

AUG 31 2012



UM to MU

Press management moves

By Henry J. Waters III

Thursday, August 30, 2012

University of Missouri administrators took a large leap toward restoring the credibility of their scholarly publishing enterprise when they announced Tuesday that the University of Missouri Press will operate under the control of the MU campus.

In a meeting last week, MU faculty supported the idea of moving press management to the flagship campus where actual scholarship, teaching and research are performed, rather than in the arcane environs of the system administration.

The MU Faculty Council narrowly defeated two votes related to the press's operation, indicating a lingering suspicion of top university officials. Faculty were not ready to instantly forgive and forget the awkward initial announcements about reforming — or as some said, gutting — the traditional publishing model.

System President Tim Wolfe and MU Chancellor Brady Deaton are determined to stick with the campus model, but they needed a major injection of credibility with faculty, authors and other critics around the nation who were out in surprising numbers, so Deaton asked Superman to help.

In this context, Superman is former Chancellor Richard Wallace, whose favor with dissident elements is unquestioned. Wallace agreed to meet with faculty to explain a revised plan, and the rest is evolving history, not a done deal but on the way to a better outcome.

Wolfe & Co. were disappointed in the willingness or ability of press managers to make needed changes they thought would improve the operation and save money, but instead of the more careful reforms now seemingly on the horizon, Wolfe announced fundamental changes without adequate discussion with concerned constituents. A strategic and proper retreat now seems under way.

Critics were most upset over the idea of creating a new press model led by English Professor Speer Morgan, who proposed using more digital formats and relying on graduate students learning the trade rather than professionals, a move critics said was sure to erode the credibility of the operation and cause prestigious contributors to look elsewhere.

Then on Tuesday, with the serious help of Wallace, Wolfe announced the upheaval would be abandoned. The press would be continued in its current form but under MU auspices. Current staff would be retained, but new management would be sought. Speer would retain a "leadership role" but work "alongside the press" to help integrate the operation into campus, clearly a phasing-out of the plan to give him permanent CEO status.

This is a victory for everyone, including Morgan. The press can emerge from the din of battle with an unchanged mission and, if all hands perform as they can and must, in a better operation. Morgan is saved from an impossible role. The bottom line is the basket has been overturned and now a move is under way to select the best apples for return to the fold. If all goes well, the University of Missouri Press will be improved, not gutted, and its friends and supporters near and far will have reason to be pleased, not angry.

President Wolfe stumbled out of the box, but give him credit for recognizing he was not going to get to first base with his premature dash. From long and painful experience, I can report managers are never able to make unerring decisions every time but always have a chance to amend their plans if they will keep eyes and ears open. In the case of the press, the clamor was impossible to ignore; sometimes, though, the louder the criticism, the more top-level heels dig in. Instead, Wolfe enlisted talented leaders at the campus level to get things back on track.

President Wolfe is a talented corporate leader without direct experience in academic mysteries such as the operation of a university press. He made an initial move without enough good advice but then admitted it. We did not hire him to know precisely how to teach history or run an academic press. Like all top managers of complex organizations, his job is to have a sense of where to go and enlist those at his command who have the skills and instincts to know how to do it.

For the university press, this delineation of skills and responsibilities will be clarified now that the operation is in MU hands. Without being a mouse in his desk drawer, my bet is Wolfe now is satisfied with changes for the press that he has set in motion. If he delegates fully to the likes of Deaton and Wallace, the press will function well. The culture of academe is kept intact with the appointment of an advisory committee and at least a transitional role for Morgan. Input from faculty and other scholars is ensured now that they have injected themselves so forcefully into the discussion.

The road ahead can be smoother as the debate turns positive, an outcome more likely now that the apples are on the table.

HJW III

Back in the mid-1980s, Nunzio J. Palladino, former dean of the Penn State School of Engineering, served as head of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, a hot seat at the time. He survived wide criticism and spent a lot of time answering questions in Congress, finally retiring on his own schedule after five years of on-and-off abuse. "I've learned that it is all right to suffer a little in front of the (congressional) committees," he said. "In fact, it's desirable. If they think you didn't suffer enough, they call you back the next week."

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Missouri Press: fight ain't over till it's over

2 hours ago • [BY JANE HENDERSON > Post-Dispatch Book Editor • \[jhenderson@post-dispatch.com\]\(mailto:jhenderson@post-dispatch.com\)](#)

Supporters of the University of Missouri Press are ready to lawyer up if its former editor-in-chief is not reinstated.

Meanwhile, a job description for a new leader may be ready to go nationwide next week.

Nonetheless, the dizzying whirl of rumors surrounding the press may be calming somewhat as Richard Wallace, former Mizzou chancellor and member of a group working on the transition of the press, returns phone calls and e-mails and makes every effort to reassure authors that their complaints are being heard.

“Our highest priority is to continue positive contacts with our authors... letting them know how desperately we need them,” he said on Thursday.

But although he could not say whether Clair Willcox, the laid-off editor-in-chief, might be offered a job, Wallace emphasized that he knew it is an important issue for authors.

About 50 authors have asked for their book rights to be returned since the University of Missouri system announced in May that it would close the press. This week, author Ned Stuckey-French, an English professor at Florida State University, demanded on the [Save the University of Missouri Facebook page](#) that Willcox be reinstated.

He said by phone that if Willcox is not re-appointed he has a “lawyer ready” whom authors are willing to pay to get the rights to their books returned. (Sales of backlist titles bring in about \$700,000 for the press each year.)

When asked whether a Facebook group should dictate who leads the press, Stuckey-French said:

“It’s not that we’re dictating. ... It’s just who we’re loyal to.”

In July, the University of Missouri announced its first retreat from the news that it was closing the press. It said it would have a new [press “model.”](#) under the leadership of Speer Morgan, and on the Columbia campus, where the press was born in 1958.

Criticism of the plan continued, however, and on Tuesday, Mizzou nixed the new idea and said the press would remain a traditional academic press; staff who remain were told they could stay.

Press members were surprised, just as they had been by the original news that they were being laid off. One likened the news to a “shock and awe” campaign.

(Many have decided not to stay: Today is managing editor Sara Davis’ last day. Acquisitions editor John Brenner has a new job. Jennifer Gravley, who manages publicity for the press, is one who said she will remain.)

Ironically, the social media abilities of the internet — which was to be emphasized in a “new model” for the press — was a topic of much derision using that exact 21st-century technique.

The activity on the Save the University of Missouri Press Facebook page went far to reinstate the traditional press — even as supporters’ posts, blogs and e-mails championed traditional academic press methods.

This week, they continued to disparage Morgan, with one Facebook commenter saying the English professor apparently been thrown “under the bus.” (Morgan did not return a phone call, and Wallace would not say whether Morgan withdrew his involvement or was deposed.)

On Tuesday, staff at the press, who had been applying for new jobs, were surprised to learn that the university was going to keep the press physically where it is, instead of moving it to the MU campus’ McReynolds Hall, where Morgan’s literary journal, the Missouri Review, is based.

In accepting the offer to direct a new press model, Morgan “was doing exactly what he had been asked to do,” Wallace said. Going forward, Morgan will be involved in the university’s Media of the Future program, exploring rapidly changing technology, Wallace confirmed.

Wallace emphasized that the press will stand apart from Media of the Future, although he said there “is some possibility of synergic thinking.” Next week, he plans to mail letters to offer positions on a press advisory committee and to write a job description for a top editor.

Steve Weinberg, a former Mizzou journalism professor and author who has published with the press, said that he was surprised by how Morgan has been “demonized” during the controversy.

“Based on my knowledge, the demonization is inappropriate.”

Morgan has a well-respected literary journal and has “served the campus and literature very well,” Weinberg said this week.

Since the University of Missouri system announced on May 24 that it was closing the press, that decision has been criticized across the country.

Gravley, the publicity manager, said this summer has been a “bit of a roller coaster.”

There has been a lot of “misinformation,” she said, and “people interpret things in different ways.”

Initial hostility to the closing focused on how much the university system administrators are willing to put into football while whining about the press' \$400,000 subsidy. (The athletic budget is actually separate. Interestingly enough, though, Mizzou football opens its season on Saturday.)

Meanwhile, Gravley has one finished book from the press' fall catalog ready to ship to stores and reviewers. Its title: "Broken Butterfly."

MISSOURIAN

GEORGE KENNEDY: Handling of UM Press proves learning experience for new president

Thursday, August 30, 2012 | 1:48 p.m. CDT BY George Kennedy

Tim Wolfe says, "I've learned a lot" in his first six months as president of our university.

For his sake, and the sake of the institution, I hope none of his other learning experiences has been as ugly as the one surrounding the University of Missouri Press.

When I wrote about the controversial "closure" that wasn't really a closure of the press a few weeks ago, I called the new administration's handling of the change "ham-handed." Now that the decisions announced in May have been almost completely reversed, my description seems unduly kind.

I'm sure it has been, however, a learning experience for everyone involved.

To review: On May 24, President Wolfe, then only three months in office, announced that the press would be phased out starting in the new fiscal year. The 10 staff members would be fired. In a news release, spokeswoman Jennifer Hollingshead noted that the Columbia campus "is exploring dramatically new models for scholarly communication. ..."

Responses from supporters of the press were quick, angry and heartfelt, on the four campuses and beyond. A national petition attracted thousands of signatures. One prominent alumnus promised a \$100,000 donation toward an endowment to save the press. The MU Faculty Council mastered its usual confusion long enough to adopt a resolution calling on Wolfe to reverse his decision.

One national publication published the headline "Score so far at the University of Missouri: Books 0, Football Coach \$2.7 million."

Then, in July, came the first step back. No, the press wouldn't be closed after all. Instead, it would be shifted to the Columbia campus and reimagined as a multi-platform purveyor of scholarly work, with faculty and graduate students from several departments involved and English professor Speer Morgan, editor of the successful literary quarterly Missouri Review, overseeing both operations.

The reaction to that ranged from skepticism to outrage. Authors demanded the rights to their books. Clair Willcox, editor-in-chief of the pre-reformation press, cleaned out his office.

I spent about an hour last Friday with President Wolfe and his chief of staff, Bob Schwartz. The president said he'd been misunderstood.

"We never intended to get out of publishing scholar works," he said. "Part of our mission statement is the dissemination of scholarly information."

He was persuaded, he said, that "We had to do something. We knew we could do it better by doing it differently."

Contrary to the widely held perception that he had made an arbitrary decision, he said he had followed his preferred decision-making process, which he described as "collaborative and inclusive."

"Conversation with bright people is the best process," he said. The bright people with whom he conferred before making this decision included all four campus chancellors and the system vice presidents.

By the time we talked, the belated damage control effort was already well under way. Just the day before, former Chancellor Richard Wallace had told the Faculty Council of a new plan to create a broad-based advisory committee to guide creation and function of the new, improved and presumably less costly press.

Chancellor Wallace has been around almost forever, it seems, and is widely beloved. He told the council that he shares with President Wolfe, Chancellor Brady Deaton and Provost Brian Foster "an intense desire" to recreate a top-quality academic press. Council members who couldn't agree on much else applauded him.

This week came the big news. Depending on your perspective, you could call it a thoughtful course correction or an abject surrender.

Now, we're told, the press will continue pretty much as is. Remaining employees will keep their jobs. Books will continue to be printed. Provost Foster, who will now have responsibility for it, was quoted in Wednesday's *Missourian* as saying, "The press isn't going to be changed in any dramatic way in the foreseeable future."

So I called him.

Yes, he agreed, "It is a 180-degree turn." (In a phone call Thursday, Ms. Hollingshead told me the president's office sees it instead as "more of an evolution.")

The turn came, Provost Foster said, after "an awful lot of discussion, on campus and off." It turns out, he added unnecessarily, that "a lot of people are passionate about the press."

“I think it’s a good outcome,” he said. “A strong scholarly press is an extremely important part of what we do as a university.”

Still, he said, a lot of details remain to be worked out in conjunction with the advisory committee, yet to be appointed. Among those details are the financing and just what role Prof. Morgan will play. He won’t be the director of the press.

I didn’t get the impression that Clair Willcox or other departed employees are likely to get their jobs back. Top editors who will be hired at the press must now be qualified to hold faculty positions as well.

Provost Foster, who probably thought he already had a full plate, sounded a little tired.

“It’s been a pretty traumatic experience,” he said.

And the education of a university president continues.

George Kennedy is a former managing editor at the Missourian and professor emeritus at the Missouri School of Journalism. Questions? Contact Opinion editor Elizabeth Conner.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Mizzou's Alden gets contract extension



University of Missouri athletics director Mike Alden speaks at a press conference last November, when Mizzou announced it was joining the Southeastern Conference. (AP Photo/Jeff Roberson)

7 hours ago • BY VAHE GREGORIAN • vgregorian@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8199

University of Missouri athletics director Mike Alden's contract has been extended by two years to June 30, 2019, MU announced Thursday.

The announcement comes as Mizzou is engaged in a \$200 million facilities upgrade and beginning a new athletics era in its first season as a member of the Southeastern Conference following more than a century affiliated with the Big 12 and its predecessors.

"Mike has provided important leadership during a time of transition of conferences," MU chancellor Brady Deaton said in a statement. "His record of integrity is stellar, and his national

leadership in the NCAA reflects recognition of his orientation to the success of the student athlete.

"The academic, competitive and financial strength of our athletic department is due to Mike's leadership, and the university is proud of his contributions. We want to see a stable pathway as we look to the future. This contract extension is one way to reinforce our commitment to excellence in athletics and to the academic mission of our university."

According to MU, the extension does "not increase Alden's base salary, performance incentives, or any other form of income."

Under the current contract, the school said, Alden's base salary is \$301,917 with the potential to earn up to \$777,976 with performance incentives.

"This extension is greatly appreciated, and I believe it reflects the efforts of so many people working together for academic integrity, social responsibility and competitive excellence," Alden said in a statement. "We look forward to the opportunities that lie ahead as we enter the SEC."

Since arriving at MU in 1998, Alden already had presided over a dramatic makeover of MU's facilities even before the latest plans to upgrade that were bolstered by a \$30 million gift by the Kansas City Sports Trust.

Crucial to Alden's success has been his hiring of football coach Gary Pinkel, who on Saturday against Southeastern Louisiana begins his 12th season at MU with an 85-54 record.

With eight wins this season, Pinkel would match Dan Devine for the second-most in MU history. With eight more a year later, he'd tie Don Faurot for the most.

Alden is the third-longest tenured among MU athletics leaders behind Faurot and Chester Brewer.

QB MAUK IS ARRESTED

Missouri freshman quarterback Maty Mauk has been arrested on suspicion of four charges including leaving the scene of an accident after a scooter mishap.

Mauk is third on the depth chart after a record-setting high school career in Kenton, Ohio, and is the second Missouri quarterback to have a scrape with the law in recent months. Redshirt freshman Corbin Berkstresser, the backup, was arrested and charged in May with a misdemeanor for hitting a parked car with his truck and leaving the scene.

A Missouri spokesman said the school was aware of the situation and was handling it internally.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

MISSOURIAN

AP Associated Press

Missouri extends AD Mike Alden's contract by 2 years

Thursday, August 30, 2012 | 1:20 p.m. CDT; updated 11:06 p.m. CDT, Thursday, August 30, 2012

COLUMBIA — Missouri athletics director Mike Alden, who helped oversee the school's transition from the Big 12 to the Southeastern Conference this summer, received a two-year contract extension Thursday.

Alden, whose contract now runs through June 2019, is paid a base salary of \$301,917 and may earn up to \$777,976 through performance incentive income. The contract extension doesn't increase Alden's compensation. Future base salary increases are limited to the same percentage raises provided to the faculty and staff.

Missouri Chancellor Brady Deaton said Alden has provided "important leadership" amid the conference change. Missouri's move to the SEC ended an association with the Big 12 and its previous incarnations dating to 1907.

"We want to see a stable pathway as we look to the future," Deaton said. "This contract extension is one way to reinforce our commitment to excellence in athletics and to the academic mission of our university."

Under Alden's leadership, the football program has competed in seven straight bowl games, and the men's basketball program received a No. 2 seed in last season's NCAA tournament. The school also noted that Alden has been involved in developing a \$200 million facility improvement plan, which includes a stadium expansion and a new indoor practice facility.

"This extension is greatly appreciated, and I believe it reflects the efforts of so many people working together for academic integrity, social responsibility and competitive excellence," Alden said. "We look forward to the opportunities that lie ahead as we enter the SEC."

Alden has led Missouri athletics since 1998. Before joining Missouri, Alden was director of athletics at Texas State in San Marcos, Texas.



Alden gets two-year extension

BY THE TRIBUNE'S STAFF

Thursday, August 30, 2012

The University of Missouri announced today a two-year extension of Athletic Director Mike Alden's contract, which now runs through 2019. Alden's salary and incentives will remain the same. He will make a base salary of \$301,917, which can increase to a total of \$777,976 with incentives.

"Mike has provided important leadership during a time of transition of conferences," MU Chancellor Brady Deaton said in a news release. "His record of integrity is stellar and his national leadership in the NCAA reflects recognition of his orientation to the success of the student-athlete. The academic, competitive and financial strength of our athletic department is due to Mike's leadership, and the university is proud of his contributions."

Alden has been Missouri's athletic director since he succeeded Joe Castiglione in 1998. He is Missouri's third-longest-tenured athletic director behind Don Faurot and Chester Brewer. Alden was named the Director of the Year in 2008 by the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics.



\$3 million goes to MU cattle study

By Janese Silvey

Published August 30, 2012 at 12:14 p.m.

Updated August 30, 2012 at 2 p.m.

A University of Missouri research team today received a \$3 million boost from the federal government to study ways farmers can improve breeding rates among cattle herds.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture award was announced this morning during a daylong conference where university officials are outlining a new program called Quality Beef by the Numbers.

Jerry Taylor, the Wurdack chair in animal genomics at MU's College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, and Professor Dave Patterson are leading the research team. The goal is to identify which genes are causing pregnancy problems in cattle by sequencing genomes of as many as 200 cattle from 10 breeds.

Every year, cattle ranchers breed 2 million cows in Missouri, but not all of the cows give birth — some are not able to conceive or they miscarry.

"In Missouri alone, we're talking about 150,000 cows that are not able to sustain a pregnancy," Taylor said in a prepared statement.

About 250 farmers and researchers convened for today's summit at the Hilton Garden Inn and Convention Center. After the morning grant announcement, university officials unveiled the new Quality Beef by the Numbers program, which will allow farmers to pay a fee to partner with university researchers who can help them better understand the genetics of their herds.

One way to do that would be to help a farmer determine the genetic capabilities of a cow by tracking the quality of beef from her steers, Scott Brown, a CAFNR research assistant professor, told the Tribune earlier this month.

And that could provide important information when farmers have to decide which animals to get rid of when culling a herd.

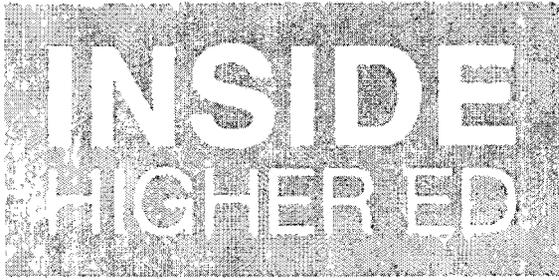
CAFNR Dean Tom Payne told producers in the audience today that he realizes many have already culled their herds in response to this summer's drought. But, he said, the same program also could help them rebuild better herds based on genetic qualities.

The beef project and grant funding are the latest movements in the university's continual push to help the United States and Missouri better compete in an evolving beef market as demand skyrockets and consumers show a willingness to pay more for high-quality beef. And that demand is only expected to rise as the global population adds another 2 billion people by 2050, MU Chancellor Brady Deaton said.

Last year, Taylor and his team received two grants totaling more than \$14 million from USDA to study why some cattle gain weight faster.

UM System President Tim Wolfe this morning touted the potential of the research work but told farmers their participation is critical.

"We need input from the industry," he said, later saying the opportunities are "endless" but only with collaboration between scientists and producers.



insidehighered.com

Lost HOPE

August 31, 2012 - 3:00am

By

Allie Grasgreen

If you're a student in the South with a state lottery-funded scholarship, and you want to retain said scholarship, being a black male from a low-income family with low ACT scores and grade point averages is "essentially the recipe for disaster," says one researcher whose new study also found that when it comes to race alone, black students are significantly less likely to retain their scholarships than are their peers of other ethnicities.

And while colleges should establish more structures to keep those students above the minimum G.P.A. required for scholarship retention, the study's author says, the students need to step up their game.

"It's not the institutions' fault, per se," said Charles E. Menifield, a professor of public and non-profit administration at the University of Missouri at Columbia. "If I had to singularly blame somebody, I would have to blame the African American male, because ultimately they have control of their G.P.A.s. And I have no issue going on record as saying that they should seriously prioritize why they are in college."

Menifield examined the effect of different demographic and academic factors on scholarship retention among more than 33,000 Tennessee students who benefited from the state lottery-funded, four-year, \$4,000 HOPE Scholarship in fall 2007. The scholarship, similar to one started in Georgia and others throughout the country, requires students to maintain a minimum 2.75 GPA at 24 credit hours and a minimum 3.0 once the student has taken 48 credit hours.

The merit scholarship has been criticized as disproportionately benefiting more affluent students who could already afford to go to college, who went to better high schools and who, as Menifield's data show, are often white. But the low-income black students who do receive HOPE scholarships "can't use [their] background as a crutch for poor performance," said Menifield, an

African-American son of a farm laborer who supported four children and a wife on just \$9,000 a year.

"Yes, it is true that students from wealthy families are more likely to retain the scholarship," Menifield said. "So what? The criteria to receive a HOPE lottery scholarship is the same for everyone."

But the cultural, family, educational and financial obstacles many of those black students are facing can be crippling, and states need to make sure scholarships like HOPE are operating the way they were intended to and helping the students who really need it, said James T. Minor, director of higher education programs at the Southern Education Foundation and a blogger for *Inside Higher Ed*.

"We know that the support systems and programs that we've had in place have not necessarily been proven to be effective. Everything from financial aid services to advising," Minor said. "A scholarship is not a magic pill or potion that automatically gets a student to commit. We all know that's one variable, and there are often many others."

Menifield argues in the study, published in the *Journal of Education Finance*, that while lottery-funded scholarships may increase access to higher education, they do not necessarily translate to academic success for certain populations. (Scroll to the bottom of the page for more detailed findings.)

While 42 states offer lottery scholarships, though, Menifield suggested his findings are probably be less applicable in states outside the South. The profile of a black student living in the Northeast, for example – income level, family background, etc. – is likely far different than one in Tennessee or Georgia.

"I think the dynamics change. The culture changes," Menifield said. "That's why the solution to this problem has to be a holistic one – because I'm saying a specific type of black male is losing their scholarship. So the ones that don't fit these criteria – those aren't the ones I'm concerned about."

Menifield envisions parents, religious leaders, teachers and administrators coming together to get these students – who have grown up spending more time just hanging out than studying – on the right track.

"I don't think African Americans are inherently different than any other group of people. I think it's all about how you've been socialized, and if you change the culture of the educational system then the problem can be solved. But it's got to be an approach where everybody's involved," Menifield said. "They need to be socialized that, when you're in college, the way to break the poverty cycle is to stay in college and graduate, and if someone's going to give you money to go, you've got to focus."

Universities can help, too – not just black or low-income students, but all students. As an example, he pointed to the learning communities at Mississippi State University, which group students together based on a common interest and see more student engagement as a result.

“This research strongly suggests that colleges and universities that desire to maintain diversity should at minimum target minority students, particularly African American males, and determine how best to improve academic success,” Menifield writes in the study. “This may require a survey simply asking, how can we help you to be successful? This could also include work groups led by high performing students, commitments by professors to facilitate work groups, community learning environments in dormitories, additional funding to ensure that students can focus on academic issues rather than working to make a living, and a culture that would indicate that the institution is concerned with the retention of all students.”

“The question of how much you intervene is a really, really big decision,” Menifield said. “The onus is on the student to say, ‘I need to go [to office hours].’ But nine times out of 10, [the at-risk students are] not the ones to show up. And that’s where the problem starts.”

According to the 2008 Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship Program Annual Report, more than 68,000 students received lottery scholarships totaling \$191.5 million in 2007, and both numbers were steadily rising over the past few years. Yet students in the highest income bracket – over \$81,000 – represented the largest proportion among recipients, at 34 percent – a figure that is also on the rise.

At the same time, the retention rate for students with lottery scholarships has dropped from 50 percent in 2005 to just 32 percent in 2007 (though Menifield notes that these students are still more likely to stay in school than those without a lottery scholarship).

Menifield doesn’t analyze whether these students ultimately graduate. But he suspects there is probably a connection.

“I think it is fair to say that the number who graduate diminishes as the result of the funds drying up,” he said. “I’m not saying that just because they lose their scholarship they drop out of school – but the odds are, some of them do.”

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Now an app that tracks battlefield objects

A new software relying on smartphones' global positioning system (GPS) and imaging abilities can fix the exact location of distant objects as well as monitor the speed and direction of moving objects, says a study.

The software could eventually allow smartphone-armed soldiers to target the location of their enemies. On the home front, the software could be used by everyone, including golfers judging distance to the green and biologists documenting the location of a rare animal without disturbing it.

"The great advantage of a smartphone is that it provides so many tools in a single, readily available, relatively inexpensive package," said Qia Wang, doctoral student at the University of Missouri College of Engineering, who led the development of the software, the journal Proceedings of the Society of Photo-Optical Instrumentation Engineers reported.

"For example, on the battlefield, a soldier needs a range-finder, compass, GPS and other tools to do reconnaissance before calling in an air strike. With our software, the soldier can have all those instruments in one device that can be purchased off the shelf," added Wang, according to a Missouri statement.

"When that soldier returns from war, he can use the same software to protect his family by clocking a speeder near her children's school and catching the culprit on video," said Wang.

Wang and his colleagues developed their software to locate and track: Targets of known size - when the size of the target is known, a single image is enough to pinpoint the target's location.

The software computes the latitude and longitude of the target using the smartphones' GPS location, compass reading and the distance to the target based on the relative size of the target in the image compared to its known real-life size.

Targets of unknown size - if the exact size of a target is unknown, the software uses two images to triangulate the location of the target.

Moving targets - by taking a short video of a moving target, the smartphone software can calculate how fast the target is moving and in what direction it is going.

"Currently, our software is limited by the physical abilities of smartphone hardware, but the devices are improving rapidly," Wang said.

"We anticipate that improvements in GPS accuracy, battery life and camera resolution will allow our software to make even more accurate observations. We also are making our software more user-friendly."

The targeting and tracking software is not available commercially yet. A prototype version has been created and is currently being tested. More algorithms and methods are being developed to improve the speed and accuracy.

These findings were presented at the Geospatial InfoFusion II conference.

United Press International

100 YEARS OF JOURNALISTIC EXCELLENCE

Spirituality, not religion, health helpful

COLUMBIA, Mo., Aug. 30 (UPI) -- Buddhists, Muslims, Jews, Catholics and Protestants with a degree of spirituality have better mental health, U.S. researchers say.

Dan Cohen of the University of Missouri said despite differences in rituals and beliefs among the world's major religions, spirituality often enhances health regardless of a person's faith.

"With increased spirituality people reduce their sense of self and feel a greater sense of oneness and connectedness with the rest of the universe," Cohen said in a statement. "What was interesting was that frequency of participation in religious activities or the perceived degree of congregational support was not found to be significant in the relationships between personality, spirituality, religion and health."

The researchers analyzed three surveys to determine if correlations existed among participants' self-reported mental and physical health, personality factors, and spirituality in Buddhists, Muslims, Jews, Catholics and Protestants.

The study, published in the Journal of Religion and Health, found across all five faiths, a greater degree of spirituality was related to better mental health, specifically lower levels of neuroticism and greater extraversion. Forgiveness was the only spiritual trait predictive of mental health after personality variables were considered, the study said.

"Our prior research shows that the mental health of people recovering from different medical conditions, such as cancer, stroke, spinal cord injury and traumatic brain injury, appears to be related significantly to positive spiritual beliefs and especially congregational support and spiritual interventions," Cohen said in a statement. "Spiritual beliefs may be a coping device to help individuals deal emotionally with stress."



Opinion: Is Voter Suppression a Myth?

The right to vote is our most sacred right as American citizens. Maintaining the integrity of the electoral process should not be a partisan issue.

Yet, whenever Democrats seem to find themselves down in the polls, they cry foul over voting laws and insist that Republicans are conspiring to block minorities from the ballot box.

Protestors gathered outside the Republican National Convention in Tampa this week demanding that the GOP and the Tea Party denounce voter suppression efforts. They claim that new state laws aimed at cleaning up voting rolls and requiring voter ID disenfranchise minority voters.

Those on the left and in the mainstream media frequently cite the Brennan Center for Justice's recent report on voter fraud as proof that this suppression is occurring. What they don't point out is that the "non-partisan" Brennan Center has received \$7.4 million from the George Soros Open Society Institute since 2000 and has a reputation for cherry picking data to prove their claim that voter fraud doesn't exist.

The real myth lies in the claim that voter ID laws suppress minority votes.

Eight states currently have voter ID laws in effect including Indiana and Georgia. So if the liberal hypothesis holds true that voter ID laws suppress minority voters you would expect to see depressed turnout numbers.

But numerous studies have shown that states with voter ID rules have *increased* voter turnout.

A University of Missouri study found that voter turnout increased by 2 percent in the state of Indiana. The state – which has a strict photo requirement – saw the number of black voters *double* from 2004 to 2008 and the number of registered Democrats increased 8.3% in that same period.

Georgia, which also has a strict ID law, saw their largest voter turnout in history in 2008 as Democrat turnout jumped over six percent from the previous election according to an American University survey.

Similar studies conducted by the University of Delaware and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln have also shown that voter ID laws do not suppress voter turnout.

Instituting laws that protect the honesty of our voting system and increase turnout should be a commendable goal. Americans want a system that works and that protects the integrity of individual votes. A majority of Hispanic voters in swing states like Florida and Colorado view ID laws favorably. Effective voting laws – like ones that require ID – should both increase turnout and eliminate fraud.

Don't let manufactured uproar by the left over voter suppression fool you. The real issue isn't over voting laws – it's over the fact that the left has an atrocious record and cannot win in November without resorting to demagoguery to scare minority voters.