

Gary Myers named dean of MU School of Law

By Celia Ampel

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Gary Myers was named dean of the MU School of Law on Monday. | MU News Bureau

COLUMBIA — Gary Myers has been selected as the next dean of the MU School of Law, Provost Brian Foster announced Monday.

Myers, 49, will begin serving as dean Aug. 15. He succeeds R. Lawrence Dessem, who is stepping down to teach full-time after 10 years as dean.

His salary will be \$250,000 a year, according to the MU News Bureau.

Myers is associate dean of research and a professor of law at the University of Mississippi School of Law. He has worked there since 1989.

Before starting at the University of Mississippi, he worked as an associate with Powell, Goldstein, Frazer & Murphy in Atlanta and as a law clerk for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit in Jacksonville, Fla.

Myers holds a master's degree in economics and a law degree from Duke University. He received his bachelor's degree from New York University.

Myers' selection follows an open search process, during which the MU School of Law announced five finalists for the position and held public forums with the candidates throughout January and February.

Myers said he had a full schedule during his visit Jan. 19 and 20. He met representatives of all of the constituency groups of the School of Law, including faculty, staff, administrators, alumni and students, he said.

"I was very impressed with the quality of the students and the strength of the faculty," he said.

Myers said he plans to visit Columbia several times before he begins his term as dean, though his travel schedule is not yet set.

"I am hoping to be back in the next few weeks," he said.

Myers said he was struck by the role the law school has taken in the history and leadership of the state. Several current state leaders are graduates of the school, including Gov. Jay Nixon and Attorney General Chris Koster.

"I'm very excited and honored to have been selected and I'm looking forward to coming to Columbia," Myers said.



MU names Gary Myers as law dean

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An associate dean at the University of Mississippi has been named dean of the University of Missouri's School of Law.

Gary Myers will begin Aug. 15. He replaces Larry Dessem, who is returning to the classroom.

In a statement, Provost Brian Foster praised Myers for his extensive experience in legal education and administration.

"His expertise in intellectual property law is extremely appropriate at this time in connection with MU's strong emphasis on entrepreneurship," Foster said.

Myers graduated with honors from Duke University School of Law and graduated summa cum laude with a bachelor's degree in economics from New York University. He also was an associate with a law firm in Atlanta and served as a law clerk on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit in Jacksonville, Fla.

Three more MU professors receive 2012 Kemper Fellowship

By Allyson Wilson

April 9, 2012 | 5:52 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — Three MU professors were recognized Monday for their hard work.

Chancellor Brady Deaton and Commerce Bank Chairman Jim Schatz — accompanied by supporters, spouses and department heads — surprised Paul Crabb, Carol Deakyne and Ines Segert and awarded them with William T. Kemper fellowships for Teaching Excellence.

Every spring the award is presented to five exceptional MU educators. Each recipient also receives a \$10,000 check to spend as they wish. The family of William T. Kemper, a 1926 MU graduate and Kansas City civic leader, established the fellowships in 1991 with a \$500,000 gift honoring those at MU who dedicate their lives to teaching.

Stephen Ball, associate professor in MU's Department of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology in the College of Human Environmental Sciences was the first recipient of the 2012 fellowship.

Deaton keeps the names of the recipients secret until they are surprised in their classrooms in the middle of their lectures.

Paul Crabb

Paul Crabb, professor and director of choral activities for the MU School of Music in the College of Arts and Science, covered his mouth in disbelief and playfully shook his finger at his students as Schatz presented him with the check.

"It's a true pleasure to be able to work with students like this," Crabb said. "To be able to have this kind of relationship where we work together towards a common goal — it's really important to me."

Crabb has been teaching undergraduate and graduate level courses in choral music since 2003.

"The university is fortunate to have someone of Crabb's ability," said Robert Shay, the director of the MU School of Music, in a news release. "He is a man who inspires students to do their very best work and to stretch themselves in new directions."

Crabb received a bachelor's degree in elementary and secondary music education from Bethel College, a master's degree in vocal performance from Wichita State University and a doctoral degree in choral music education from Florida State University.

Carol Deakyne

Next, Deaton and Schatz surprised Carol Deakyne, associate professor in the department of chemistry in the College of Arts and Sciences.

As the cameras entered, Deakyne paused mid-sentence and smiled.

"It's very hard for me to believe this," she said. "I know I was nominated for it this year, but you know you never really expect to get it."

According to a news release, Deakyne is described as a dedicated, positive and compassionate professor who will go out of her way to help students succeed.

Deakyne received a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Rider College, a master's degree in chemistry from Carnegie Mellon University and a doctoral degree in chemistry from Princeton University.

Ines Segert

The final award for the day went to Ines Segert, associate director of the MU Honors College. The class chuckled at Segert's reaction as Deaton entered from the back of the room — she simply stopped in the middle of a sentence.

"I couldn't do it without the students," she said. "They make it a pleasure to come in every day and talk to them. They make it a pleasure to be here."

She jokingly added, "This is for my pizza party at the end of the school year," referring to the money she was awarded.

Segert's husband, Jan, then appeared from amidst the media with a spray of pink and red carnations, baby's breath and red roses and smiled sweetly.

Ines Segert has been a faculty member in the psychology department since 1990 and has taught, advised and mentored thousands of students.

Michael J. O'Brien, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, then gave the students a pop quiz.

"OK, class, question, pop quiz," he said. "This stranger brings in a check for \$10,000, her husband brings roses. Which do you want?"

"Fortunately it's not an either/or," Deaton said.

Segert received bachelor's degrees in psychology and English from Rutgers University, and master's and doctoral degrees in psychology and neuroscience from Princeton University.

Fellows are nominated by their peers then chosen by a committee. The fifth and final recipient will be revealed on Tuesday.

MU's student paper stirs up controversy

By MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS

The Kansas City Star

Perhaps the best thing that can be said for the April Fools edition of The Maneater, the University of Missouri's student-run newspaper, is that it provided "a huge learning experience."

The worst? That it was "incredibly offensive and potentially damaging to the social climate at MU."

Both assessments came from the paper's managing editor, Abby Spudich, after a campus outcry over the edition, which used several words and phrases derogatory toward lesbians and women in general.

The Maneater, which is published twice a week, is entirely staffed by students and is operated independently from the Missouri School of Journalism.

The edition generated several letters from students who were ticked off that the paper, in an attempt to be humorous, was insensitive.

"This edition was offensive, crude and not something that represents Mizzou or its students," senior Kathy Rudd wrote. "... It isn't satirical. It certainly isn't journalism."

Spudich followed the April Fools edition with a public apology Friday.

In her letter, Spudich wrote: "The biggest failure on our part is that this edition has spread negativity and hurt toward marginalized groups. A second major failure is that this edition is contradictory to The Maneater's point of view toward diversity issues."

Student writers and editors, she wrote, had learned a lesson.

"I learned I cannot assume what others might find to be offensive based solely on my own background, as my own personal background isn't good enough, and ignorance is not an excuse when using offensive language," Spudich wrote.

Travis Cornejo, editor of The Maneater, did not respond to a request for comment Monday afternoon.

The paper has decided not to publish an April Fools edition next year.



Identical DNA Codes Discovered in Different Plant Species

ScienceDaily (Apr. 9, 2012) — Analyzing massive amounts of data officially became a national priority recently when the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy announced the Big Data Research and Development Initiative. **A multi-disciplinary team of University of Missouri researchers rose to the big data challenge when they solved a major biological question by using a groundbreaking computer algorithm to find identical DNA sequences in different plant and animal species.**

"Our algorithm found identical sequences of DNA located at completely different places on multiple plant genomes," said Dmitry Korkin, lead author and assistant professor of computer science. "No one has ever been able to do that before on such a scale."

"Our discovery helps solve some of the mysteries of plant evolution," said Gavin Conant, co-author and assistant professor of animal sciences. "Basic research on the plant genome provides raw materials and improves techniques for creating medicines and crops."

Previous studies found long strings of identical code in different species of animals' DNA. But before this new MU research, which was published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, computer programs had never been powerful enough to find identical sequences in plant DNAs, because the identical sections weren't found at the same points.

The genomes of six animals (dog, chicken, human, mouse, macaque and rat) were compared to each other. Likewise, six plant species (*Arabidopsis*, soybean, rice, cottonwood, sorghum and grape) were compared to each other. Comparing all the genetic sequences took 4 weeks with 48 computer processors doing 1 million searches per hour for a grand total of approximately 32 billion searches.

Although the scientists found identical sequences between plant species, just as they did between animals, they suggested the sequences evolved differently.

"You would expect to see convergent evolution, but we don't," Conant said. "Plants and animals are both complex multi-cellular organisms that have to deal with many of the same environmental conditions, like taking in air and water and dealing with weather variations, but their genomes code for solutions to these challenges in different ways."

The MU team's research laid the groundwork for future studies into the reasons plants and animals developed different genetic mechanisms and how they function. Their basic research created a foundation for discoveries that may improve human life. Besides advancing genetic science's potential to fight disease, the code-analyzing computer program itself could help in the development of new medicines.

"The same algorithm can be used to find identical sequential patterns in an organism's entire set of proteins," said Korkin. "That could potentially lead to finding new targets for existing drugs or studying these drugs' side effects."



Missouri S&T leader has eye on diversity

Chancellor first woman in post.

By JANESE SILVEY

Monday, April 9, 2012

ROLLA — Cheryl Schrader looks forward to the day it's not unusual for an engineering university to hire a female chancellor.

But somebody has to be first. And as the first woman to lead the Missouri University of Science and Technology, Schrader is in a position to make sure she's not the last.

Schrader is interested in seeing more women and other underrepresented populations on the Rolla campus. She has a track record of making such things happen: At Boise State University, where she most recently served as an associate vice president, the number of minority groups graduating with science, technology, engineering and math-related — or STEM — degrees rose by some 94 percent in recent years. And Boise State's College of Engineering also gained national recognition while she served as dean for having females make up 28 percent of faculty members.

Diversity is important for people to share ideas and collaborate in supportive and encompassing environments, she said. But it's also a matter of economics: The United States has growing workforce needs in STEM-related fields, and there aren't enough traditional students to meet the demands.

"It really is imperative we are able to attract those who have been underrepresented in STEM to address workforce shortages in those areas," Schrader said. "It's an issue on many leaders' minds, both nationally and statewide. We are looking at an inability to fill the jobs that are being created. White males wouldn't be able to fill the shortages we have."

Rolla's female student population has hovered around 23 percent for several years, spokesman Andrew Careaga said. But that also reflects a growing enrollment. This fall, the number of students on campus was 6,659, about 2,000 more than a decade ago.

Of the 155 tenured and tenure-track engineering faculty at Missouri S&T, 13, or 8.4 percent, are women.

Schrader knows firsthand why it's important to have female and other underrepresented role models. As a girl in the 1970s, she had "visions of being a math teacher, an acceptable career for women." Her dad encouraged her to think about less traditional, more profitable math-related careers.

While studying electrical engineering at Valparaiso University in Indiana, a male professor encouraged her to consider a career in higher education — another career path she had not considered because she didn't see other women doing it.

She went on to earn her master's and doctoral degrees at Notre Dame after spending a year as an instructor.

Rolla's reputation is what attracted Schrader to the job.

"This institution has a tremendous legacy," she said. "There's a legacy, a strong foundation on which to build. ... It has the potential to truly become world-class."

Missouri S&T is in a position to showcase innovative approaches to teaching, research and administrative functions, she said.

The first tasks on her to-do list, though, are to simply listen and observe, Schrader said. "To be the best leader, I really have to understand the sense of place and culture, and that takes being everywhere, not just on campus," she said. "I need to establish trust and relationships."

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Missouri state budget talks continue

BY ELIZABETH CRISP • ecrisp@post-dispatch.com > 573-635-6178 | Posted: Tuesday, April 10, 2012 5:00 am | (0) comments.

JEFFERSON CITY • Helping the budget — one bake sale at a time?

Several advocacy groups will be joining forces at the Capitol on Tuesday, armed with sugary sweet aid to the state's struggling budget.

That's right. A bake sale will be held on the third floor of the Capitol rotunda from 1-6 p.m. Tuesday. According to a news release from organizers, all proceeds will be turned over to the Department of Revenue to deposit into the state's general revenue fund.

Groups involved in the bake sale, which is really serving up a tongue-in-cheek jab at Missouri lawmakers and the current budget situation, include the Missouri Health Advocacy Alliance, Missouri Civic Engagement Table, Missouri NEA, Missouri Jobs with Justice, Missouri Faith Voices, the Missouri Budget Project, Progress Missouri, Associated Students of the University of Missouri, Missourians for Tax Justice, Communications Workers of America Local 6355.

The group blasts lawmakers in its release stating: "Until legislators get serious about a streamlined sales tax, stop coddling cigarette companies and ask multinational corporations to pay their fair share, we'll have to invest in our public structures and systems somehow!"

Lawmakers have been wading through the budget process — trying to find areas to cut back because revenue has not yet bounced back from the recession and the state will lose stimulus funds next year.

Gov. Jay Nixon, a Democrat, and Republican legislators, who control both the House and Senate, say they oppose increasing taxes to cover the gaps.

But they apparently disagree on areas to cut back.

Nixon has proposed a nearly \$60 million cut to higher education in the coming year (still down from a much larger cut he proposed earlier in the year, but it's on top of repeated cuts to higher ed).

The House recently adopted a budget plan that would fund higher education at its current level but would cut a health care program that serves more than 2,800 blind Missourians.

After approving initial markups last week, which virtually locked in the level higher education funding as well as a \$50 million increase for K-12, the Senate Appropriations Committee is meeting again this week to finalize its recommendations for the budget year that begins July 1.

The hearings start back up at noon today.

MU faculty panelists discuss Trayvon Martin's death

By Marysa Greenawalt

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COLUMBIA — Public perceptions of the death of Trayvon Martin and the subsequent debate over whether George Zimmerman should be charged with a crime are influenced by a complex web of self-defense law, racial attitudes and media coverage, three MU faculty members said at a forum Monday.

The MU School of Law and the MU Difficult Dialogues Program hosted "Implications of the Death of Trayvon Martin" on Monday afternoon at MU's Hulston Hall. The panel included three MU associate professors: David Mitchell, associate professor of law; Kent Collins, associate professor and chair of radio-television journalism; and Bruce Bartholow, associate professor of psychological sciences.

Martin, 17, was shot and killed Feb. 26 during a confrontation with Zimmerman in a gated community in Sanford, Fla. Zimmerman has claimed he was acting in self-defense when he shot Martin, who was unarmed. Protesters across the country have insisted that Zimmerman be charged in the death.

On Monday, The Associated Press reported that the case would not go to a grand jury and that the decision about whether to charge Zimmerman would be special prosecutor Angela Corey's.

At the MU forum, Mitchell began with a chronological overview of the case, then noted the ambiguities and contradictions in self-defense law. Under common law, he said, people are allowed to assert self-defense in cases where they reasonably believe they are under attack.

"Self-defense is generally returning force with force — equal force with equal force, not escalated."

Mitchell also explained that the long-standing Castle Doctrine states that your home is your safe space and that you are legally justified in using force to repel someone invading it.

In 2005, however, Florida changed its self-defense laws, declaring that a person is justified in using deadly force if he or she reasonably believes that such force is necessary to prevent imminent death or great bodily harm.

"The castle is no longer your home. You are your home. You are your castle," Mitchell said of the Florida statute, which is commonly known as the "Stand Your Ground Law."

"What's imminent? Whose reasonable belief?" Mitchell asked. "To whom is that reasonable person based upon? Critical feminist scholars say it does not talk about women; it's based upon a patriarchal standard. Critical race theorists say it is based upon a patriarchal system of white males. This reasonable belief has already been tainted. It is not clear. It is not explicit."

The legal issues surrounding the Martin-Zimmerman case will subside, Mitchell said, but the social consequences will linger.

Those consequences are exactly what Bartholow tried to explain in social psychology terms.

Ideas of stereotyping and prejudice have changed significantly since the 1930s when the social psychology of racial bias was first studied, Bartholow said. Since the 1960s especially, explicit attitudes and overt acts of racism have been on the decline, but implicit prejudices remain in place.

"The notion now is that stereotyping and prejudice, while unfortunate in many respects, are a byproduct of the way that our brains process information," Bartholow said.

"Whether we like it or not, our brains are constantly collecting and gathering information from our environment and using that information to help us predict what we should do under a certain set of circumstances."

That, Bartholow said, can cause our brains to default to stereotypes, or what he called "real-world bias."

Bartholow said that once people recognize that we all carry biases we will be in better position to control how they affect our behavior.

Collins, of the Missouri School of Journalism, said the media can be a source of powerful influence in shaping biases. He explained the difference between true news reports and media that use news for entertainment or commentary.

Collins said that although the media play an important watchdog role in stories such as the Martin-Zimmerman case, some news reports also can play into the "culture of fear."

"The media has the power to make you fearful," he said. "We have the power possibly to make you happy, to make you outraged. We have opportunities to speak to you in a way that creates an emotion."

The decisions that the media make regarding how they edit words and pictures can perpetuate biases and create a culture of fear.

Collins noted the different photos of Martin and Zimmerman that various media outlets have used in their reporting. Collins argued that photos can be misleading and manipulated to blur reality.

One popular image of Martin, for example, shows him with a bright smile as a much younger child, while another depicts him wearing a hoodie. Similarly, a common photo of Zimmerman is a 2005 police mug shot from the Orange County Jail, while another shows him smiling in a jacket and tie.