UM non-faculty staffers required to complete performance survey

BY KACEN J. BAYLESS

University of Missouri System leaders are moving forward with the first official step in the Fiscal Year 2018 Administrative Review project, according to emails sent Monday from UM System President Mun Choi and MU Chancellor Alexander Cartwright.

Over the next two months, an advisory committee of UM System faculty and staff will study responses from non-faculty staff members across all four UM System campuses to understand the specific roles and distribution of work performed. According to the UM System website, the Activity Analysis Survey designed for the study “will augment organizational knowledge about how our daily workload is managed and help the University find the right balance of work in functions and academic units.”

“It will be very important that we hear from each non-faculty staff member through this survey so that we can use data to inform our decisions and find the right balance of work in our functions and units,” Choi said in an email.

This Activity Analysis Survey comes after UM System leaders along with the help of consulting firm PricewaterhouseCoopers released a review of all administrative activities and functions within the UM System in December. In that review, the firm saw between $44 million and $74 million in opportunities for UM System budget cuts, including benefits, facilities and information technology annually during each of the next three years.

Before the release of that review, Choi said the opportunity to improve academic efficiency was a “very important topic that really defines the future of the university.”
MU spokesman Christian Basi said the survey will include about 17,000 employees from the four UM System campuses.

The advisory committee involved in the administrative review is split into three groups: the Faculty and Staff Steering Committee, the Governance Team and the Work Team. Among the 19 UM faculty and staffers involved in the process are members from MU’s Staff Advisory Council and Faculty Council Chrissy Kinter and Camila Manrique, Cartwright said in the email.

“When it became evident that comprehensive data collection was going to be part of next steps in the Administrative Review process, the advisory committee asked that staff be able to provide this data, which led us to this Activity Analysis,” Cartwright said in the email.

The UM System website provides a brief timeline on when and how the Activity Analysis Survey will be implemented. On Monday, Feb. 19, all non-faculty staff and students involved in administrative work are expected to complete a survey administered through an survey program called Qualtrics. The survey is not required for UM faculty, hospital-only MU Health employees and graduate assistants.

According to the UM System website, an introductory email will be sent to non-faculty staff with instructions on how to access and complete the survey. Those who fail to complete the survey by the March 2 deadline will have a survey completed on their behalf.

“Your participation in this survey is critical to ensuring that we have the accurate data to make informed decisions as we continue working to become a stronger and more efficient organization,” Cartwright said in the email. “Your voice is important in this process. In addition to providing vital information through a survey, you will have an opportunity to share additional feedback and ideas about how we can improve efficiencies as a next step in this process.”

The results of the survey will be examined and shared at the next UM System Board of Curators meeting on April 12 and 13.
“After the survey results are shared at the April Board of Curators meeting, the University community will have the opportunity to share feedback, including recommendations for improving efficiency and effectiveness across the system,” Choi said in an email.

Final results of the survey and any decisions for further action will be released in early summer, Choi previously said.

MU medical program, other higher ed initiatives could lose all state funding

BY KATHRYN HARDISON

JEFFERSON CITY—Several higher education initiative programs in Missouri could lose all state funding after a recommendation made by the Department of Higher Education on Monday.

One program that faces funding elimination is the MU Cooperative Medicine Program, located in Springfield.

This comes after Gov. Eric Greitens’ recommendation to cut state funding for the higher education programs in his budget proposal for fiscal year 2019, which begins July 1. He recommended cutting all $5 million in state funding for the Cooperative Medicine Program.

Zora Mulligan, commissioner of higher education, and Jeff Barlow, assistant commissioner, made recommendations for the department’s fiscal year 2019 appropriations to the House Budget Committee on Monday and expressed agreement with the governor’s recommendations.

“When I look at the future, when I look at the present, I don’t see a lot of prospect for additional funding for higher education,” Mulligan said. “What that means is that our institutions, and ways of coordinating, are faced with increasingly challenging choices about what we do and do not do. So it is an extremely
bitter pill to have to swallow to consider the possibility of discontinuing the program so you can support another one.

“But that’s the position that most of our (university) presidents find themselves in … we’re simply faced with the situation where revenue is not keeping up in a way that allows us to add on other higher education priorities without considering or reconsidering our old priorities.”

Members of the budget committee expressed concern about eliminating school initiative programs, while Mulligan said the department’s main concern is to keep as much of its core funding as it can.

Rep. Curtis Trent, R-Springfield, questioned whether there was unnecessary spending within core funding that could be eliminated before taking away funds for the Springfield-based program.

“I would strongly suggest that a program like this is incredibly valuable to economic development, to serving the needs of the community and a greater value than some other parts of the core (funding), and I think that should be looked at,” Trent said.

This potential elimination of the medical program comes in addition to Greitens’ proposed $98 million cut to higher education, including a $43 million cut to the University of Missouri System compared to appropriations the previous year. Higher education was cut $159 million the previous fiscal year.

UM System President Mun Choi told a House education appropriations committee in late January that the UM System has “made dramatic cuts, and that further cuts would be very damaging to our core operation.”

Rep. Donna Lichtenegger, R-Jackson, said higher education institutions have worked well with the budget committee in finding resources to cut.

“They have cut those programs, they’ve done what we asked them to do. Now it’s time for us to do the responsible thing that we’re supposed to do,” Lichtenegger said.
“We don’t have workforce development without our post-secondary education, and I think that’s something we better look at. Because if we want companies to come here, then we have to have that workforce development in place and at the rate we’re going right now, that’s not going to happen.”

**MU students mobilize against higher education budget cuts**

By BRYCE MARLIN


COLUMBIA -MU students are organizing a campaign to fight against Governor Eric Greitens proposed higher education budget cuts.

Governor Greitens proposed cutting $98 million statewide from the higher education funding. The University of Missouri System will lose $43 million from its 2019 fiscal year. This follows a $159 million higher education statewide budget cut last fiscal year.

The MU Socialists group will hold its first meeting at 7 p.m. Feb. 12, at Middlebush Hall to mobilize against the potential multi-million dollar cuts.

President of the MU Socialists, Joseph Moore, said the group is in the preliminary stages of planning, but hopes to build off of the meeting.

“We’re looking to get more of a concrete plan of action,” Moore said. “What are the things we want to achieve, and then how do we plan to achieve them, and where do we want to focus our pressure?”
“We’re going to be talking about what we can do to address this issue, what we can do to mobilize people, and potentially create some sort of campaign to push back against these budget cuts.”

Moore said that the proposed budget cuts could lead to an increase in student tuition by up to 10. The group is focusing on spreading awareness of a possible increase among other MU students.

“That’s one of the things we’re trying to do with this meeting and campaigns going forward is increasing awareness with undergraduates about budget cuts and how that is going to affect their tuition potentially,” Moore said.

The group plans to raise awareness through social media and other student led groups on campus. Moore also said they have yet to reach out to faculty, but hopes to organize a campaign with them in the future.

Governor Greitens’ budget will be finalized this summer, and Moore said the group will do everything possible to fight the proposal until then.

“We do have some time to mobilize. This is a process, and this meeting is the first step in that process,” Moore said.

The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. in room 206, at Middlebush Hall on MU’s campus. It is not exclusive to only MU students and will be open to the public.

**University of Missouri police arrest man accused of starting fire at Missouri Psychiatric Center**

By JOSH MATEJKA

COLUMBIA, Mo. - University of Missouri police confirmed Monday that officers arrested a man for allegedly catching a bed sheet on fire at the University Psychiatric Center on Sunday.
Brian Hanson was arrested on suspicion of first-degree arson and second-degree tampering after Columbia Fire and MUPD responded to the hospital Sunday afternoon.

**COLUMBIA DAILY TRIBUNE**

**Make colleges better, not fewer**

By Tribune staff

*The following editorial first appeared in the St. Joseph News-Press:*

A business professor at the University of Missouri has it all figured out: The solution to tight funding for higher education is to close campuses.

“There is simply no justification for having 13 public (supported by state tax) four-year colleges and universities,” writes Art Jago, a professor emeritus.

“That number of faculties, staff, physical facilities, administrators and overhead is unsustainable in the current environment. The closure of entire campuses is required.”

As a conversation starter, this ranks pretty high on the list if you are in Cape Girardeau, Rolla, St. Joseph or Maryville. Because Jago leaves no doubt his preference for cuts involves any campus except the one in Columbia.

We would like to dismiss this notion as simply goofy, or not constructive. But the professor opens a new chapter in the struggle to adequately fund higher education. He is suggesting we should pit one community against another.

One flaw in this argument is in thinking that somehow we would advance the cause of Missouri residents by making it logistically more difficult and likely more expensive to obtain a college degree.

By extension, it’s hard to come to any conclusion other than we would be denying a chance for higher education to many Missourians in one or more communities that now provide that opportunity.

The point has been made that our higher education institutions are important contributors to the economy of the state and the individual regions they serve. That’s certainly true in St. Joseph and Maryville.
Missouri Western State University and Northwest Missouri State University are big employers in the two communities, but they are much more than that. They attract employers and families who value what they offer.

They also are beacons for any parent seeking a better future for their child, and for any young student or older adult needing a pathway that leads to new experiences and ultimately college degrees that will open doors for employment and careers.

We should work to make our network of colleges and universities as efficient and effective as possible.

This means we need to be sharply focused on making sure these institutions are turning out grads well-equipped to compete for today’s jobs and tomorrow’s careers, and they are held accountable for their efforts. We should insist these institutions better coordinate their work to avoid needless and wasteful duplication of effort.

This is what’s required — not the closing of entire campuses.

For urban high-schoolers in Kansas City, a launching pad for their careers

KANSAS CITY, MO.—Lyndon Ersery is a junior studying engineering at the University of Missouri. Thanks to some intensive workforce training, he is well on his way to a successful career in the field.

A product of the public school system in Kansas City, Mo., Mr. Ersery is familiar with the barriers that students who don’t have access to contacts and internships encounter in trying to explore such a field. He credits Green Works, a nonprofit organization in Kansas City, with helping to provide him with a launching pad for his collegiate – and soon professional – career, and with “educating inner-city students like me and giving us a beacon of hope that we can be someone.”

Founded in 2007, Green Works blends workforce development and environmental education for urban high-schoolers. It forms partnerships with other organizations to help establish networks
and opportunities for students, who receive job skills training and financial literacy education, in addition to paid internships.

Since the nonprofit’s founding, at least 280 students – Ersery included – have participated, and the team is working with 100 more students this academic year.

For Jerry Rose, Green Works’s director of community outreach and partnerships, the workforce development aspect of the organization is all about fostering opportunities, as well as the skills necessary to take advantage of those opportunities.

Seeking progress and innovation in education

“Most organizations that mentor youth are activity-based,” says Mr. Rose, a retired FBI agent who came to Kansas City wanting to give back to the community and mentor young men and women, including those who don’t have positive adult role models. “Few nonprofits actually sit down with them and instruct, and tell them how to conduct themselves, how to prepare for an interview, how to act at work, how to be responsible, how to be accountable, and how to take criticism.”

The Green Works approach includes training in each of those areas, including the creation of a LinkedIn profile, the use of social media for professional advancement, and strategies for pursuing and holding an internship.

Kate Corwin, Green Works’s founder and president, is familiar with the dearth of professional opportunity for many city youths, having grown up in an urban neighborhood herself, and from her experience working with disadvantaged populations.

“Our students live in neighborhoods with few resources,” she says. “They have less exposure to role models from the business community. Many of our students are from low-income families and lack not only financial resources, but social capital connections to help them transition into the workplace.”

Seeking progress and innovation in education

Ms. Corwin launched Green Works after seeing students graduate from high school without the means to continue their education. She also saw them struggle to find their place in the workforce.

“I realized that I could create programming that would expose high school students to growing careers including environmental careers in weatherization [of buildings], sustainable energy, and resource management,” she says. “Not only would it benefit the young adults, but it would benefit Kansas City by increasing the number of young people working at their capacity and contributing to the economy, not to mention caring about the environment.”

The environmental focus
As Corwin alludes to, Green Works offers environmental educational experiences, with some tangible outcomes for participants. Organizers have seen some of them make more-informed decisions about personal care products and food after learning about ingredients, and many become more comfortable in natural settings that aren’t always common in urban communities.

In this way, Corwin says, Green Works uses the environment “as the learning platform” for students, who usually participate for at least two years but often remain engaged in various educational and service-oriented projects following the program.

Green Works offers its programs and funds the paid internships on an average annual budget of $250,000, nearly 90 percent of which comes from contributions from corporations and private foundations.

“Our goal is to make long-term and life-changing investments in our students, empowering them to care for our environment, contribute to our economy, and create healthy communities,” Corwin says. “These students are future voters, taxpayers, homeowners, and environmental stewards.”

One student’s outlook

During a visit to the Green Works classroom space, Rose notes that Ersery’s public school education “did not prepare him for the challenges, the demands of an engineering student.”

Ersery recalls the intensive preparation he received from Green Works before the first of his two internships with major engineering firms in Kansas City, including mock job interviews, résumé writing sessions, and coaching on how to interact with and email colleagues and clients.

Given his own experiences, he is now working to form his own program to help mentor young men and women who are also seeking a career in engineering and could use a similar boost.

When asked about where he would be without Green Works, his answer is simple.

“I think I would be in engineering,” he says, “but I probably would not have had the internships and met the people I met.”

Drought continues in Missouri

Story generated by MU Extension release: Most of Missouri remains in drought

By Hannibal Courier-Post Staff
Most of Missouri still remains in a drought, according to a map released Feb. 8 by the National Drought Mitigation Center.

The drought affects livestock farmers facing dwindling hay reserves. Row crop farmers are eyeing the situation with caution as planting season nears.

East-central, southeastern and south-central Missouri face the largest water deficits in the state, said University of Missouri Extension climatologist Pat Guinan. Smaller pockets of long-term dryness exist over portions of northern Missouri, he said.

But that could change. “We’re still in winter and there is time for notable improvement,” Guinan said. “Climatologically, southeast Missouri has the best chance for drought recovery during the cold season.”

While concerning, things could be worse. In 1953-54 there were 16 consecutive months of below-normal precipitation, he said. Five years ago, Missouri experienced a severe hydrological drought that carried over from the historic drought of 2012. Conditions improved in February and March 2013, when a much wetter weather pattern emerged. A cool, wet spring followed.

“That being said, drought impacts are currently ongoing,” he said.

For Missouri, September 2017-January 2018 ranks as the driest September to January period in more than 40 years, Guinan said. The statewide average precipitation for the period was 8.3 inches—slightly more than half the normal of 15.9 inches.

For the fifth year in a row, Missouri experienced below-normal precipitation in January. Statewide, precipitation for November-December 2017 averaged 1.91 inches, or 30 percent of normal.

For some locations, the dry spell began as early as June 2017. By the end of the year, drought affected much of the state, with parts showing a rainfall deficit of a foot or more, Guinan said.

Guinan encourages Missourians to participate in the drought assessment process and submit information to the Drought Mitigation Center’s Drought Impact Reporter at droughtreporter.unl.edu/map. For more information on how to submit information, go to climate.missouri.edu/news/arc/july2017b.php. The center’s Drought Monitor Map collects data from numerous agencies.

MU Extension specialists from east-central, southeastern and south-central Missouri reported drought impacts to Guinan in the fall. These impacts persist.

They reported failures of fall-sown crops, including wheat, to germinate. Annuals such as oats and turnips did not produce well, and new grass and legume seedlings were reported in poor condition.
Dry conditions also led to large numbers of brush and grass fires, says MU Extension natural resources engineer Frank Wideman, whose office is in Perryville, 80 miles south of St. Louis. Perry County was one of several counties in the state to issue burn bans.

Livestock owners in drought-stricken areas continue to face concerns about dwindling hay supplies before spring grasses appear. “Producers who need hay and don’t yet have it tied down are looking out of the area and are probably going to have to pay higher than normal prices,” said Ted Probert, MU Extension dairy specialist in Wright County in southwestern Missouri.

Because of dry conditions, farmers started feeding hay earlier in the season than normal, Probert said. “Much of the hay put up last spring was cut late and quality is not good.” Feeding low-quality hay for longer than normal may adversely affect the condition of animals as they come out of winter, he said. “Also, pastures have been grazed pretty short on a lot of farms. Spring grass may be later than normal.”

Winter annuals and perennials emerged but lacked good growth going into the winter. Their vigor remains yet to be seen, said Probert. He works with dairy producers in southwestern Missouri, where the faucet dried up after growers planted forage grasses and legumes.

Anthony Ohmes, agronomy specialist in Cape Girardeau County, said dry conditions caused some emergence issues and delayed planting of fall-seeded perennials in southeastern Missouri. This left them immature going into winter. Hay stockpiles are adequate in most cases, but some livestock farmers are shipping hay in from southern states, Ohmes said.

Guinan said low temperatures during the last week of December into January made for stressful conditions for livestock farmers who had to break ice on frozen ponds, and move cattle because of low or empty ponds or for shelter. Wells dried up or levels dropped.

The extended period of subfreezing temperatures, combined with little or no snowpack and dry soils, contributed to an unusually deep frost line, said Guinan. The deep frost line, along with shifting soils due to the dry conditions, resulted in numerous reports of frozen water and sewer lines for homes and livestock operations.

Guinan suggests the following resources for those following Missouri’s drought conditions:

– National Drought Mitigation Center’s Drought Impact Reporter, droughtreporter.unl.edu/map.


Most of Missouri in an extended drought, Springfield farmers hope for rain

By Bobby Oler

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. -- Farmers in Springfield say if drought conditions don't improve soon, we may feel it at grocery stores this summer.

"It's going to get serious here pretty soon - in two weeks or three weeks,” Springfield produce farmer Dan Bigbee said. “It's going to get serious here pretty soon in two weeks or three weeks. We're going to need some rain, and we're going to need quite a bit to catch up. "

Farmers like Bigbee say they need the sky to open up soon or their crops may struggle through the growing season.

"We need some rains that are 1", 1.5", 2" that get into the subsoil and we're going to need those on a fairly regular basis to get back to even," he said.

All of Missouri is experiencing at least abnormally dry conditions. Since September we've had just more than 8 inches of rain. That's about half of what we normally get, and the driest January-to-September spell in 40 years.

"Unfortunately in the Ozarks, we've seen drought before in the winter and summer,” University of Missouri Extension horticulture educator Kelly McGowan said. “Hopefully as we get into spring we'll get a lot of bountiful spring rains and hopefully it'll bring us back to normal levels."

McGowan says the biggest thing to watch out for now are dry conditions leading to brush fires. But it can mean money lost for farmers.

"It can have effect on our livestock industry,” she said. “If farmers have to feed more hay to their cattle, that's certainly an increased expense.”

Despite the current conditions, Bigbee is optimistic.

"I don't think it's time to worry,” he said. “I believe rain is on the horizon and it'll come in a timely fashion and do all us farmer's pretty much just what we need."
C. Mauli Agrawal named chancellor of University of Missouri-Kansas City

Generated by UM System release: UM System president appoints C. Mauli Agrawal as new chancellor of the University of Missouri-Kansas City

By Staff reports

NEW YORK – C. Mauli Agrawal, an Indian American, was appointed as chancellor of the University of Missouri-Kansas City, starting June 20, according to a university press release.

Agrawal is currently the interim provost and vice president for academic affairs at the University of Texas in San Antonio.

“I’m thrilled that Dr. Agrawal has agreed to serve as the next chancellor of UMKC, and I’m confident that the university will reach new heights of success in research, education and outreach through his leadership. UMKC has an outstanding team of administrators, faculty, staff and alumni supporters who will work closely with him to achieve our collective vision,” University of Missouri System President Mun Choi stated in the press release.

“We had a very strong finalist pool, but what made Dr. Agrawal stand out was his combination of strong academic credentials with proven entrepreneurial skills. He understands the mission of UMKC, but he also knows that mission can only be fulfilled through innovative approaches and risk; he is not a status quo leader,” David Steelman, the chair of the University of Missouri Board of Curators, added.

Choi introduced Agrawal to the Kansas City campus on Friday, Feb. 9 at 10 a.m. at the Spencer Theatre in the Olson Performing Arts Center and the event was streamed live on the university’s website, according to the press release.

“I’m very grateful for the work of the search committee members who spent countless hours reviewing and interviewing candidates. I’m also extremely appreciative of Dr. Barbara Bichelmeyer, who has made important contributions as interim chancellor and provost at UMKC. Dr. Bichelmeyer will continue in her role as interim chancellor during the transition period and will return to her provost role when Dr. Agrawal arrives in June 2018,” Choi said.
“I will work closely with Dr. Bichelmeyer to make the important and necessary changes during the transition period. We are indebted to her for her work in continuing to move UMKC forward. She will be a great asset to Dr. Agrawal as he moves into this position,” Choi added.

“I’m excited to partner with Chancellor-designate Agrawal and look forward to his arrival in Kansas City. His background and experiences complement the mission and vision of UMKC – and together, with all the great partners on this campus and in this metro area, we will keep the momentum going as we grow UMKC into the great university this region needs,” Bichelmeyer said.

Before his appointment at the University of Texas in San Antonio, Agrawal served as the vice president for research and dean of the College of Engineering and was also a professor of orthopedics and bioengineering at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio.

He earned his bachelor’s degree of technology from IIT-Kanpur in India, has master’s degree from Clemson University which he earned in 1985 and obtained a doctorate from Duke University in 1989.

“I’m very excited to be chosen to help lead this great university. The potential for the University of Missouri-Kansas City is immense and exciting. UMKC has all the elements necessary to make a great university. With strengths in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, business, engineering, arts and theater, the university is an exceptional anchor for economic development in the Kansas City region. I’m looking forward to working with UMKC’s faculty and staff as well as Kansas City’s civic leaders who are passionate about higher education and are constantly working to make Kansas City a great place to live, learn and work,” Agrawal stated in the press release.

During his tenure as dean, Agrawal managed to increase in student enrollment at the UTSA College of Engineering by 40 percent, faculty by 50 percent and research funding by 400 percent.

In 2010, he worked closely with the city of San Antonio and Mayor Julian Castro to establish the Texas Sustainable Energy Research Institute at UTSA, which received a $50 million pledge of support from CPS Energy, the city-owned utility operation.

“Mauli is a beloved member of the San Antonio community who has earned admiration and respect from the university community, the business community and civic leadership. I certainly wish him the very best at UMKC. You have an absolute gem of a man to lead the university forward. He understands the important role that a university plays in the civic life of a city and has a unique skill set of translating that role into meeting the needs of the university. His skill set is one of a kind,” said the current San Antonio Mayor Ron Nirenberg, in a press release.

Agrawal has also served on the editorial boards of various scientific journals including the Journal of Biomedical Materials Research, Tissue Engineering, the Journal of System of Systems...
and the Journal of Tissue Engineering and Regenerative Medicine, and has written more than 300 scientific publications while holding 29 patents.

His research specializes in the areas of orthopedic and cardiovascular biomaterials/implants.

Agrawal is a Fellow of Biomaterials Science and Engineering, the National Academy of Inventors, the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering and has served as president of the Society for Biomaterials in 2006.

**Board of Curators approves renaming of New Hall after African-American journalist Lucile Bluford**

By LAUREN WILCOX

*Earlier this month, the UM System Board of Curators decided unanimously to rename New Hall after influential Kansas City journalist Lucile Bluford.*

Bluford earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Kansas in 1932. She went on to work for Atlanta’s Daily World and then the Kansas City American and the Kansas City Call.

In 1939, at the age of 27, she applied to the Missouri School of Journalism’s graduate program. She was initially accepted, but upon arrival to Columbia, she was denied because she was African-American.

With the NAACP, Bluford filed several lawsuits against the university, and after two years of trial, the Missouri Supreme Court ruled in her favor. Before she had the chance to attend, MU shut its graduate doors in 1942 because of a lack of students and professors during the second World War.

Bluford spent her life fighting to expose racism and became a leading figure in the civil rights movement, especially in Kansas City. There, she helped the Kansas City Call become one of the most prominent and influential black newspapers in the country. Bluford was always an advocate for higher education and tirelessly fought for equality of African Americans in the schooling system, according to the State Historical Society of Missouri.

MU recognized her achievements in life and journalism with the school of journalism’s highest honor, the Missouri Honor Medal for Distinguished Service in Journalism, in 1984. And in 1989, Bluford received an honorary doctoral degree from the university’s officials. Upon accepting the
degree, she said, “[I accept] not only for myself, but for thousands of black students [discriminated against by the university over the years].”

The Residence Halls Association proposed that the hall be named after Bluford in late 2016. New Hall opened in August 2017 but was renamed Lucile Bluford Residence Hall in a Board of Curators meeting on Feb. 1.

Freshman Peyton Jones, a New Hall resident, is excited to see the name change.

“I think it’s really cool that MU is honoring such an inspiring woman, and it’s going to be nice that they aren’t going to just call it New Hall,” Jones said.

Freshman Elena Conaty, who also lives in New Hall, said the name change may be hard for students to adjust to, but she is happy with the board’s decision.

“I liked the name ‘New Hall’, ” Contay said. “However, it will be a hard transition for everyone who already lived here this year because we’ve grown into the name of just ‘New Hall.’ I like what the new name of ‘Bluford’ stands for because she was a powerful woman who left her mark on the Mizzou community.”

Missouri House member wants sex education in schools to go a step further

By Alisa Nelson

In this revolution of high-profile sexual misconduct scandals, teaching young people what’s appropriate, what’s not appropriate, and how to react to bad behavior is the focus of a Missouri bill. A state House committee will consider this evening whether to require Missouri schools teaching sex education to include curriculum about sexual harassment, violence, and consent.

Missouri school districts are not required to have sexual education as part of their curriculum. The proposal would require that these new areas be included for those that do. It would define what consent, sexual harassment, and sexual violence are.

Bill sponsor Holly Rehder, R-Sikeston, says she wants students to learn how to protect themselves and to respect others.
“I want them to know some clear-cut signals and how to make those clear-cut signals. I think it makes a lot of sense,” says Rehder. “I think it’s a small – doesn’t cost the state anything but could do a world of good.”

**Rehder says University of Missouri students gave her the idea to sponsor the legislation. They believe teaching high school students about those subjects could prevent situations that can cause life-changing harm, and Rehder agrees.**

She says the issue goes beyond her duties as a legislator. The mother of three is thinking about the generations to come.

“I think that’s the prism that we need to look at it through – what would we want for our children? What do we want them to know and be prepared for before they go into college,” says Rehder. “Or not college – before they go into the workplace and you have people over you. I think that these are just very important things to know before you’re thrown out into the world.”

At least one of the many USA gymnasts sexually abused by a team doctor has written a letter in support of Rehder’s bill. Dr. Larry Nassar was sentenced last month to up to 175 years in prison for victimizing young female gymnasts.

Amanda Thomashow tells lawmakers young people must be equipped with knowledge to protect and empower them, and she says Rehder’s legislation does just that. She goes on to say she realized many of those Nassar assaulted didn’t know they were being abused, at least not at first, and trusted the doctor.

Tuesday’s hearing before the House Committee on Children and Families will begin at 5 p.m. at the Missouri Capitol in Jefferson City.