

New University of Missouri System president about to be introduced

By MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS

University of Missouri System will name its new president in a series of announcements on each of the four campuses starting with a 10 a.m. event Tuesday in Columbia.

University officials are being tight-lipped about who the system's next president is. But some speculation points to a man with ties to Missouri and, like his predecessor Gary Forsee, is from the business community.

Anticipating that the new president will come with a business background, Intercampus Faculty Council President, Gary Ebersole, had some advice with regard to how faculty might take to not having an academic in charge.

"How faculty respond will depend upon the new president's demeanor and how he engages with the faculty," Ebersole said. "You cannot bring a CEO-mentality — that is, a top-down management style — into the academy and expect it to work."

Forsee, on day one, said he knew business and not education so he was open to learning from faculty, staff and students. He held a series of town hall meetings around the state to hear what the needs were in each area served University of Missouri campuses. He was well received by all sectors within the university system.

Board of Curator President Warren Erdman, who has led the university's search committee, said last week that after a year-long search, curators had selected a person to be introduced to the public this week after some final contract negotiations had been completed.

After narrowing the search from hundreds of nominations, an advisory search panel talked to final candidates and made its recommendation to the full search committee, which is made up of the Board of Curators and the student member of the board. Curators make the final decision.

For a year, since Forsee resigned his post last December to care for his ailing wife, Steve Owens has led the university as interim president. Owens stepped away from his position as general counsel for MU to fill in while the system searched for its 23rd president.

Tuesday's presidential announcement will be made in the Donald W. Reynolds Alumni Center followed by a reception at 10:30 a.m. Subsequent announcements will be made at 4 p.m. in Rolla at Missouri University of Science and Technology, then at 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday in St. Louis and 12:30 in the Student Union at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

University of Missouri set to announce new president Tuesday morning

BY TIM BARKER • tbarker@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8350 | Posted: Monday, December 12, 2011 4:50 pm |

The University of Missouri Board of Curators said Monday it will announce the system's new president on Tuesday morning.

The closely-guarded announcement follows a nearly year-long search to replace Gary Forsee, who resigned in January to spend time with his ill wife.

The 10 a.m. news event will be at the Reynolds Alumni Center on the University of Missouri-Columbia campus. The new president, the system's 23rd, will then travel to the other three campuses for visits on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Speculation about the next president has involved a host of names, including Mizzou Chancellor Brady Deaton; John Carney, the former chancellor of the Missouri University of Science and Technology; former Missouri lawmaker Judy Baker, who just resigned a federal health post; Kathy Osborn, a former vice chancellor at the University of Missouri-St. Louis; UMSL Chancellor Thomas George; and former Senator Kit Bond.

Many of those named have said they are not seeking the position.

Steve Owens, the system's general counsel, has been doing the job on an interim basis, but has said he is not interested in keeping it full time.

Board of Curators to name new UM System president Tuesday

By [Zach Murdock](#)

December 12, 2011 | 10:36 a.m. CST

COLUMBIA – The University of Missouri System will name its 23rd president Tuesday.

The UM System Board of Curators will announce the new president at 10 a.m. Tuesday in the Reynolds Alumni Center on the MU campus.

The announcement concludes a yearlong presidential search that began in *January* when Gary Forsee stepped down to care for his ill wife. Steve Owens has served as interim president since January and has said he plans to return to his former position as system general counsel when a new president is named.

On Friday, board Chairman Warren Erdman announced that the presidential search committee – which is made up of the board of curators – had finished its deliberations and chosen a finalist. He said the curators still had to work out employee agreement details and ratify the decision before the candidate could be named.

Erdman has been careful throughout the search to protect candidates' identities and wouldn't speculate on details of the person or name of the board's finalist Friday.

Erdman said the search came down to four interviews with candidates, second interviews and telephone follow-ups before the search committee settled on a single finalist. The final candidate was present and was interviewed Dec. 6 at a presidential search advisory committee meeting at Mizzou Arena.

The new president will visit each of the system's campuses Tuesday and Wednesday and will take office in mid-February.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU, Columbia College, Stephens College to hold commencement ceremonies this week

By Melissa Gilstrap

December 12, 2011 | 10:04 a.m. CST

COLUMBIA – More than 2,000 students will toss up their mortarboards and become alumni this week during commencement ceremonies at MU, Stephens College and Columbia College.

Ceremonies at MU will be held Friday and Saturday at either Hearnes Center or Jesse Auditorium, depending on the school or college.

MU will give 2,107 degrees to 1,969 students over the weekend, with some receiving more than one degree, according to an MU news release. Of those, 1,473 are bachelor's degrees, 480 master's degrees, 143 doctoral degrees, three law degrees and eight educational specialist degrees.

"They (students) are celebrating their accomplishments in front of family and friends," said Cathy Scroggs, vice chancellor for student affairs. "They are excited about the next step they're taking."

Actor Robert Loggia and author William Trogon will be presented with honorary degrees during MU's honors convocation, which starts at 8:30 a.m. Saturday.

Loggia, an MU School of Journalism graduate, has performed in more than 100 films including "Scarface," "Independence Day" and "Jagged Edge." He has been nominated for one Academy Award and several Emmy Awards.

Under the pen name William Least Heat-Moon, Trogon has published several travel and historical novels, including "Blue Highways," which topped The New York Times' best-seller list for 34 weeks. Trogon has received four degrees from MU, including a bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree in English, as well as a bachelor's degree in photojournalism.

Many of MU's schools and colleges will feature speakers, including:

- Greg Garrison, managing partner of U.S. operations at PricewaterhouseCoopers, will speak at 2 p.m. Friday at the School of Business commencement.
- Randy Cox, director of visual journalism at The Oregonian, will speak at 6 p.m. Friday* at the School of Journalism commencement.
- Brett Begemann, executive vice president and chief commercial officer at Monsanto, will speak at 12:30 p.m. Saturday at the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources commencement.

A complete list of dates, times and parking information for MU's commencement ceremonies is available on [MU's commencement website](#).

Stephens College will give out 29 bachelor's degrees and 31 master's degrees during its [fall commencement ceremony](#) at 6 p.m. Thursday in Kimball Ballroom of Lela Raney Wood Hall, according to a news release.

[Commencement ceremonies](#) for Columbia College will be held at noon and 3:30 p.m. Saturday at the Southwell Complex Gymnasium. Doors will open for guests at Southwell Complex an hour before each ceremony.

A total of 366 students will participate in Columbia College's ceremonies, with 226 in the first and 140 in the second, document imaging manager Angie Myers said.

Columbia College also plans to live stream its ceremony.

UM Curator Erdman pushes for higher tobacco tax

By Janese Silvey

The outgoing leader of the University of Missouri System's Board of Curators plans to spend the coming year helping persuade Missourians to increase the state's tobacco tax.

Warren Erdman, who ends his term as board chairman next month, is involved in a group planning to pitch an initiative that would place a 73-cent tobacco tax hike on the November ballot.

The language still needs approval from the secretary of state, and organizers would have to collect roughly 100,000 signatures from registered voters to get it on the ballot.

Missouri has the lowest cigarette tax in the country at 17 cents per pack. The national average is \$1.46 per pack.

"It's so skewed it's embarrassing," said state Rep. Mary Still, D-Columbia, who has called for a tobacco tax increase for several years.

Still isn't involved in Erdman's group but said she's glad residents are getting involved. Lawmakers have, for the most part, dodged the topic despite significant state funding challenges.

Under the plan Erdman is helping draft — which has yet to be named — half of the revenue generated from the tax increase would support K-12 public schools. Thirty percent would be allocated for higher education, with 25 percent of that portion designated for training health care workers, and the remaining 20 percent would go toward public health. Erdman said the tax plan will include a provision that would require lawmakers to use the money for designated purposes and on top of general revenues already allocated to these entities.

A separate tobacco initiative was approved by the secretary of state this summer for the signature-collection process. That petition, filed by Jefferson City attorney Marc Ellinger, would ask voters to increase taxes on generic-brand smokes by \$1. The measure aims to fix what some see as an inequity: Four of the largest tobacco companies in the United States pay into a fund for smoking-related medical costs under a 1998 settlement agreement, but small tobacco companies in Missouri do not pay into that fund.

Erdman said his group has considered whether voters would confuse the two initiatives, but he is not convinced Ellinger's plan will make it to the ballot. He said he is confident the 73-cent tax for education and health ultimately will go to voters, though.

Missouri voters have shot down previous attempts to raise the cigarette tax, most recently in 2006, but Still said she thinks the next go-round would be different.

“The economic situation has gotten worse,” she said. “The revenue is so needed.”

Missouri is facing a \$789 million funding shortfall in fiscal year 2013, which starts next summer, higher education officials warned this week.

Erdman, whose term as a curator expires in 2013, stressed that he is working on the issue as a private citizen and not as a university representative. If the board were to take a position on the tax, Erdman said he would abstain from that vote.

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ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Ex-Mo. Rep. Baker leaves Obama administration

Associated Press | Posted: Monday, December 12, 2011 10:02 am |

A former Missouri lawmaker and unsuccessful candidate for Congress has resigned her federal government job after two years in President Barack Obama's administration.

Judy Baker served as a regional director of the Department of Health and Human Services since November 2009. The Kansas City regional office oversees HHS business in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska.

Baker, who is from Columbia, told The Associated Press that she resigned last week and cannot comment on her future plans.

She has been mentioned as a possible candidate to lead the University of Missouri system, but says she's not in the running. The system plans to announce its new presidential hire on Tuesday.

Baker, a Democrat, served in the Missouri House from 2005 to 2009. She lost a 2008 U.S. House race to Republican Blaine Luetkemeyer.

Judy Baker resigns federal health post

STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

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Baker, who is from Columbia, told The Associated Press she resigned last week and cannot comment on her future plans.

She has been mentioned as a possible candidate to lead the University of Missouri System but says she is not in the running. The system plans to announce its new president at 10 a.m. tomorrow at the Reynolds Alumni Center on the MU campus. The recommended hire was approved Thursday at a closed session of the UM Board of Curators' presidential committee.

Baker, a Democrat, served in the Missouri House from 2005 to 2009. She lost a 2008 U.S. House race to Republican Blaine Luetkemeyer. Before taking the HHS position in 2009, Baker was a managing partner of Cura Advantage, a health care systems consulting firm. In August, her husband, John Baker — former pastor at Columbia's First Baptist Church — was chosen as executive director of the Community Foundation of Central Missouri, a local philanthropic organization.

Judy Baker did not return calls from the Tribune this morning seeking comment.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Driving I-70 taking a toll

\$10 charge to Kansas City could be option to boost in gas or sales tax.

MU MENTION ON P. 2

DAVID NICKLAUS dnicklaus@post-dispatch.com > [314-340-8213](tel:314-340-8213) | Posted: Tuesday, December 13, 2011 12:00 am |

With all of the trucks, construction delays and rutted concrete, a drive down Interstate 70 is perhaps the worst transportation experience Missouri has to offer. But would you be willing to pay \$10 or so for a smoother, faster and less congested trip to Kansas City?

That's a question that Missouri legislators will be asking as the state tries to figure out how to fix its most important highway. The Missouri Department of Transportation says Interstate 70 needs at least \$2 billion of work, or maybe \$4 billion to create dedicated truck lanes across the state, and it doesn't have the money.

One way to find the money, MoDOT says, would be to raise the gasoline tax by 15 cents a gallon. Another would be to add a half-cent sales tax statewide.

We live in an era, however, when most elected officials view a tax increase as a good way to lose a re-election bid. And if taxpayers won't pay for a new road, motorists may have to.

MoDOT's director, Kevin Keith, said last month that he would like the Legislature to authorize tolls on I-70. As part of the proposal, MoDOT would partner with private companies, which would rebuild the highway and then collect tolls to pay for it.

State officials haven't said how high the toll would have to be, but motorists pay roughly \$10 to travel a similar distance on the Kansas Turnpike. Truckers pay significantly more, which is one reason why the trucking lobby doesn't like toll roads.

Opponents of tolling say it amounts to double taxation, because fuel taxes are also supposed to pay for highways, and they say that roads are a classic public good. That means the road network has positive externalities, benefitting business owners, property owners and others who don't drive them every day. Their business is more profitable, and their property more valuable, when folks in Columbia or Kingdom City have a way to reach their front door.

A specific highway like I-70, though, also has a private-good aspect. If you travel to Kansas City every week, that rebuilding project benefits you a lot more than your neighbor, who perhaps pays the same amount of gasoline tax but does all his driving within the St. Louis area.

"The real public value is this connection to the entire network," explains Joseph Haslag, a University of Missouri economist who also works for the St. Louis-based Show Me Institute. "I-70 by itself has no network externalities, but it's an extremely valuable road."

Economics textbooks often use road tolls as an example of how charging for something can make it more efficient, especially if the operator charges more during congested periods. A private operator of I-70 could maximize profits, and smooth out the traffic flow, by reducing the toll at night and raising it during rush hour. Electronic collection systems would make it easy to set a fare that varies by the hour, and MoDOT should encourage such a pricing structure.

First, it needs to persuade legislators to charge Missourians for something that's always been free, and that may be a tough sell. The best argument is that we're already paying a price in time and aggravation, and as I-70 deteriorates, the price may include a rise in accidents. When you think about it that way, a \$10 toll might be a bargain.