to an MU News Bureau press release.

In an email to MU students, faculty and staff, Chancellor Brady Deaton asked people on campus to take a moment of silence during those times to pay honor and tribute to those affected by the 9/11 attacks.



The next chapter

By **JILL RENAE HICKS**

University of Missouri agreement sheds light on a long history and hopefully longer future for the Missouri Theatre and the Missouri Symphony Society.

Partygoers pack the foyer of the fully-restored Missouri Theatre Center for the Arts March 2 during the Jubilee, a gala that kicked off the eighth year of the True/False Film Fest.

Over the past 83 years, a history of tears, joy, frustration, imagination and perspiration, hopeful effort has been intently composed behind the marquee of the Missouri Theatre Center for the Arts. There is more than enough fodder for all the makings of a fascinating narrative. Yet, the building's story is also inextricably bound up with the history of the Missouri Symphony Society, which was at one time the only community-based symphony present in Columbia.

The recent leasing agreement between the University of Missouri and MOSS broke open a new chapter for both the symphony society and the historic theater itself. Although this chapter is largely unwritten, the penmanship of the past reads like a good novel, and many involved today have fervent hope for an increasingly happy ending.

ONE SYMPHONY SOCIETY FOR ALL

Hugo Vianello, conductor laureate and founder of MOSS, has seen the society through copious change since its inception in 1970. The society was originally wrought as largely an educational program, he said. He began with a youth orchestra the first year. Then a choir was established the second year and a band the third. At the same time, Lucy Vianello, Hugo's wife, co-founded the Women's Symphony League, which existed to raise funds for MOSS and hosts a holiday home tour in Columbia.

The society grew "little by little, which I thought was very successful," Hugo recalled in a phone interview. In 1976, MOSS began to bring in professional performers. As more professionals joined the symphony, the MOSS makeup of today gradually formed as students graduated and the youth population of the orchestra dwindled. Eventually, the town had its first fully professional orchestra.

Maestro Kirk Trevor, who succeeded Vianello after his retirement, added many Columbia residents don't realize the lasting commitment to youth education that has continued as an unbroken thread through the history of the society. "When Hugo started the orchestra," it was intended "as an educational experience for students from Stephens and MU to play with professionals," he said. In 2007, Trevor revamped the youth program and initiated the Missouri Symphony Conservatory, which continues to teach aspiring young musicians.

As the orchestra's makeup transitioned, it was rehearsing and performing without a home venue, moving between Stephens College, Columbia College and MU. "We always tried to fit our schedule with whatever venue we were going into," Vianello said. "It happened to be, in 1987, a particular problem because at the time we were renting from the university, and at that time, they could not accommodate us. We didn't know where we would be able to perform."

That was the same year Vianello scoured the streets for a new venue to call MOSS's own. Either by happenstance or thoroughness, he wandered into the Missouri Theatre. David Jones, the manager at the time, greeted him. The theater was owned by a trust, Vianello said, so he approached Jones about renting the building for five weeks the next summer.

"He said, 'Why don't you buy it?'" Vianello recalled. Vianello told Jones that he thought it was owned. "He said, 'It was, yesterday — but they released it yesterday.'"

Vianello wrote a check and put an escrow on it that very day. He notified the MOSS board, and the deal was approved. "We took possession of it on January 16, 1988," Vianello said. "We put it on the 16th" instead of the usual 15th of the month "because it was my birthday, and so I'd never forget what day it was."

A HOME TO MANY

Before to MOSS's purchase of the Missouri Theatre, the theater boasted a prismatic history unto itself. Built by J. Dozier Stone and modeled after the Paris Opera House, it opened in 1928 to 300 guests and featured an opening ceremony of dancers, music and a Buster Keaton film. The hall showed black-and-white cinema and hosted vaudeville acts; admission to shows was *only* a few cents apiece. But the theater was a challenge to operate even from the beginning. It was large, the furnishings were rather luxurious for that time — and the Great Depression took hold of the country not long after it opened. Through the 1930s and the war years of the '40s, it began to languish. Finally, Commonwealth Theaters Inc. acquired the Missouri Theatre in 1953 and operated it as a single-screen movie house until 1983.

In 1982, rumors that Commonwealth was going to gut the theater to make it into a multi-screen cinema provoked a local campaign, "Save the Missouri Theatre Now." Some people heard that the theater would be torn down for a parking lot. Others thought Commonwealth would gut it completely. "There are several stories in there, and I let people make their choice," Vianello said. "What's important is, we did save it."

When MOSS acquired the bedraggled Missouri Theatre, with its unused stage and disconnected lights, members and other community volunteers set to work preparing it for their summer music festival, now known as Hot Summer Nights. After months of sweat and dust, MOSS brought the hall back to a usable condition and began a long line of orchestral performances once again.

In 1998, Vianello retired as maestro after 28 years. David White was hired as executive director in 2000, and Trevor conducted his first Missouri Symphony season soon afterward, in 2001. Trevor worked to expand Vianello's vision to incorporate a wider range of concerts, especially concerts that cater to the whole family. That same year, White proposed the concert hall be further renovated and renewed to become the Missouri Theatre Center for the Arts — a community presence in all the arts, rather than only a home for the symphony. A similar proposal had already been defeated in 1994.

This, perhaps, is where the story gains especial drama in the memories of Columbia residents, and Tribune reports started portraying discouraged rather than heartened community members. After initially

proposing renovation costs of about \$5 million, White began a purposeful, gregariously led campaign to raise the necessary funds. Around 2005, fundraising was petering out, there were reports that White was overworked in his efforts, and MTCA, a still-young organization created to oversee the theater, merged back into MOSS. The operations were further split into three LLCs to take advantage of historic preservation tax credits, which complicated efforts. MOSS began managing the theater in addition to handling musical and artistic purposes to which it was initially dedicated.

The renovation was eventually completed but not until 2008 — at a culminating cost of \$10 million, an amount MOSS has tried to shake off for the past three years. It has made progress toward that end but not succeeded completely: at the time of the recent agreement for MU to lease MTCA, the debt remained at \$3.7 million.

MU will pay MOSS for theater rental costs for three years, which the symphony will use to pay the debt interest — “unless we have an angel that would cover the costs,” Trevor said. Columbia Art League and the yogurt shop Yogoluv, both housed in the MTCA building, will pay MU their shares of rent. After the three years are over, MU will have an option to purchase the theater from MOSS.

The agreement is bittersweet for Trevor and the Vianellos along with MOSS members and community supporters. “It makes us sad that we don’t own the theater anymore,” said Trevor, especially “for those of us who have spent so much energy restoring it and keeping the theater running.”

Before the restoration began in 2007, Lucy related, “the beams were falling apart, and they had holes in them. The plaster was coming down from the walls. The roof leaked incessantly. The air conditioning was so noisy, you could barely hear the symphony.”

“But it was ours,” Hugo said.

A NEW CHAPTER UNFOLDING

The story of MOSS's intricate relationship with the Missouri Theatre Center for the Arts also unfolded over the past quarter of a century within the larger story of Columbia's burgeoning expansion — something Columbia citizens today might not realize, Lucy said. In 1970, the population was close to 60,000. Today, it exceeds 100,000.

The university makeup changed significantly as well, Lucy added. “Stephens College was actually the big arts school. All of these ... have a bearing on the development of these things.”

MU has always had a relationship with MOSS in terms of a community arts presence, Trevor added, which makes the recent agreement somewhat sweeter. “I think our relationship with the university has obviously been a strong one over the years,” he said; MOSS has consistently utilized MU faculty in its concerts. Attending a recent meeting, he noted the university “was quite clear that they intended to maintain the vision of Missouri Theatre as being a community theater and that it would still be available to local artists to use” — including the Columbia Civic Orchestra, True/False Film Fest and others.

At what cost remains to be seen. Trevor hopes the conservatory will still be able to rehearse at the theater, depending on the university's priorities and need for a venue for future events. Yet, “what we're so happy about in terms of the partnership,” Trevor said, “is it ensures ... that there will be either students or outside people using the theater on a daily basis and realizing what a gem it is.” That continuous community awareness, and even the energy of students filling the building once again, should be nothing but a boon for the arts in Columbia and for the historic theater itself, Trevor said.

And MOSS can return to its original purpose, rather than trying to operate as a management company, he pointed out. "I think this has really helped the integrity of the symphony in clarifying its focus and making it clear that the symphony is involved in running a fully prepared symphony orchestra ... and that it's committed to an important education program that benefits a lot of students in our community." The society will continue to raise funds every year for Hot Summer Nights.

There are no plans for the festival and other concerts to go away after the three years of the lease are over, Trevor added. "This is definitely my home. My family's here. ... It's important for me that the Missouri Symphony is a future for me as well as it is for the community. I have a vested interest."

The Vianellos are similarly proud to have a legacy in classical music in Columbia, and both hold up continued visions for the symphony society they birthed. Hugo's dream — "and of course this is a little bit of bluster," he said — would be for the Kansas City Symphony and the St. Louis Symphony to join the Missouri Symphony to form one complete, statewide orchestra. Lucy said it would be wonderful if the symphony were able to tour around the state again. In earlier years, the orchestra would perform 23 concerts around Missouri in eight weeks.

But the ultimate dream? "Getting the winning lottery ticket," Hugo quipped. "I could pay off the debt and also go to Hawaii and stay a few weeks."

"But it's not likely to happen," he added. "I never buy a ticket."

Martial arts used to help rebuild patients' bodies after cancer treatment

BY SONYA COLBERG Staff Writer scolberg@opubco.com 1
Published: September 11, 2011

When [Ian Black](#) hauls off an ax kick, or [Ethan Henry](#) executes a roundhouse kick, the similarities between the two martial arts students go beyond their focused expressions and white uniforms.

The two 9-year-olds survived cancer, but the surgery and chemotherapy that saved their lives also damaged their coordination, strength and self-confidence.

So when their mothers, [Carrie Gilliland-Black](#) and [Christina Henry](#), took on the challenge of finding a way to help the boys, they turned to martial arts. The boys like the busy martial arts studio better than the more traditional physical therapy rooms.

"It's helped me get back up on my feet," said Ethan Henry. "Before taekwondo, I had really bad leg problems. I was going to physical therapy, but it seemed more kind of like a hospital thing."

A new University of Missouri study suggests that martial arts may help with the side effects of chemotherapy treatments. The small study indicates breast cancer survivors' memory, language and attention improved among survivors who took tai chi, a harmony-seeking, slower cousin of taekwondo. More research is needed to see if other martial arts, such as taekwondo, also improve patients' focus.

Focus is an issue with some cancer patients reporting cognition problems. Gilliland-Black said her son, Ian, has mild attention deficit disorder but martial arts obviously helped with physical issues.

"It's great. Within the first month I could tell the difference. He could do things like stand on one foot," she said. "Just typical kid activities he had struggled with improved."

The Black family's ordeal began when Ian, then 3½ years old, hollered from the bathroom.

"My pee looks like a strawberry slushy," he said.

"I confirmed. That's a pretty accurate description," Carrie Gilliland-Black said.

Many tests and a couple of days later, they knew he had a rare childhood kidney cancer called Wilms' tumor. His surgeon removed his left kidney and other tissue. Rounds of radiation and chemotherapy followed.

The Black family turned to martial arts to help strengthen the muscles in Ian's legs and abdomen. Gilliland-Black said Master James Ray, at All American Martial Arts in Del City, didn't hesitate to take on the young cancer survivor whose heart was bigger than his kick.

“We were excited about the opportunity to work with them. We had to be a little slower in the progression to make sure we didn't do anything to cause them harm,” All American co-owner James Davenport said of Ian and Ethan.

In July 2010, Ethan Henry became the second student to join the martial arts class.

His battle began with his inability to recover from flu-like symptoms in 2009. The family finally found a doctor who placed a hand on the boy's swollen stomach and uttered one of the words most feared by parents: Cancer.

Ethan began chemotherapy within 24 hours of lab tests confirming his undifferentiated embryonal sarcoma, an extremely rare form of cancer. Though the more than four-inch mass shrunk slightly, he had to have a liver transplant.

“The whole process was scary. Hearing about it and seeing it are two different things, especially when it's your 6-year-old lying in that bed,” said his mother, Christina Henry.

Once Ethan was recovering and in physical therapy, the family looked for an activity where he could interact with other children since he was homeschooled in their Newalla home.

They hoped to improve his fitness and he wanted to continue playing soccer but felt frustrated because he couldn't keep up with the other kids.

They settled on martial arts for Ethan after finding out the training was helping Ian Black.

“It's about the same as physical therapy but in a fun atmosphere,” Christina Henry said. “He was able to quit physical therapy.”

And he's once again signed up for soccer.

Davenport said it's obvious the boys are benefiting from martial arts.

“It's about 50 percent physical, 50 percent mental. We have a series of movements or forms, which include strikes and punches, and to do it well requires mental discipline, tremendous focus and concentration,” he said.

“Once they've broken a couple of different boards, their confidence skyrockets.”

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Strangers' gifts inspire an unlikely freshman

BILL McCLELLAN • bmcclellan@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8143 | Posted: Sunday, September 11, 2011 12:00 am

Tim Jones dreamed of going to college.

But college was always a long shot. Tim was the fifth of 10 kids. The kids came from several fathers. None of his older siblings went to college, and only one graduated from high school.

The streets in his neighborhood were dangerous. A cousin was shot and killed. Last April, an older brother with whom Tim was close was shot in the neck.

Home life was unstable. Three days after his brother was shot, the family was evicted. They moved in with a neighbor until they scraped the back rent together, but shortly after they moved back into the house, their utilities were shut off. They moved back in with the neighbor.

Tim was accepted at the University of Missouri, but he had no money for college. He had a 3.7 grade-point average, but his school, Construction Careers Center, was not exactly top-tier. In fact, when the state came out last year with a list of worst-performing schools, CCC was one of 21 city schools on the list. So was the middle school Tim had attended.

He got a 22 on his ACT. That is above average for city students, but it made him ineligible for most scholarships at Mizzou.

I wrote a story about Tim in May. I wrote that he was trying to climb out of the quicksand of poverty.

I received an email from a man who said that he and a friend wanted to pay for whatever the scholarships wouldn't cover. He said they wanted to do this anonymously so Tim would not feel obligated.

"My plan would be to open an account in his name with you as the custodian. Each year we would fund the account with tuition money and living expenses. We are not looking for a tax benefit or a write-off. We simply want to help this young man get a college education."

The kindness of strangers can take your breath away.

I called the man and said I did not want to be a custodian for an account. I said that if he wanted to help Tim, I could give him the phone number of one of Tim's teachers — Tim had no phone — and the teacher could arrange a meeting. I said I thought he should meet Tim before making such a financial commitment.

The man and his wife met Tim and the teacher. They must have liked Tim because they said, "You're going to need a cellphone and a computer in college. Let's get them today."

The teacher told me Tim started to cry.

A young man at Mizzou read the story, too. Tim had set up a Facebook account on a school computer. The young man sent Tim a message: The first thing you better do when you get on campus is look me up.

The young man's name is Kaylan Holloway. He grew up near Fairground Park and came from the same environment as Tim. He has established a mentoring program at the university.

I visited the university Wednesday and met with Tim. I asked if the couple had followed through on their offer. Yes, he said. Everything, even clothes. He said he talks with them several times a week.

He said he sits in the front row of all his classes. "The smartest people sit in front and they talk to you," he said, and he smiled. "So if you want to get in a study group, those are the ones you want to know."

He lives in South Hall, which he said is the best dorm on campus. He shares a suite with three other young men, two of whom are pre-med students. He said that is a good thing because the pre-med students study all the time.

I asked if it was a big adjustment from the streets of St. Louis to the campus at Columbia. He nodded. "There is so much opportunity. Every day. This is what freedom is."

He said the people are friendly. "People talk. It's not just being in one group. It's a different world here. Teachers might tell you that you should go to college and it's different, but you just can't know until you're really here."

He thinks he is doing well in his classes, but they are difficult. He said one professor mentioned that the first couple of weeks were basically reviewing what they had learned in high school — and all of it was new to Tim. Also, study habits. He had to learn those, he said.

Later, I talked with Kaylan, a junior. "Tim is going to do fine," Kaylan said. "He's got his priorities in order. He's not ashamed to ask for help. He wants to do good."

Tim turned 18 on Monday. He said some kids in the dorm came to his room and sang "Happy Birthday" to him.

I had stopped at the university on my way home from a maximum security prison in Cameron, Mo. There are probably more kids from Tim's neighborhood up there than at the university. But Tim seemed comfortable on campus. He seemed at home.

MU gets \$100,000 for plant science studies

By Melissa Gilstrap

September 9, 2011 | 7:40 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA – Student laboratory research in plant science will be aided by a \$100,000 grant MU received Wednesday from the Monsanto Company. The gift will be distributed to the Monsanto Undergraduate Fellowship program throughout the next three years.

The program's purpose is to prepare high-achieving undergraduate students for careers in agricultural science.

"It allowed me to do research in a lab that otherwise might not be able to fund me," Monsanto Undergraduate Research Fellow Greg Yeckel said of the fellowship. "It made a lot more sense than just regurgitating facts."

Yeckel worked with the program in 2007. He is now a graduate research assistant in the Life Sciences Center studying parasitic nematodes that cost the U.S. billions of dollars in soybean crop losses.

Students participating in the program work with a plant science research group, where they create research projects and participate in field work.

"You get to experience doing what hardcore science is all about," Yeckel said. "I was able to learn a lot better because you're able to apply what you've learned in a real world setting."

The Monsanto Undergraduate Fellowship Program was founded in 2002.

Director hopes MU Hillel becomes destination spot for Jewish students

By [Alexandria Pisauro](#)

September 12, 2011 | 12:01 a.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — The new director of MU Hillel is already using his experience to organize a trip to Israel for Jewish students to explore their heritage.

Brian Mitchell, who began his job Aug. 22, has led four Taglit-Birthright Israel trips that each took 40 young adults, ages 18 to 26, to Israel and he wants to bring that opportunity to MU Hillel.

The 10-day trips are funded by a three-way partnership between donors, the government and taxpayers of Israel and the Jewish Federations of North America.

About 10 students have expressed interest, even though registration doesn't open for the December trip until Sept. 14.

"There have been Missouri students who have gone on birthright trips before, but it has been a long time since there was a Mizzou one," Mitchell said.

In addition to a birthright trip, Mitchell, 34, is focused on making Hillel a destination spot on campus for Jewish students.

"I know Hillels on other campuses are the spot for Jewish students to hang out, and I would love for this to be the same," Mitchell said. "We want people to feel comfortable coming here. We're going to spice up the TV room, which many students don't even know we have, and we now have wireless Internet."

Mitchell has plenty of experience connecting the students. For the past six years, he was assistant director at a Jewish camp in Massachusetts, supervising 200 young adults.

Mitchell said serving as a mentor on a college campus attracted him to the new job.

Dan Edidin, past president of the Hillel Board of Directors who helped hire Mitchell, said his work with college students at the camps qualified him for the position.

"His dynamism makes him such a great fit," Edidin said. "He has a great personality, and I felt like he would be great at engaging students."

When working with college students, Mitchell said: "You have to be able to put on a different hat and be a different person. It is challenging and rewarding to be able to be someone different for each person."

The director's job also comes with administrative responsibilities. He is the landlord of the Hillel building and manages the budget with the board of directors to bring in money for the facility and programming for the year.

"I can honestly say I have no experience in development and fundraising, but I'm going to learn," Mitchell said. "Maintenance, and facility upkeep? Very little experience. I know where I need to improve upon, but my strength is in engaging students, and being able to connect with the college aged cohort."

Hillel is not for profit, and provides programming, religious services, leadership development and socializing for Jewish students at MU as well as Columbia and Stephens colleges.

With about 700 Jewish students at MU, Mitchell's goal is simple: "I want to engage as many Jewish students as possible."

Kyle Tons, a junior at MU, said Mitchell "has a lot of goals for Hillel, and he definitely seems like he wants to bring new life to it."

As director, Mitchell works with the Jewish Student Organization board to plan programming for the entire year.

Mitchell has done Jewish communal work since he graduated. He grew up in St. Louis, which has a large Jewish community, and said he spent almost every waking moment at the St. Louis Jewish Community Center until he was 18.

"I'm what you would call a J-rat," Mitchell said. "I signed up for every league, for every camp and for vacation days."

Mitchell planned to rely not only on his past experiences, but also his age to propel his position as director.

Other members of Mitchell's family went to MU, but he decided to attend Indiana University where he graduated in 1999 with a degree in journalism.

"I'm the black sheep in my family," Mitchell said. "I just couldn't go to the same school as my whole family and high school, despite the fact I wanted to study journalism."

Although he chose to not attend MU, Mitchell said he's been a Tiger fan his entire life and is excited to be back in a college town.

"Brian stuck out as a great candidate because he wanted to be in Columbia," Edidin said. "This place has always meant something to him."