



MU News Bureau

Daily Clips Packet

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MISSOURIAN

UM System hired a high-profile PR firm for damage control after fall 2015

By EDWARD McKINLEY

After the campus unrest at MU in fall 2015, the University of Missouri System quietly hired the world's largest private public relations firm to help craft its message and avoid perception crises.

Edelman PR, which Penn State hired after its child molestation scandal, was paid between \$250,000 and \$350,000 from June 2016 to July 2017 and was hired again through next June for an additional estimated \$123,600.

The strategy Edelman presented was to limit media access, mostly in the form of written “pre-determined statements,” push positive stories about the university and create a strategy for all representatives to answer expected tough questions the same way.

Edelman has looked at news releases and provided feedback, proposed specific events to push positive media messages for MU and helped plan the school's overall public relations strategy, according to the contract and documents. The firm has been helpful to MU, campus spokesman Christian Basi said.

The agreement between Edelman and the UM System was not publicly announced.

“We do not send out press releases on every consultant that we hire,” Basi said.

Edelman was mentioned during an October 2016 UM System Board of Curators meeting, Basi said, in a public presentation by Steve Knorr, the system vice president for university relations. However, the comment wasn't noted in the meeting minutes, and the documents accompanying Knorr's presentation were not posted.

Basi said Edelman's hiring went through the UM System's typical public process where bids are requested for a service. That information is available on the System website, and Basi said

anyone could have known about Edelman from seeing it there or making a public records request.

The Missouriian learned this from documents obtained by public records requests in July and August.

Edelman has a long list of notable clients, including institutions of higher education and Fortune 500 companies. In addition to Penn State, the firm worked with the tobacco industry in the 1980s and the Saudi Arabian government last year, according to an April 2016 Washington Post article.

In 2014, Edelman proposed a strategy of investigating dissenters of the TransCanada pipeline and then spreading unflattering findings, according to a November 2014 New York Times article.

Edelman contracts

The initial contract between the UM System and Edelman ran from July 1, 2016, to June 30 of this year for an estimated \$350,000. The amount paid to Edelman was based on a breakdown of promised services and included ad hoc support capped at \$100,000. No information was immediately available on how much Edelman was actually paid, but based on the initial contract, it ranged from \$250,000 to \$350,000.

According to the initial contract, these were the main services Edelman provided:

- A comprehensive communications manual
- Social, local and national media monitoring
- Public relations coaching for the curators, system president, system administration, chancellors and other “designees throughout the year”
- A calendar of major news events and opportunities for positive stories to be shared by MU and the system
- Overall media and public relations strategies, short and long term
- Ad hoc support as needed to deal with public relations issues or opportunities as they arose

Under the new contract, which began July 1, Edelman provides the system with branding and marketing strategies, communications training, ongoing support for small stories and “Crisis/Issues preparation.”

The contract specifies that the services do not include “support of crisis situations” or major incidents detrimental to MU and the UM System. Edelman’s ongoing support to MU and the

system also does not include support that “requires immediate dedicated Edelman resources for a prolonged period of time.”

Edelman documents

A document obtained through a public records request, called “Crisis Planning Materials,” contained language written by campus or system officials that was then refined by Edelman, as well as language written by Edelman. Basi called it a “team effort.”

Edelman was periodically consulted about events that had the potential to impact the image of MU or the UM System. Examples found in the materials received through public records requests include the hiring of UM System President Mun Choi and the first anniversary of the 2015 protests by Concerned Student 1950.

In “Crisis Planning Materials,” sample answers were provided for a set of anticipated tough questions. The strategy was for everyone who spoke for MU or the system to be on the same page and promote a unified narrative. Several suggested answers in the document avoid directly addressing the questions.

Communications plans were reviewed by staff from MU and the system, as well as Edelman, Basi said.

“There’s plenty of messages in here that were utilized,” Basi said about Edelman’s strategic plan.

In response to questions about what happened in fall 2015 at MU, the document advised campus officials to say that the events were a “perfect storm,” that it was a challenge to “all of those who care deeply about this university” and that MU emerged from the protests “stronger than ever.”

In June of last year, shortly after the relationship between Edelman and the UM System began, former UM System Interim President Mike Middleton delivered a speech at the National Press Club in Washington in which he referred to the protests at the system’s flagship campus as a “perfect storm.”

It is nearly impossible to ascertain exactly which language in the Edelman documents was written by the firm rather than MU or campus staff. What is clear is that Edelman synthesized a clear message. The firm’s main role was to provide an outside perspective for MU, Basi said.

In a section of the crisis planning document called “Taking Control of Media Narrative,” Edelman recommended a change in media philosophy from quick responses and access to spokespersons to one where the school would rely more on pre-determined written statements: “Access to spokespeople will be reserved for key events.”

It suggested some events where MU could share positive media narratives, such as a Sept. 13, 2016, event called “DEI Media Day,” where MU could highlight its new diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.

At that event, Middleton, then MU Interim Chancellor Hank Foley and Kevin McDonald, vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity, held a panel discussion about MU’s diversity initiatives. The goal, according to Edelman’s document, was to show that “Missouri cares about improving experiences for all of its students.”

Middleton, Foley and McDonald each repeatedly referred to the protests and football team strike as a “perfect storm” at the panel and used other phrases and ideas from the media plan.

Another example of the support Edelman provided to MU happened after a racially charged incident outside the Delta Upsilon Fraternity house, where members of the Legion of Black Collegians were met with racial slurs. Edelman provided the school with a “social audit” where it collected social media posts related to the incident to track interest in the story online.

Edelman found more than 9,000 relevant posts about the Delta Upsilon incident, which made up 35 percent of all social media posts about MU, according to the social audit.

The firm found the most significant media outlets contributing to the online explosion were the Washington Post and Total Frat Move, a website of entertainment and news aimed at a fraternity audience. The firm analyzed social media posts and graphed them over a five-day period, pointing out where interest in the incident peaked, began to slow down and eventually came to an end.

Edelman’s metrics

Edelman’s “Plan On A Page” document, which was among the “Crisis Planning Materials,” listed three metrics for the system to use to measure results.

The first was increased enrollment: MU’s enrollment total in 2015 was 35,488 students, and in 2016 it was 33,266 students. The first-time college enrollment in 2015 was 6,191 students, in 2016 it was 4,772 students, about a 23 percent decrease. This year’s fall enrollment is 30,870.

The second metric was “positive media coverage/acknowledgement of progress”: On July 9, The New York Times published “Long After Protests, Students Shun the University of Missouri” and on July 10 the Washington Post also published an article about people losing faith in higher education that was critical of MU.

At a mid-July curators retreat, UM System President Mun Choi described the media coverage of MU as a big problem and an “all-hands-on-deck” situation.

“This is a really critical period” for MU and the system to take strides toward better public perception, Choi said.

“If we don’t fix this now, there’s going to be another New York Times, another Washington Post article that we won’t recover from.”

The last metric was “increased donations and state funding.” During the fiscal year before Edelman was hired — from July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2016 — \$170.1 million was raised, the most in school history. In fiscal year 2017, after Edelman was hired, \$152 million was raised.

Even though it was lower than the previous year, fundraising in fiscal year 2017 was the fourth highest in MU’s history, Basi said. It’s unreasonable to expect MU to break records every year. Fiscal year 2017 did break the record for cash donations, Basi said, which is the amount paid up front, without including pledges and estate gifts.

In addition, state funding has dropped for all higher education institutions, with tens of millions coming out of the system and MU. On Jan. 17, Gov. Eric Greitens withheld about \$80 million from the higher education budget, and MU lost about \$20 million of that figure.

The fiscal year 2018 state budget cut 9 percent of higher education funding.

State higher education funding was cut across the entire state, Basi said, so the fact MU’s budget wasn’t slashed separately shows that Edelman has helped.

Across the system, there have been several rounds of budget cuts leading to layoffs and restructuring to help meet the deficit. An ongoing review process is seeking opportunities for expected future cuts.



[Discipline and Child Behavior](#)

By DAVID HOPPER

Generated by MU News Bureau Release: [Spanking Can Be Detrimental for Children’s Behavior, Even Ten Years Later](#)

Debate over physical punishment for children still abounds.

Gustavo Carlo, professor of diversity at the University of Missouri, discusses this issue.
Dr. Carlo received his Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from Arizona State University in 1994.

Currently, he is the Millsap Professor of Diversity and Multicultural Psychology at the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at the University of Missouri. He teaches courses in child development, prosocial and moral development, and culture. His primary area of interest is culture and moral development. His research focuses on the sociocultural, socialization, and personality processes associated with helping behaviors in children and adolescents.

Discipline and Child Behavior

The discussion about the effects of physical punishment on children is still ongoing in many circles. Prior studies have determined that there are negative associations between discipline and behavior that are typically observed in less than one year. Is it possible for children to experience long-term effects as well?

We noted the research was limited in studying children's social behaviors among low-income, racially-diverse populations. So, we intended to answer these questions by analyzing data from Head Start, a federal program that provides comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income children and their families. Approximately 2,000 mothers and children from Head Start participated in the study and all participants identified as either European American or African American. The children were approximately 15 months old, 25 months old and in the fifth grade when the information was collected.

Our team found that if an African American child was severely punished as early as 15 months old, they were more likely to display negative behaviors, such as aggression or irritability, and less likely to show positive behaviors, such as helping others, ten years later. While we didn't find this link for European-American children, we did find that negative emotions determined similar outcomes. Generally speaking, if a child from either group practiced good self-regulation, then we expected to see positive behaviors.

Prior studies have addressed parental discipline practices and how likely they reflect parents' expectations for children. Our findings expand the research by showing how parents treat their children can have a long-lasting significant impact on their temperament. Our team recommends parents teach them how to regulate behaviors early in order to nurture positive behaviors. We believe our research will help parents and teachers better understand the well-being and resiliency in low-income, racially-diverse children.

MISSOURIAN

MU students return from Hurricane Harvey relief in Houston

By KASEY CARLSON

Generated by MU News Bureau Direct Pitch

Over Labor Day weekend, Anthony Ruffner, 20, and a friend talked about going down to Houston with three others a week later to volunteer and help victims of Hurricane Harvey.

They decided to push the trip back a week and see how many volunteers they could get to go on the trip.

The wait paid off: Between 35 and 40 MU students volunteered in Texas last weekend.

The students stayed at Grace Community Church in Houston and worked with the organization Eight Days of Hope, a Christian organization whose goal is to bring hope and love to people in devastating situations like Houston.

Hurricane Harvey had battered Texas' Gulf Coast in late August, dropping more than 40 inches of rain, causing at least 70 deaths and damaging or destroying more than 250,000 homes.

Eight Days of Hope had assignments prepared for the students and bused them out to work sites.

The first day, Friday, was spent moving furniture and rotting wood out of the house of an 86-year-old woman with 4 feet of water in her home.

The group prepared for another crew to come in the next day and work on the drywall. Ruffner said it was continuous cycles of crews coming in and out to help.

The next day, the students went to a second home and helped to rip out drywall. Ruffner said they worked with an 87-year-old volunteer who wanted his life to be about giving to others.

“He was the hardest-working person I’ve ever seen,” Ruffner recalled. “He was such a great man.”

Ruffner said there were a lot of older volunteers around who appreciated that 20-year-old students from college would drive 14 hours to help a community.

Blaine Thomas, 20, a volunteer on the trip, said the most rewarding part of the trip was seeing that such a large group of MU students would take a chance on a 14-hour drive to Houston with a common goal of helping others.

“It was super hot, super humid, and we were doing intense manual labor, but no one ever complained,” Thomas said. “People just kind of put their heads down. Everybody knew why we were there and what we were doing and why we were doing it.”

Ruffner founded The Hope Project in 2016, a campus group whose mission is to empower students to change the world through service.

“We get so consumed with the bubble we live in at Mizzou that we forget what exactly is going on outside in the world,” Ruffner said.

He also said that driving down the road in Houston, seeing absolute wreckage on both sides and seeing vulnerable people dealing with the aftermath was challenging, but hearing someone’s story hits home a lot more than watching an event happen on TV.

“It was cool to see students band together in a purpose of doing good and making a difference in the world because that’s not always super prevalent here,” Ruffner said.

MISSOURIAN

[A record number of employers to visit MU business career fair](#)

By LILY O’NEILL

[A record 205 employers will recruit at the 2017 Fall Mizzou Business Career Fair today at Mizzou Arena.](#)

All students, business majors or not, can attend the event, which is hosted by the Trulaske College of Business. The fair will be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Jennifer Davis, assistant director of business career services and career fair manager, said 13 more businesses will be at the fair this year than last. Outreach and employer relations account for the growth, she said.

“We are reaching out a lot more to employers where our students want to go,” Davis said. “So we have surveyed our students, specifically at the college of business, to see where they would like to find employment, and we targeted those areas and reached out to employers. Just from a career services standpoint, that’s one of our main goals is to find a lot of employers and help those students connect with them.”

Commerce Bank is [one of the 200 businesses](#) sending a representative to the career fair. John Machisen, a Commerce recruiter, has been attending the fair for 22 years. He said confidence and professional presentation are the main aspects to finding a good prospective student to hire.

“The key thing that we’re looking for in students at the career fair is how they present themselves,” Machisen said. “One thing I’m always impressed about the Mizzou fair is all the students come dressed in suits or the females are in their dress slacks. They’re all very professional. Another key aspect is, how comfortable are they talking to us? Are they coming up and introducing themselves and giving us a snapshot of who they are?”

With a 92 percent job placement rate in the business school in the class of 2016, members of the business career services department work hard to prepare students for the fair. They offer resume reviews, mock interview workshops and an MU Career Fair app for students to research the companies that attend.

Ty Kapitzky, a graduate student, plans to attend the business career fair for the fifth time. He said he has seen a large growth in businesses throughout the years and works hard to prepare himself every time.

“As far as preparation goes, myself along with many other students, we spend a lot of time critiquing every detail of our resume, making sure all of the formatting is correct and neat,” Kapitzky said. “I have also spent a lot of time preparing my elevator speech. You know where I’m from, what my major is, why I’m interested in the company and why I think I would be good for the position. I like to make sure I’m ready to present myself and to develop those connections.”



[University of Missouri enrollment lowest since 2008](#)

Posted: Thu 4:09 PM, Sep 21, 2017

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) - Enrollment at the University of Missouri continued a decline that began after campus protests in November 2015, with this fall's enrollment the lowest since 2008.

Official numbers released Wednesday show the university attracted 20,870 students this fall, down 12.9 percent since a record set in 2015.

Missouri did slightly better than expected in attracting new freshman but the total of 4,134 is down 546 from last fall and 2,060 fewer than 2015.

The Columbia Daily Tribune reports a statement from the school emphasized an 87 percent student retention rate, the second highest in school history. And the ACT score for the new class averaged 26, higher than both state and national averages.

Every class except seniors is smaller than last year, and international enrollments fell 12.1 percent from 2016.

Similar stories were posted and aired on:

The Kansas City Star, Kansas City, Mo.

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[Despite falling enrollment, MU records second-highest retention rate](#)

Thursday, September 21, 2017 4:32:00 PM CDT in [News](#)

By: Maia McDonald, KOMU 8 Reporter

Watch the story: <http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=718328b5-7a60-4903-88eb-360979f1bd29>

COLUMBIA - MU is holding students at a better rate than previous years, according to recently released data.

According to the MU News Bureau, the university's retention rate for the last year was 87 percent, just off the school's record for retention.

Freshmen enrollment is also up, with 4,134 first years starting at MU this fall, up from the projected number of 4,009 expected freshmen based on preliminary numbers last May.

MU News Bureau Director Christian Basi said these numbers reflect a positive change at the University of Missouri that is attracting students.

“It’s indicating to us that students are having a very good experience on campus. They’re having a successful experience, and they’re coming back because they know we’ll provide them with the skills that will make them competitive in the workplace.”

Despite Basi’s positive view on the situation, there is a clear shift in MU's enrollment in the last two years. In Fall 2015, MU set a record high with approximately 35,000 enrolled students, after seeing numbers increase steadily in the years prior. Now more than two years later, the enrollment situation has become apparent to university officials.

“We know that a large portion of it is the perception of the MU campus, and many people have differing thoughts about that and so it’s not just one specific thing. It’s a lot of differing things related to an overall perception of the campus.”

There were 2,000 fewer students in 2016 compared to 2015, and that number continued to decline into 2017.

Falling enrollment numbers have also had an impact on the university’s budget, something that caused the university to scramble to find quick solutions.

MU has closed at least four dorms temporarily, as well as eliminated jobs due to declining enrollment numbers. Basi said the university has been trying to find ways address the situation.

“We have new leadership across the campus. We have a new chancellor, new president. We have new vice chancellors, a new dean. New people in place that were not here two years ago, and we know things have change over the course of two years. We’ve done a lot on the campus.”

Basi said the university will continue to do what they can to provide a welcoming environment to students, both future and those currently attending.



[By a tail: In-state freshmen numbers show Mizzou edges Missouri State](#)

by Mark Slavit Thursday, September 21st 2017

Watch the story: <http://krcgtv.com/news/local/by-a-tale-in-state-freshmen-numbers-show-mizzou-edges-missouri-state>

COLUMBIA — Enrollment figures for 2017 showed Mizzou only has four more new Missouri freshmen than Missouri State University.

Enrollment numbers revealed the University of Missouri-Columbia had 2,754 new freshmen who live in Missouri. That number compared to 2,750 for Missouri State University. The enrollment figures came a week after MU administrators said their school was the number one choice of Missouri high school seniors. MU officials made changes to keep up with competition.

“We know that there are some concerns from prospective students and their parents,” MU spokesman Christian Basi said. “We are embarking on a very aggressive recruiting effort to make sure that they understand what Mizzou is.”

Missouri State University 2017 enrollment numbers showed a record amount of students at the Springfield school. Mizzou’s overall enrollment started declining a year after the 2015 racial protests. MU officials admitted the protests gained national attention and resulted in lower state funding, lower enrollment and a damaged school reputation. MU officials said they were back on the right track for attracting Missouri high school seniors and other students.

“We have new recruiters in certain markets throughout the country,” Basi said. “We also are doing many more visits to high schools across the state, as well as, sending out more materials to specific areas of the state and the country.”

Mizzou had more seniors in 2017 than the year before, but the school had fewer sophomores, juniors, graduate students and international students. Mizzou’s total enrollment for 2017 is 30,870 students, the lowest enrollment figure since 2008.



New MU course tackles race and American history

Thursday, September 21, 2017 5:45:00 PM CDT in [News](#)

By: Jessica Porter, KOMU 8 Reporter

Watch the story: <http://www.komu.com/news/new-mu-course-tackles-race-and-american-history>

COLUMBIA – A new course at the University of Missouri is taking on the challenge of talking about race relations. The class is called “Race and the American Story” and will focus on the intersection of race and American history.

“We’re not just going to talk about current issues that can get heated and emotional and non-productive,” associate professor Adam Seagrave said. “We’re going to talk about the ways in which our current issues stem from things that have happened in the past.”

The course is one-credit hour and will meet for one hour once a week. Seagrave said he doesn’t want the course to be another burden for students.

“It’s definitely more experienced focus and less assignment focused,” Seagrave said. “The readings won’t be too long and the class will be discussion based and students will have to write reflections.”

Seagrave has had a long interest in African-American history and politics. He said he thinks it’s essential to understanding American history.

“I came to the conclusion very early on in my teaching career that African-American history and the African-American experience is really a lot of ways the core of the American experience,” Seagrave said. “If we can understand African-American history, understand the history of slavery and understand the abolition movement we can really understand what’s best in American history.”

The course was developed as an off-shoot of [Citizenship@Mizzou](#), a freshman orientation that is required after the protests in 2015. It’s meant to “engage students with the values of Mizzou.” Dr. Shonekan, chair of the black studies department at MU is over the program and was looking for ways to extend those conversations into the year.

“I think with the issue of race relations we’re scared of talking about it so I think it’d be good to get it on a college campus,” Symone Hamilton MU sophomore said. She believes race is still a major issue today.

“It’s becoming more and more prevalent especially with recent news and stuff like that, so I think that in itself having it as the American story will lead to an interesting kind of conversation,” Hamilton said.

The course will be offered next semester.

THE KANSAS CITY STAR.

MU accused of retaliating against law professor who wants to carry a gun on campus

BY MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS

mdwilliams@kcstar.com

SEPTEMBER 21, 2017 10:04 AM

A University of Missouri law professor who wants to carry a gun on campus says the university is retaliating against him for challenging its gun prohibition as unconstitutional.

Two years ago, Royce de R. Barondes sued the UM System Board of Curators and the system president claiming that policies prohibiting guns on the Columbia campus violated state statute on guns and the Missouri Constitution.

Now, in documents filed with the Circuit Court of Boone County, Barondes and his lawyers claim the university is retaliating against the associate professor with counter legal action.

They claim the university is going after Barondes because he filed a lawsuit that he believes defends his constitutional right to keep and bear firearms.

“The University’s retaliatory pleading is not what any employee, student, taxpayer, or citizen should expect from Missouri’s flagship institution committed to higher learning,” the court document states. “Its counterclaims and attempts to seek attorneys’ fees against an employee are improper and without legal basis.”

University officials declined to discuss the latest legal action. “Due to the fact that this is in litigation we cannot discuss it publicly,” said Christian Basi, spokesman for the university curators and the University of Missouri campus.

Barondes’ initial lawsuit challenging the university gun rule does not seek any money damages but asks that the school pay his attorney’s fees.

The suit, which names the State of Missouri and Missouri Attorney General Josh Hawley as plaintiffs against the university system, says Missouri law would allow Barondes as a state employee to leave his licensed fire arm out of sight and locked away in his vehicle while he is working on campus.

A curators’ rule prohibits guns on the MU campus “except in regularly approved programs or by university agents or employees in the line of duty.”

The university counter sued claiming it feared Barondes would bring a gun on campus while the lawsuit was pending. The university sought a court order forbidding Barondes from bringing a gun onto campus.

This week Barondes, who has worked at MU since 2002 and teaches a course at on firearms law, and his attorneys claimed the university's request for an injunction and payment of attorney fees was retaliation for Barondes suing in the first place.

"He wants to be able to keep and bear arms on campus generally," said Edward Greim, an attorney for Barondes.

Barondes has said that if he wins prevails in this case he will carry his gun on campus.

"We want to have a good legal fight here to get to the bottom on this," Greim said. "At the end of the day we want to get a decision on the underlying legal issues."



Women need better advice about financial risk

Posted by [Sheena Rice-Missouri](#) September 21st, 2017

Generated from News Bureau Press Release: [Life Differences Make Women Less Risk Tolerant When Investing](#)

Women are, on average, less tolerant of risk in their financial decisions but not because men and women think about investment risk differently. Rather, researchers find, income uncertainty affects men and women differently.

The gender gap is a concern because investors with low levels of risk tolerance might have greater difficulty reaching their financial goals and building adequate retirement wealth because they are unlikely to invest in stocks.

“Risk tolerance is one of the most important factors that contributes to wealth accumulation and retirement,” says Rui Yao, an associate professor of personal financial planning in the University of Missouri College of Health and Environmental Sciences. “It is important to understand what causes women to be less risk tolerant so that financial planners can better serve their needs as women, on average, live longer than men and often need more retirement savings.”

For her study, Yao examined data from the Survey of Consumer Finances. The survey takes place every three years with support from the Federal Reserve and the US Department of the Treasury. By analyzing data from nearly 2,250 unmarried American individuals, Yao found that women are more likely to have uncertain incomes from year to year. Life events such as childbirth, child care, and care-giving often contribute to women’s income uncertainty.

Yao also found that, on average, women had lower net worth than men. This may have resulted, in part, from women keeping funds in accounts with low returns to buffer the risk of negative income shocks.

One-quarter of women and one-fifth of men in the sample reported using a financial planner for saving and investment decisions, but the advice given to women may not be in their best interest. Yao suggests that financial planners need to understand the differences in income uncertainty and net worth between men and women and the way in which these differences relate to risk tolerance.

“Simply telling women to be more risk tolerant is ineffective,” Yao says. “In fact, it might encourage women to take more financial risks than they can tolerate, which could lead to more problems in the future. The difference in investment advice received by men and women requires further investigation, particularly given the new fiduciary standards for financial advisors.”

Yao’s advice to women is to plan for income uncertainty by creating a financial strategy that fits their needs. For example, when anticipating child-rearing or care-giving periods in the near future, women can and should be more conservative in their investing. When those periods are coming to an end, women should work with their financial planners to make riskier investments.

The study appears in the [*Journal of Economic Psychology*](#). Patti J. Fisher, associate professor at Virginia Tech, is a coauthor.

T COLUMBIA DAILY
TRIBUNE

Columbia Public Schools to close on land purchase to build middle school

By: Tribune Staff

Columbia Public Schools next week will close on the purchase of land which will be used for a new middle school in south Columbia.

The Columbia Board of Education on Thursday approved an amendment to the land purchase and sale agreement listing the closing date as Sept. 29. **The board earlier this year approved a \$2.9 million land purchase agreement for 63 acres of Sinclair Farm, which is owned by the University of Missouri.**

The agreement was contingent on the school district's evaluation of the land coming back clear. Sinclair Farms previously was used for research and in the 70's radioactive waste from MU research was burned on a 2-acre plot of the 500-acre property.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission tested the land and determined it safe to use and sell. The school district conducted its own soil tests as part of its evaluation of the land and also determined it safe to use.

CPS plans to use the property for a new middle school, which will help relieve overcrowding at Gentry Middle School. The district hopes to open the new school by 2020.



Is Missouri really outpacing nation in jobs since Greitens took office?

By TATEANNA MCCASKILL, RILEY NEWTON

Republican Gov. Eric Greitens has been pushing job growth since his 2016 campaign.

In a Facebook live video on Aug. 23, Greitens said there has already been substantial improvement since he took office in January.

"Since we took office, we have been outpacing the nation in job growth," he said.

Is Missouri really "outpacing the nation" in jobs? We wanted to find out.

By the numbers

The number of jobs added from January through July 2017 increased by 0.9 percent over the same period in 2016.

Greitens compared Missouri to the national average job growth over the same time, which was 0.8 percent.

Between January and February of 2017, Missouri job growth increased by 0.0012 percent whereas national job growth increased by 0.0016 percent. However, Missouri experienced a 0.005 drop in jobs between February and March. Greiten's Press Secretary Parker Briden claims that the governor has created more than 35,000 jobs since then.

"Since March, we have created 37,200 jobs, while the United States as a whole has created 792,000," Briden said. "Thus, in that time we account for approximately 4.7 percent of total job creation in the country, performing far better than the national average."

The standard metric for tracking job growth at the national and state level is the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics' Current Employment Statistics survey.

As far as numbers go, Greitens has a point. But can he take credit for the job spike?

In 2016, Missouri experienced a 0.2 percent hike in job growth. The same upward trend goes for 2014 and 2015, where jobs grew by 0.5 percent in the first seven months of each year. So, jobs had been added at a decent clip before Greitens took office, though not as much as this year.

BLS' data shows the state of Missouri at a steady increase in job growth over the past five years.

"Most economists would say that it's highly unlikely anything he did in the first eight months of office is the reason for this job growth," said Peter Mueser, an economics professor at the University of Missouri's Truman School of Public Affairs.

Mueser even went on to say that most of the time, governors don't have enough control to cause employment growth or decline.

"Lots of things contribute to the economic growth that the governor doesn't have control of," he said. "Over time, population increases and every so often it's easier to claim that employment grows because of the population growth."

Bills for businesses

Greitens' major initiatives on the economy or workforce have either not yet taken effect or only recently became law.

In January, Greitens signed SB 19, a "right-to-work" bill that allows workers to opt out of joining a union. Greitens pledged to pass this bill while on the campaign trail and signed the bill in an abandoned warehouse in Springfield.

The bill was supposed to take effect on Aug. 28. However, after more than 300,000 petitions (more than triple what is required to put a bill on the ballot) were submitted, "right to work" will instead be moved to the Nov. 28 ballot for the public to decide.

Another bill the governor has signed but only recently went into effect is HB 130, which requires transportation network companies, such as Uber and Lyft to pay a one-time \$5,000 licensing fee and conduct driver background checks and vehicle inspections. Pacific Republican Kirk Mathews sponsored the bill and says regulations will keep transportation network company drivers in Missouri. The bill is expected to create up to 10,000 new driver jobs in the state but was five days away from becoming law when Greitens made his statement.

Greitens also signed SB 43, which will make it tougher for fired workers to prove employment discrimination. The governor, who signed the bill in June, said the new law will "prevent trial lawyers from killing good jobs."

Our ruling

Greitens said, "Since we took office, we have been outpacing the nation in job growth."

Missouri did outpace the national average in job growth from January to June in 2017.

However, Missouri's jobs have been on a steady uphill climb since 2014, long before Greitens took office. And although Greitens has passed multiple laws affecting employment and businesses, these bills did not go into effect until Aug. 28. So there is no evidence that the continued job growth in Missouri is because of his management.

Even Greitens' press secretary didn't provide information on how exactly Greitens has increased job growth except employment numbers. When asked for further examples on how the governor has created 37,200 jobs, Briden did not return request for comment.

We rate this claim Half True.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Editorial: State agencies spent twice what was reported to settle legal disputes. What are they hiding?

By EDITORIAL BOARD

Missouri Auditor Nicole Galloway reviewed state legal expenses and found that agencies not typically monitored had paid [\\$36.8 million](#) to settle legal disputes over the past two years, double the amount already reported by the attorney general's office. Galloway's report on an [audit](#) of the State Legal Expense Fund says the payments were eligible expenditures under the fund but that agencies paid them out of their own budgets.

A lack of transparency and oversight is costing taxpayers more money and could be helping state agencies hide patterns of abusive behavior by their employees. That has to change.

The Legal Expense Fund, a pool of money appropriated by the Legislature, is used to make payments from lawsuits against the state. Galloway says there is [no system](#) in place to track the

amount and nature of payments, and reports on spending from the attorney general's office do not identify the types of legal problems being covered.

The system is outdated and can't even produce basic electronic reports, Galloway adds. The state's Office of Administration and the attorney general's office administer the fund jointly. The system's inadequacies make it difficult to identify whether a state agency is experiencing unusually high numbers of certain types of claims.

"A culture of workplace discrimination does not pop up overnight," Galloway said in a [statement](#). Proper monitoring mechanisms would give the state "the ability to identify and intervene, instead of blindly shelling out millions in taxpayer dollars and allowing inappropriate conduct to continue."

An adequate oversight system would possibly prevent ongoing problems such as the sexual harassment and discrimination claims that engulfed the state [Department of Corrections](#) last year. Galloway's audit examined \$4.2 million in corrections department legal expenses, 75 percent of which involved claims of employment discrimination. Last year, *The Pitch*, a Kansas City weekly newspaper, reported the fund spent more than \$7.5 million over five years to settle or pay judgments against the department.

Agencies that use their own budgets to settle legal claims instead of the Legal Expense Fund endure even less scrutiny. **For example, the report says the University of Missouri reported paying more than \$17 million for settlements or judgments on 27 medical liability claims and 213 other claims in the two-year period.**

The money agencies spent outside of the Legal Expense Fund was on top of roughly the same amount already reported being spent by the Missouri attorney general's office. Without an adequate reporting system, lawmakers must guess how much money to appropriate for legal expenses. For example, they appropriated \$6.7 million for legal settlements for the last fiscal year. The actual expense was \$24.2 million.

Transparency and oversight would help the budgeting process and also help identify situations in which the state should intervene to prevent agencies from continuing bad employment practices.



[A September of Racist Incidents](#)

Assaults and race-related posters and graffiti afflict college campuses across the U.S., inflaming students as the academic year begins.

By JEREMY BAUER-WOLF

This article contains explicit and potentially offensive terms that are essential to reporting on this situation.

The attack that left a black Cornell University student bloodied last week may be the most severe racially charged incident on college campuses in the early weeks of the academic year, but it is far from the only one.

Experts say these apparently racially motivated events are nothing new in academe, though they've gained more visibility in recent years with the advent of social media, forcing administrators in an age of transparency to act more quickly and aggressively.

At Cornell, the Black Students United group occupied Willard Straight Hall for several hours Wednesday, harking back to another protest in the 1960s in which black students overran the student union, though in that instance they were armed with guns.

Black Students United were protesting the recent assault of a black student; the victim returned home to find a group of other students arguing with his housemate. When he tried to intervene, most of the students in the group began punching him and using a racial slur.

The university is investigating the Psi Upsilon fraternity's connection to the attack. It was suspended last year after its president was accused of sexual assault, but the university withdrew its recognition after the fraternity threw a party during the probationary period. Cornell announced this week that Psi Upsilon intended to close the chapter after the allegations.

One student, John Greenwood, 19, was arrested and charged with third-degree assault and second-degree aggravated harassment. He has apologized for using "unacceptable and inappropriate" language but denied any physical fighting.

A roundup of some of the other reported incidents within the last week or so:

Racist language and symbols were posted at least twice on the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville campus, including a note on the door of a student's on-campus apartment that read "filthy nigger."

A swastika was carved into a campus elevator, and the N-word was written on the whiteboard belonging to a black student at Drake University.

At Cabrini University, a racial slur was written on the door of a first-year student Saturday, and two additional sightings were later reported in residence halls.

Lewd language and the N-word were scrawled on door name tags of black students at the University of Michigan. Later, protests and a fight broke out over the university's response to this and other incidents.

"Nigger lives here" was written on a name tag of a student at Westfield State University.

Fliers encouraging students to join a white nationalist group were posted around the University of Louisville campus.

White nationalist fliers were also distributed around Stockton University advertising the “alt-right” movement, characterized by its white supremacist and racist views.

At Purdue University, fliers were posted by a group called Identity Evropa, a white supremacist group that bragged about the posters on Twitter. The group also mentioned other colleges where it hung fliers recently, including Stockton, Simpson University, Shasta College and Millersville University.

Generally, the responses of universities have been to denounce these actions and begin police investigations. At Cornell, President Martha E. Pollack convened a task force to examine campus bigotry and directed campus Greek organizations to develop new trainings around diversity.

“For the vast majority of Cornellians who abhor these recent events, our community needs your help,” Pollack said in a statement. “Please speak out against injustice, racism and bigotry and reach out to support one another. Ours must be a community grounded in mutual respect and kindness.”

The Southern Poverty Law Center, which tracks hate crimes nationwide, documented a total of 1,863 hate-related incidents between Nov. 9 and March 31, of which 330 occurred on college campuses.

The center has previously reported that many instances of hate or bias involve fliers being hung on college campuses, and these primarily come from outside organizations, not students. These hate groups have targeted college campuses and run rampant on them, said Lecia Brooks, the center’s outreach director.

White nationalist or alt-right speakers, such as Richard Spencer, who helped found the movement, have also pursued an extensive campaign of provocative speeches at colleges, many of which have inflamed campuses by drawing sizable and sometimes violent protests.

“When an alt-right personality is scheduled to speak on campus, the most effective course of action is to deprive the speaker of the thing he or she wants most -- spectacle,” the center wrote in its guide on the alt-right at colleges. “Alt-right personalities know their cause is helped by news footage of large jeering crowds, heated confrontations and outright violence at their events. It allows them to play the victim and gives them a larger platform for their racist message.”

Shaun R. Harper, executive director of the University of Southern California’s Center on Race and Equity, has studied campus climate and race issues on campuses for a decade or so. He said his extensive interviews with students reveal that these issues have persisted for some time but have simply come to light because of the new ways society communicates.

Of the nearly 50 campuses he’s visited, on only one did he not find a black student who had been called a “nigger” by some campus community member, sometimes even a professor, he said.

“The kind of things that we’re reading online now and seeing in tweets and in Facebook posts are consistently the same kinds of things I’ve been hearing for a decade in focus group interviews and our climate studies,” Harper said, adding that the election of President Trump does seem to have emboldened white supremacists.

Students, professors and staff are perhaps more aware of these incidents since the election and more likely to report them, said Brooks.

Harper expressed frustration that institutions have commissioned him and his groups in the past to assess the campus trends on race but the leaders have sometimes done little with the data he presents. Harper

said that only a handful of universities have shared the full results of his investigations on their campuses, an act he called “responsible,” but not courageous.

Sometimes, he said, these issues are addressed quietly, or administrators attempt to persuade students not to discuss them widely. Instead, campus leaders should take strong stances -- and not try to remove the element of race from racist incidents, Harper said.

He criticized University of Virginia President Teresa Sullivan for her early “raceless” response -- that did not mention by name the groups involved -- to plans by Spencer and other white supremacists to invade the campus in August. Those white nationalists marched at UVA and in the city of Charlottesville, Va., with bloody protests leaving one woman dead.

Following Charlottesville, anxiety abounded among colleges, Brooks said.

“College presidents hoping that this wouldn’t happen on their campuses are quickly learning they need to be prepared and respond strongly,” Brooks said, urging institutional leaders not to minimize the trauma that these incidents cause.

Harper called it unfair that the students who have previously endured this treatment have not had their stories shared as broadly.

“It’s unfair to those students that what they were experiencing was somehow less racist, less impactful, less hazardous to their academic health and personal wellness,” he said.

Brooks pointed out that the race-related protests on the University of Missouri campus, perhaps one of the most intense display of activism, resulted in enrollment drops for the institution and the exit of the president. Should colleges not prove that they have committed to solving these problems, they could end up like Mizzou, she said.

“Students have a choice -- they don’t have to attend an institution where administrators are not supportive or don’t take a strong enough stance,” Brooks said. “Colleges and universities have everything to lose.”