

Fall 2010

# PERSPECTIVES

News Magazine of the University of Missouri-Kansas City



**Finding hope in Haiti:** Alumni and faculty respond to the nation's crisis





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## Cover story

- 6** ***Finding hope in Haiti***  
Alumni and faculty share stories of hope from their recent travels to the ravaged nation still reeling from January's earthquake

## College roundup

- 28** ***News from each school***  
Find out what's happening in your school or department



Early in an epic journey: History Professor Jim Falls in Santorini in 1969. Falls retired this past spring — read about it on page 28. On the cover: A man walks amidst rubble and buildings damaged in the January earthquake that struck Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

## Feature highlights

- 4** ***Life 101***  
Alumni share “Best of” lists on books, movies, vacation spots and more
- 12** ***It’s easier being green***  
Alumnus’ entrepreneurial spirit is saving the Earth and money for local businesses
- 14** ***Swope Murder Trial***  
Local alumni re-enact famous murder case a century later
- 16** ***One child at a time***  
Professionals try to understand the challenges of autism in children
- 20** ***Right direction***  
The School of Education’s dean weighs in on the Kansas City, Mo., School District’s move to close 28 schools
- 22** ***Debating the facts***  
Little-known facts about UMKC’s Debate Team
- 24** ***Accents***  
Campus news, notes, highlights
- 33** ***Brushes with fame***  
Alumni share stories of chance encounters with big names
- 36** ***Class of 2030***  
What will UMKC look like in 20 years?
- 38** ***Voices***  
News for and about UMKC alumni
- 42** ***Class notes***  
Find out what fellow alumni are doing

# Must read

## The most popular magazine page

I'm a class notes junkie, and I bet most of you are, too. It's a well-known fact that the most-read section of any alumni magazine is class notes, where you can check out what your fellow graduates are up to. Who has a new job, who's been promoted, who's moved.

Fortunately, I can feed my addiction daily because I have had the enviable job of getting all submissions that alumni send us. But my inbox is no longer going to be the portal for all of the fun news and updates we put into *Perspectives's* class notes twice a year. The new Alumni Association website takes it to a whole new level: Join the online community and read the daily updates and submissions much like status updates on Facebook.

One thing I've come to appreciate over the years in reading alumni class notes is how giving and compassionate our alumni are. In addition to the career updates, I often receive notices of people's mission trips and projects, their awards for community involvement and their service on civic boards or philanthropic causes.

Our alumni are giving back to their alma mater, too. Last year, alumni and friends donated 175,800 hours of volunteer time to UMKC. That's an all-time high since we began recording those gifts of time five years ago. Alumni also set a record giving rate this year boosting the Alumni Fund to its highest fundraising year ever at a time when alumni participation nationally declined 3.5 percent. UMKC Roos have a lot to be proud of in defying the national trends of declining giving and support for higher education.

UMKC alumni are giving, involved, active and engaged both here and in their communities, and now there is a new tool powered by the UMKC Alumni Association to keep up with all the news and status updates. Visit [www.umkcalumni.com](http://www.umkcalumni.com) to let your fellow alumni know what you're up to and to search for old buddies and classmates regularly!



LISEN TAMMEUS

## New alumni website is live

UMKC alumni have a new way to stay connected through the UMKC Alumni Association's free online community. Alumni can log in to search for fellow Roos, share and view photos and class notes, create and customize their own profile page, register for UMKC events and more. The website also offers a Facebook connect feature, as well as news and stories about UMKC and its alumni. Visit [www.umkcalumni.com](http://www.umkcalumni.com). To log on, alumni will use their alumni ID from the *Perspectives* magazine mailing label. Turn to page 44 for directions on registering and to see what benefits the UMKC Alumni Association offers.

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## Readers respond to spring issue

### Making a difference

As an asylum officer at the Chicago Asylum Office and also as an alumnus of UMKC, it was nice to see Erick Schmidt's story about Mohamed Nur. I adjudicate many asylum applications in the course of a week, and it is nice to know that the folks who are approved are doing well and making a difference.

Jacqueline L. Miller  
B.A. '87

### Vets deserve recognition

I am very pleased with your magazine, *Perspectives*. But I do feel that the World War II veterans under the G.I. Bill should be mentioned at the annual Alumni Awards Luncheon. I received my bachelor's and master's degrees after WWII and it was quite an honor. I hope you take one minute to praise the students who received education rights after WWII at the next luncheon.

James L. McCoy  
B.A. '49, M.A. '50

## A record year for alumni

Alumni set a record high giving rate this past year, placing UMKC in the top tier of its peers nationally for alumni participation. Alumni and friends also donated more volunteer time to UMKC than ever before.

**7,465 alumni donors**  
(increase of 244 donors)

**175,012 alumni and friends  
volunteer hours**  
(up 25,566 hours)

**\$628,478 total contributions  
to the Alumni Fund to support  
UMKC students**  
(up more than \$66,000)



## We want to hear from you!

Did you attend UMKC on the GI Bill? We'd like to hear from our GI Bill alumni for a future *Perspectives* story. Please send your name, graduation year and contact information to [perspectives@umkc.edu](mailto:perspectives@umkc.edu) or call 816-235-5613 and our editors will be in touch with you.

Do you have story ideas for *Perspectives*? We welcome your suggestions of topics, alumni stories and other ideas from our readers for future issues. Please send your feedback to [perspectives@umkc.edu](mailto:perspectives@umkc.edu).



### Spring '10 clarification

In the article "Ensuring Integrity," in the spring 2010 issue, Tim Hall, athletic director, was quoted saying that UMKC's Division I certification by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) was certified "with conditions." Hall says prior to 2007, "We were fully certified, but with 'strategies for improvement' imposed by the NCAA. 'With conditions' and 'strategies for improvement' are two completely different things. We have completely implemented those strategies and remain fully certified."

### Editor's note

*Perspectives* is interested in the opinions of readers regarding articles published. Due to size and style constraints, *Perspectives* reserves the right to edit letters.

Letters to the editor may be sent to:

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# You have to ...

Alumni share what tops their “best of” lists from books and classes to movies and vacation spots

by KARA PETROVIC

## Know your historical facts

I enjoyed taking history classes while pursuing my undergraduate degree at UMKC. The study of history has given me a perspective on my civil engineering practice that allows me to understand and explain how a built environment shapes a community.

As a senior water resource engineer with HDR Engineering, Inc., I spend a lot of time working on the Brush Creek Flood Control Project. Knowing the history of Kansas City has helped me understand where the rivers were and why certain decisions were made at the time. Without knowing the background of the city, it's difficult to make future decisions. Studying history also gave me the knowledge to ask, “Why was it built like this?” “Why was it built there?” Answering these historical questions is important because for me to help fix the problem, I have to first find out how the problem was built.

Thomas James Kimes  
B.S. '87

## Read a book with meaning

The best book I've read is *Catch-22* by Joseph Heller. The story takes place during the later stages of World War II and is ultimately about individuality, taking a stand and overcoming adversity in a world of contradictions and rules. I've read it four times. The book is really funny, and there have been numerous times I've found myself laughing so hard I start crying. The characters are also well-developed and become silhouettes of actual people, and by the end of the story there's a real meaning you can walk away with.

I first read the book in high school during an advanced literature class. The teacher sold me on the book, and I still remember a lecture he gave on the climax of the book, which had him throwing chalk in the air to demonstrate a point.

And in what other novel is there a character named Major Major Major? I mean, that's reason enough to read it!

Raymond A. Cattaneo  
M.D. '03

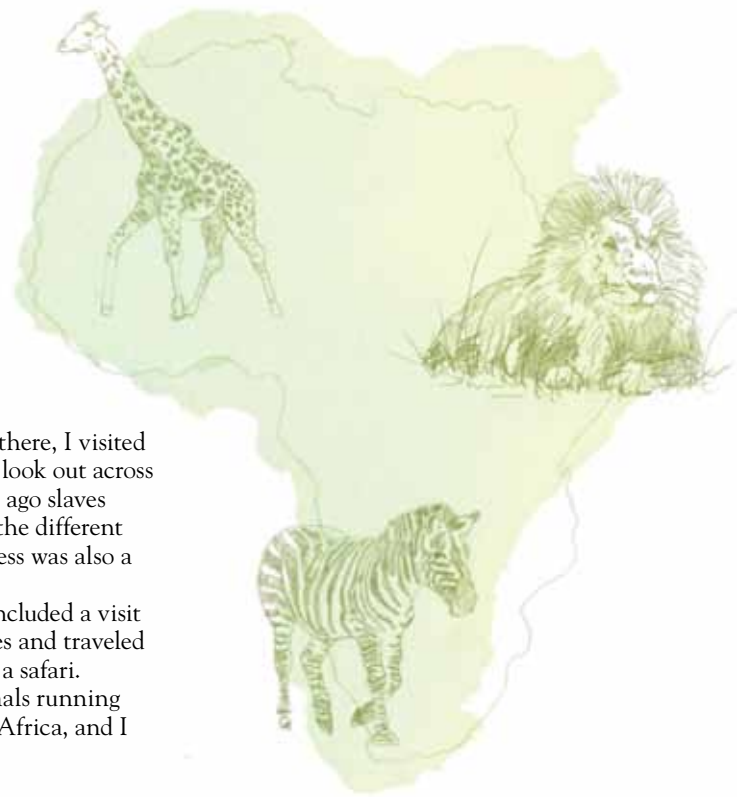
## Revisit destinations through photos

One of the best places I've traveled was the Mayan ancient ruins in Mexico. I went on a cruise with a friend, and we took a day excursion to see the ruins. I think anyone who gets the chance to visit them should, because they are a part of history. Seeing them up close puts everything into perspective, because you get to see the tools and artifacts they used.

I also have a renewed appreciation for the ruins because my daughter just finished an art appreciation class at UMKC, and part of what she studied for that class I saw during my trip. During our discussions, I got my photos back out and had the chance to relive the experience of being there. She got to see pictures of secret altars we found at the pyramid we climbed, which were similar to pictures in her book. After getting my photos out and looking through them with my daughter, we've definitely talked about going back to visit the ruins together.

Shawn McFerrin  
B.A. '97





## Go on an African safari

My most memorable trip was to Africa. While there, I visited the Ivory Coast, and it was amazing to stand and look out across the Atlantic Ocean and imagine that many years ago slaves were transported to the United States. Learning the different cultures of West Africa, including its food and dress was also a great experience.

Another one of my most heart-warming trips included a visit to Cape Town, South Africa. I visited various sites and traveled down the coast of South Africa, where I went on a safari. Riding in an open jeep and looking for wild animals running loose was amazing. I think often of my travels to Africa, and I hope to return one day.

Yvonne N. McCay  
B.B.A. '86

## Follow the Yellow Brick Road

Since playing Dorothy in my sixth grade play, my favorite movie has been *The Wizard of Oz*. The movie has always reminded me how important good friends and family are in life, and that home is where the heart is.

I own several copies of the movie both on DVD and VHS and watch it whenever it's on TV. And to this day I still love red shoes and own several pairs, because they make the perfect accent to just about any outfit. I even wore ruby slippers under my wedding dress. I felt like I was playing Dorothy all over again.

Julie Brown Longly  
M.D. '00

## Explore Alaska's scenery

The absolute best vacation I ever took was to Alaska. I have traveled around the globe, and I have yet to find a place where I can drive a couple of miles out of a town and feel completely and utterly alone in the vast wilderness. The wildlife is unlike any you can see in the lower 48 states. Alaska also provides the opportunity to do things I love like fishing and rafting, and it includes some of the tallest mountains, including Denali, which is amazing.

Alaska is one place that no one should leave this earth without visiting at least once.

Allison Burke Gardner  
M.S.N. '05

## Learn outside the classroom

I really enjoyed the class Urban Planning Studio 4, because part of it took place in New Orleans. Our class was able to visit the city four times that semester thanks to a grant we received from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and through private donations we collected. Our studio was given the challenge of using heritage tourism to promote economic prosperity for post-Katrina New Orleans. We investigated neighborhoods outside the French Quarter with tourism destinations and eventually narrowed our focus on the neighborhoods of Treme and Mid-City with the Laffitte Corridor connecting them.

New Orleans is a fabulous city, and to be able to say that your work has helped to rebuild the culture of this city feels pretty great. It definitely felt like we were making a difference and learning from real world experience. As an alumna, it's nice to see that the Department of Architecture, Urban Planning and Design continues to do great work down there.

Vanessa Spartan  
B.A. '06











# Finding hope in Haiti

Faculty and alumni make their mark  
on a nation in need

by KARA PETROVIC

When the streets stood still and dusty smoke blanketed survivors of last January's earthquake in Haiti, devastation was all that remained in the western hemisphere's poorest nation. It only took seconds for the quake's sheer force to topple concrete-block homes and businesses, leaving behind mountains of rubble, more than 200,000 Haitians dead and another 300,000 seriously injured on the island of about 9 million people.

Official reports deemed the 7.0 magnitude earthquake — centered about 10 miles southwest of Haiti's capital city Port-au-Prince — the most powerful quake to hit the country in more than a century. Haitians are still recovering from the catastrophe nine months ago, and, as two UMKC faculty members shared from their recent visits to Haiti, the destruction remains, as do the strong emotions they have carried since returning home. Yet for husband and wife School of Medicine alumni, a trip so soon after the quake didn't feel right. They remained behind grieving for a country they've loved and supported for more than 20 years.

This emotional roller coaster left them all wondering how to best use their own talents to give back, and now, with their individual visits back to Haiti approaching, they finally have the answers.

These are their stories and dreams for a better Haiti.



Peter Morello, assistant professor of journalism, left the United States two weeks after the earthquake struck Haiti to capture video for a documentary he hopes to complete before the disaster's one-year anniversary.

“Haiti is going to be a long-term project, and I estimate that it will take 20 years to rebuild this country.”

-Peter Morello

## A teaching tool

As aftershocks shook Haiti, Peter Morello, associate professor of journalism in the Communication Studies Department at UMKC, found himself in the epicenter within two weeks of the quake.

Catastrophes are not new to Morello. As an international correspondent and producer for Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) for 15 years, his coverage included the breakup of the Soviet Union, the war in Bosnia and famine relief efforts in Somalia. Morello joined UMKC in 1999. He thought his prior knowledge and experience would prepare him for Haiti, but Morello says the country's condition was beyond anything he'd seen in his career.

“When I saw Haiti, I likened it to the bombing of Dresden during World War II,” he says. “There was devastation with massive pockets of rubble everywhere. It was difficult to maneuver. I'd never been to Haiti before this, and it's hard to compare troubled regions that I have visited to Haiti because they are all different. However, I can tell you that I've never seen so much destruction on a mass scale.”

Days after the earthquake, Morello says he received a call from a local church asking him to accompany two members to Haiti who wished to aid in the relief efforts. The church knew of Morello's documentaries, national awards and correspondent work that appears regularly on Kansas City Public Television (KCPT-19).

“While they were there laying the groundwork for relief efforts, I was there laying the groundwork for a documentary,” Morello says. “What I saw at that time was that the Haitian people have very specific needs and still do. Haiti is going to be a long-term project, and I estimate that it will take 20 years to rebuild this country. I didn't go to Haiti for myself, but for the people of Haiti.”

Morello says his week filming in Haiti was an experience he'll never forget, but notes that it wouldn't have been possible without the support he received from Communication Studies Department Chair Carol Koehler and the College of Arts and Sciences Dean Karen Vorst.

“The department supported my efforts and gave me a little bit of funding to go,” he says. “And after returning, I shared all of my information with three different journalism classes. What this did for students was very impactful. It taught them that even if they don’t know much about an area or region, awareness is the best tool they can have if they blend it with the skill sets they’ve developed here at school.

“I like to think that my experience taught them to develop goals early and to stick with them. I continued to remind them that as a guy in my 50s, I was able to travel to a new country where I didn’t know the language because of the skills I have. And if I could do it, they can certainly do it at their age.”

Morello says he plans to return to Haiti to finish his documentary work on faith-based relief groups and will cover both U.S. and Haitian efforts. He hopes KCPT and regional PBS will broadcast it to coincide with the country’s first anniversary after the quake.

“I’m going back for the right reasons,” he says. “I’m going back for the people of Haiti. It’s a journalism basic that the best stories are stories told through people. The Haitians are very resilient people, and they’ve been through a lot and have learned how to adapt. This is a chance for them to share their stories.”

## Developing new ideas

After 10 years teaching in academia, UMKC School of Nursing Professor Pat Kelly always hoped to don her nurse practitioner hat again and aid in a disaster-relief effort. Kelly says she wanted to help the Haitian people on day one, but waited two months because the country needed trauma surgeons first.

On March 1, Kelly left New York with her sister-in-law, Rebecca Freeman, a nurse-midwife, and Freeman’s husband, Bill Bemis, a social worker and therapist, to work for two weeks as volunteers with the Kansas City-based agency Heart to Heart International.

“My sister-in-law and I had been talking about doing something like this for a long time, but we knew immediately that we needed to wait a bit because our services wouldn’t be very useful. We aren’t trauma people,” Kelly says. “We also knew that after a while that volunteer interest would fall off and that our training of primary health care would then be most beneficial.

“It was so stark and devastating and an experience I’ll never forget.” -Pat Kelly



Left: UMKC School of Nursing Professor Pat Kelly with mothers and children at a clinic in Haiti. Right: Kelly met these two Haitian children during her disaster-relief effort.





“It’s my belief that to change children’s lives, I need to do it through health care issues that they can take back to their families.”

-Kathy Shaffer

“And while we’ve all traveled and worked in disaster primary care before, this was our first trip to a country with such limited resources. I always circle back to photographs. You always seem to think that you are experiencing what’s happening in a photo, but really you aren’t. You can’t feel it. You can’t taste the dust in the air. It was so stark and devastating and an experience I’ll never forget.”

During their two-week volunteer trip, the three wrote a journal to keep family, friends and colleagues abreast of the situation in Haiti. They shared stories from the clinic where they worked, which was situated on the second floor of a downtown church, two blocks from the destroyed main cathedral. Each day they traveled 40 minutes one way in either the back of an open pickup truck or in a tap-tap, a small covered pickup with seats in the back that served as a taxi, to assist up to 175 to 200 Haitian men, women and children with non-medical emergencies. The clinic treated everything from pneumonia to diarrhea, as well as cases of tuberculosis and HIV, Kelly says.

Kelly says the medical practices she witnessed while working at the clinic prompted her to return alone to Haiti in May for 10 days and to write the editorial, *Providing International Work in the Void of Cultural Context*. Kelly plans to present her editorial at an upcoming nursing conference this year.

“People want to go over and help, but so many don’t understand that the medical practices we have here aren’t appropriate there,” Kelly says. “Some people were diagnosing things that there aren’t any treatments for in Haiti. People forget that this country even has limited facilities for birthing babies. The reality was that health care providers just couldn’t wrap their heads around this.”

As for classroom discussions, Kelly says she hasn’t spoken of her visits to Haiti much with nursing students because for them, it’s the hands-on experience that matters. However, her trip hasn’t stopped her from discussing new programming ideas with the dean of the School of Nursing. Days after returning from her second trip, Kelly says she began writing a proposal for programming that would focus on third-world country nursing needs and explained that similar programs already exist at other state institutions.

“After coming back, I noticed all that we have around us,” Kelly says. “I wanted to do what I knew best to help. This proposal is one such way. I’ve also been trying to figure out how I can volunteer on a long-term basis. I was pretty gripped by Haiti, and I’m already planning my visit back.”

## Passing it forward

UMKC School of Medicine alumni Stan (M.D. ’73) and Kathy Shaffer (M.D. ’79) have deep roots in Haiti and say the country has been a second home for them for more than 25 years. Yet Stan explained his first visit to the country was for personal reasons during his pediatric training at Children’s Mercy Hospital in 1983.

“I was interested in seeing diseases I’d never seen,” he says. “I’d only seen two cases of measles, and I wanted to see the tropical diseases we never see here. But Haiti changed my perception, because once you see that type of suffering — which is only an hour-and-half plane ride away for Miami — it changes you.

“That’s how my desire to change the system instead of individual patients over the years began. Together, Kathy and I learned that to help the country, we first needed to help the government educate its people through health care.”

The Shaffers agree that it was Stan’s first visit that initially formed the lasting relationship they now have with the country and its people. Since then, Kathy has worked hard and kept the Haitian children in the forefront of the school, St. Augustine, she helped open in Maniche, Haiti, in the mid-80s.

“It’s my belief that to change children’s lives, I need to do it through health care issues that they can take back to their families,” she says.



Left: Stan Shaffer during a visit prior to the January earthquake. Right: Shaffer established Maison de Naissance, a birthing home, in 2004. He will visit Haiti again this fall.

And prior to Stan's work in Haiti, he says expecting mothers had two delivery options: birth the baby at home and risk infection, or walk for hours to an under-staffed hospital where they were required to provide their own food, medicine and linens.

In 2004, Stan established Maison de Naissance, a birthing home, which now provides a clean place for deliveries, essential health care for infants and community education. Since its opening, more than 2,000 babies have been born and vaccinated. The facility is also satellite equipped to allow Stan and his St. Luke's Hospital colleagues in Kansas City to visit with patients and staff in Haiti.

Stan and Kathy say they typically make several visits to Haiti each year but haven't been back since the earthquake.

"Haiti has always been special to us," Kathy says. "We used to take our children to Haiti, and we agreed that it was an important part of raising them. And after having a 25-year relationship with the people of Haiti, it has been extremely hard not to be down there helping.

"However, it's not our mission to be heroes in that type of setting. Instead, we've been focused on ways to help change the structure of a community over time to make it better long term. We've never been in this for short-term gains."

This September, Stan will make his first visit back to Haiti since 2009 in an effort to expand a new program called the Golden Minute, which focuses on a newborn's first minute of life. Stan says that one in 10 babies needs assistance and that those who don't receive the proper medical attention are termed stillborns. Program master trainers, including Stan, will visit various countries and offer Golden Minute training workshops.

"I will be training Haitian community health care workers, doctors, nurses and first aid providers through one or two days of training," Stan says. "On the first day I will teach six people. The next day, those six people will train six new people. Within a week, we could have 42 individuals trained."

Kathy also plans to return to Haiti in November with a focus on sanitation efforts and plans to continue to try to get parents involved in their children's education. "Like anywhere, having parents involved in education is critical for students to continue to advance in school," she says.

Kathy says she will also work to install a new water filtration system for clean, potable water near the school where 300 children in grades pre-K through seventh attend.

"It's our goal is to provide medical and health care-related education that is standard and offered here," Kathy says. "We don't believe in second-rate care or education."

"The world is very big," Stan adds. "There is so much we, as American physicians, can offer Haiti and countries in similar types of situations. We all just need to be willing to start somewhere." ■

"There is so much we, as American physicians, can offer Haiti and countries in similar types of situations. We all just need to be willing to start somewhere."

-Stan Shaffer

# It's easier being green

Alumnus helps businesses save money,  
become environmentally friendly

by ERICK R. SCHMIDT



Alumnus Jerame Gray has combined his passions for architecture and environmental sustainability into a full-time private consulting firm.

Jerame Gray (B.S. '08) steps out of the car on a warm July morning, and the sweet, pulpy smell of the compost farm is immediately overpowering. "That's the smell of progress," Gray says.

The graduate of the Architecture, Urban Planning and Design department visits the Missouri Organic compost site 15 miles north of Kansas City three times a month. It's difficult to imagine being further from Gray's original academic focus of architecture, but this is where Gray's interests in community planning and environmentalism have culminated. Gray's passion for the planet brings him here, where thousands of feet of hot, steaming waste collected from all over the city and state are being processed into reusable compost.

"If you can take a high percentage of food waste and turn it into earth, why wouldn't you?" Gray asks. "It only makes sense."

Gray says he's always enjoyed the outdoors and preferred being

out in the sunshine than in an office or classroom. His motivation to make a difference through sustainability began during his first semester at UMKC. As part of a class assignment, he decided to collect and document all of the waste he generated in a week, contained to his one-bedroom apartment.

"A couple days in, I started realizing how much I was consuming, and I started becoming a little more conscious of it," he says. Not only that, he also began wondering about the bar and restaurant where he worked as a bartender and waiter. He had worked in the food service industry for 10 years but never grasped the amount of waste that was thrown out.

From that consciousness came a question: If one person living on his own was creating this much waste in the space where he lived, what was the rest of the world doing to the planet? How was his own job contributing to the dilemma?

"It's a fast-paced business. It's an in-and-out business," Gray says.



"People want to come in, they want to get fed, they want to have a good time. As a restaurant, a waiter or a bartender, it's get them in, get them out. It's all about making money. In the process, a lot gets left out because everything's expendable."

It bothered Gray, who says he always felt a connection to nature.

"I started thinking there was something I could do or something that could be done that may not be that far out of grasp," he says.

Soon after he graduated, Gray began by looking at the businesses where he worked. He realized the answer was to help the owners and managers learn to adapt their business practices to be more economical and Earth-friendly.

What began as an idea in his apartment soon became Earthscraps, a private consulting firm he founded in early 2009. Gray's goal is to save landscape and ecology from being turned into landfill. He does so by evaluating a business's waste, water systems, energy usage and food products. He looks at everything from recycling practices and light bulbs to water flow rate and portion sizes. He then provides his clients with a list of areas where they can improve, including everything from buying supplies from local companies to implementing compost or recycling systems. He will even train the staff and help them come up with creative solutions.

**"If you can take a high percentage of food waste and turn it into earth, why wouldn't you?" -Jerame Gray**

Gray will also point clients toward other resources in the area. For example, Earthscraps works in close partnership with Missouri Organic, the company that owns the landfill site. Within a few hours of consultation and developing a plan, he provides clients with the resources to find a solution that fits them.

"I see myself as being a single point of contact for businesses to get to these services, just a connecting point," Gray says.

To make it work, Gray has to find business owners who are inspired to make a change. He has found those owners at Kansas City establishments Café Europa and The Blue Grotto, both locations where he has worked. He has also worked with Chacko's Bakery and often takes inquiries from others.

Gray says the natural challenge that Earthscraps faces once he finds interested businesses is that he has no tangible product to sell. Instead, he's selling an idea. The benefit can be two-fold for owners.

"It's doing the right thing and feeling great about that," he says. "But it's also going to save you money."

Like Gray, Molly Davies, associate professor of Geosciences and director of the Environment Studies program at UMKC, has seen an increase in interest for environmental efforts. In seven years, she has seen the number of sustainability and environmental majors offered at the University increase from 35 to more than 150. It's one of the fastest-growing major areas in the entire University of Missouri System, Davies says.

"People have been doing this for a very long time, but the awareness seems to have reached these generations," Davies says. "Our student population is varied, too. We're not just 18-21 year olds, so I can't just say it's a younger generation thing."

Davies says that helping to spur the success of the program is its multi-disciplinary nature. Faculty from all across the University participate in the program, including 33 members from the life sciences, business, economics and more. As interest in the program has grown, there has been a need to create or integrate courses with other schools.

One of the most recent additions to the program was a minor in sustainability. The first one was completed this spring. It's the latest sign that environmentalism at UMKC is growing. Davies says that the difference between the movement being waged now and the one that gained popularity in the 1970s — the one most commonly associated with Earth Day — is that today's movement has more depth.

"It's moved far away from studying plants and animals and human impacts," she says. "We are an urban university, and we're tightly tied to our community. Environment also means the urban environment."

Students today learn how water, electricity and waste make their way through the city. The impact is being seen not only in Kansas City but also as close as the UMKC campus. When the new Student Union opened this fall, it had the distinction of being completely LEED-certified, a detail that Davies says was pushed by students who wanted to see better building practices used on campus. That awareness has been proliferated by technology and has helped instill willingness for change into the program's graduates as they move out into Kansas City and beyond.

"Kansas City, while not Portland or San Francisco, is rapidly becoming recognized in sustainability," she says.

Back at the compost site, Gray has his own ideas for the next step in sustainable life in the Kansas City and UMKC communities. He says that there must be more of an effort in legislation and governmental policies for true progress to happen. And Gray says incentives for Kansas City and Missouri businesses to be environmentally responsible, such as tax breaks based on the money a business saves the city and state by cutting down on their waste, are needed.

"It's diverting trash from landfills and giving it to another Kansas City business," he says. "It's generating work, creating new products. It's a no-brainer to me." ■



Gray's environmental consulting work has taught local restaurants and businesses that food waste can become reusable compost.

# Swope Murder Trial: A century later

## Alumni get into character for trial reenactment

by ERICK R. SCHMIDT

In June, the UMKC School of Law presented the “100th Anniversary of the Swope Murder Trial: A Reenactment” in conjunction with the Jackson County Historical Society.

UMKC alumni played key roles in the reenactment, including 16th Judicial Circuit of Missouri Judges John Torrence (J.D. '82), Michael Manners (J.D. '76) and J.D. Williamson Jr. (J.D. '65).

The original trial revolved around the 1910 mysterious death of Kansas City real estate mogul and philanthropist Thomas H. Swope and has maintained a sense of romanticism ever since. Dr. Bennett Clark Hyde treated Swope in a time of illness and was accused of poisoning the millionaire. The case is well known due to the involvement of local celebrities, complicated circumstances and, of course, murder.

“It’s an intriguing set of facts,” Williamson says. “It remains a mystery in the sense that there was never a definitive outcome of the case.”

The jury found Hyde guilty of murder on May 16, 1910, and he was sentenced to life in prison. The defense lawyers appealed the case, however, and after a fourth trial, Hyde was never convicted.

The actors didn’t have a script from which to work. Instead, they were given the facts of the case and allowed to use their own tactics to get from Point A to Point B. Manners says the preparation and reenactment was “very similar” to trying cases.

Torrence says he always held interest in the case beyond his career in law. He’s also a history buff who says the case plays an important part of Kansas City’s past.

“It’s helping the community understand something,” he says, “and gives them an opportunity to learn about the history of the community.”



Judge Michael Manners  
as James A. Reed

Judge Michael Manners (above) played James A. Reed, a former Kansas City mayor and prosecutor who was selected as a special prosecutor for the case. Manners said that even though the participants dressed accordingly, the role more closely resembled trial law than a school play.

“Ten years ago, I was a practicing lawyer, and I haven’t tried a case in almost 10 years. I feel a little bit rusty. Hopefully I won’t be too bad at it,” he joked before the reenactment.



Judge John Torrence  
as Judge Ralph Latshaw





Judge J.D. Williamson Jr. retired (retired, below center) played the politically active and prominent defense attorney Frank Walsh. Walsh often squared off in public forums with prosecutor James Reed (played by Manners). Williamson says he enjoyed playing a man with such a recognizable name.

"This was a case that involved extremely prominent people at the time," Williamson says. "It didn't just get local coverage, it got attention nationally."

Judge J.D. Williamson Jr.  
as Frank Walsh



There is a curiosity about the case even 100 years after the fact, says Judge John Torrence (left), who played presiding Judge Ralph Latshaw during Hyde's trial, which began April 16, 1910.

"It's a fascinating case full of all kinds of different issues that are part drama, part soap opera, part American history, part human drama and the skeletons in the closets of families," Torrence says. "It's all the things we love about these kinds of stories."



Ralph Monaco as  
the ghost of  
Colonel Thomas Swope



Ralph Monaco (above) played the ghost of Colonel Thomas Swope, the land developer whose death was at the center of the trial. Monaco led the organization of the event, and many of the participants gave him credit for making the historical reenactment a success.









# One child at a time

Caregivers strive to understand the unique characteristics of autism in children

by PAT McSPARIN

**A**utism spectrum disorder (ASD) raises many questions, and an important part of finding the answers is recognizing that every child with autism is different. Timothy Buie (M.D. '84), Michele Kilo (M.D. '84) and current Conservatory master's candidate Alaine Reschke-Hernandez (B.A. '04) — have accepted the challenge of finding effective ASD treatments.

A 2009 Centers for Disease Control (CDC) report showed an increase of 57 percent in the average prevalence of ASDs at study sites, which meant an average of 1 in 110 children in the United States in 2006 was classified as having ASD. This increase has brought ASD to the center of public awareness, and more physicians and care providers are searching for effective methods of treatment.

According to the CDC, a "spectrum disorder" affects each person differently. While people with ASD share similar symptoms, such as problems with communication and social interaction, there can be vast differences in the severity and nature of the symptoms.

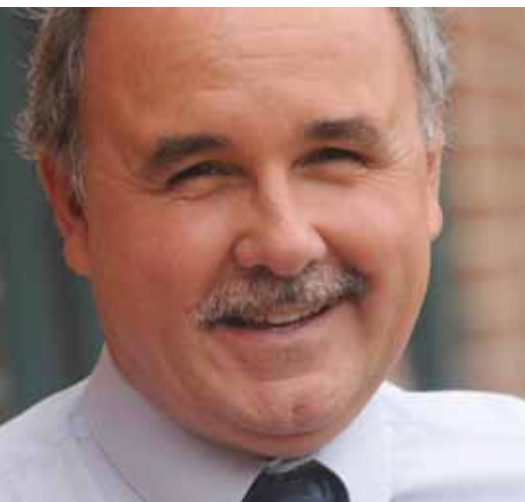
"Autism is a collective umbrella," says Kilo. "It's a collective group of characteristics that you have to meet in order to accurately be diagnosed with one of the autism spectrum disorders. But that's about as much commonality as these kids have. There's a saying: when you've seen one child with autism, you've seen one child with autism."

Kilo serves as assistant professor of pediatrics at the UMKC School of Medicine and has been with Children's Mercy Hospital and clinics in Kansas City, Mo., since beginning her residency in general pediatrics in 1984. She quickly found developmental behavior pediatrics to be her calling.

"I knew that the best thing for me was making a long-term connection with people," she says. "(Developmental behavior pediatrics) is a field that was very new at the time, and it allowed me the opportunity to get to know babies when they're very young, and to work with them as they become children, as they become teens, as they become young adults, to become a part of their family and to follow their progress."

Buie found his way into autism research and care by a different route: through the stomach. He specialized in pediatric gastroenterology, completing his fellowship at Yale-New Haven Hospital. He had a private practice for eight years before accepting his present position as associate in pediatrics at Boston's MassGeneral Hospital for Children. Buie was also recently named assistant professor of pediatrics at Harvard University.

He says his focus on gastrointestinal disease (GI) in children with ASD was not entirely by choice.



Top: Timothy Buie  
Above: Alaine Reschke-Hernandez

“When families see their kids getting help, you get drafted,” he says. “As people brought in their autistic kids with GI, I just became the guy to go to. And it became evident that these kids were being ignored. They couldn’t talk, but they had a lot of pain. Many treatments they received made them feel better, but it didn’t fix the condition.”

Buie says he left private practice in 1998 to better serve children with ASD who suffered from GI problems. The Autism Society of America (ASA) recognized his dedication by presenting him with its 2009 Professional of the Year award.

Reschke-Hernandez says she answered the same call that Kilo and Buie heard, but as a musician, she traveled a different route to help autistic children.

“I’ve been a music therapist for six years now, and all six years I worked with children with autism,” says Reschke-Hernandez, a board certified music therapist. “My full-time job when I finished my bachelor’s was in Florida public schools. I saw about 150 children a week with autism. I was a little scared at first because I hadn’t worked with many children with autism. I ended up loving it.

“In those three years of working with so many kids,” she says, “I saw so many things happen through music therapy that weren’t happening through other therapeutic areas. Other people working with the kids were saying, ‘This child has never done this before’ and ‘How are you getting them to do that?’ I just became really curious about why? What makes it happen?”

Reschke-Hernandez says that it was her love of working with the children combined with not understanding autism that led her to work toward her master’s degree in music therapy. Her paper, titled “A history of music therapy treatment interventions for children with autism,” will be published in *The Journal of Music Therapy* this fall.

## The communication barrier

There are few symptoms that all children with autism share, but nearly all have some difficulty with communication, ranging from avoiding social interaction to being completely unable to speak.

“A 12-year-old with acid reflux might say, ‘I have heartburn,’” says Buie. “But a nonverbal autistic 12-year-old with acid reflux can’t say ‘I have heartburn.’ He can’t even say, ‘doctor.’”

Buie explained that children with ASD get sick and can come down with the same common ailments that people without autism incur. This presents an especially formidable challenge to doctors, caregivers and family.

“They have all the symptoms that we as adults sometimes feel,” Kilo says, “but in kids who can’t talk, who can’t communicate how painful it is — they just act out. What we see is their behavior. It really takes digging deep to be able to find what it is in this population of kids.”

Kilo says sometimes caregivers get lucky. Recently, a severely autistic 12-year-old boy whom she has been following for eight years had become more aggressive and self-injurious. The boy’s parents, teachers and doctors could not figure out what was causing the change in behavior. Then they had a breakthrough.

“The teacher told me,” Kilo says, “just out of the blue, she wondered if maybe something hurts? Maybe the boy doesn’t feel good? So she called the mom, and she asked permission to give the boy Motrin. She gave Motrin. She didn’t know what she was treating, but she gave Motrin, and for a couple hours, he was better. You can’t talk to this boy and say, ‘What is hurting you?’ You can’t do that. It’s a guessing game.”

Reschke-Hernandez faces similar issues in music therapy, where children sitting next to each other may have opposite reactions to certain instruments but are unable to tell their therapist.

“When I work with groups, I have kids on both ends of the spectrum,” she says. “How do I address the needs of a non-verbal child who might be hypersensitive to a jingle bell while another non-verbal child just loves a jingle bell? That’s where creativity comes in. It’s very individualized, just like your music taste is individualized.”

Kilo says that the medical community is recognizing that there isn’t necessarily one cause for autism. Rather autism is a description of children with a set of similar behaviors and characteristics.

“Each one of these kids may manifest this constellation of behaviors for a very different reason,” she says. “They’ve all got the brain pre-disposition to have delays in social skills, delays in language, delays in their pragmatics and understanding of how to negotiate the world around them, but it’s for very different reasons. And they all display it differently.”





## Changing the focus

Reschke-Hernandez focuses on treating the unique needs of each individual.

“Music therapy is a very systematic application of music interventions that are individualized,” she says, “and they work on non-music goals. We work on communications skills, social skills, academics, motor skills if need be, all based on individualized assessment and on-going assessment.”

Because autism is a relatively new disorder — the first paper was written in 1943 — it is not fully understood. According to Buie and Kilo, this has resulted in some diagnoses and treatments that are less than ideal. Buie says it’s because so many physicians and caregivers have been quick to blame treatable problems on autism.

“We need autism caregivers to separate the behavior from the diagnosis,” he says.

While there is no known single cause for autism, Buie believes too much focus is being placed on finding causes rather than on treating the conditions.

“We want families to look at children and think in terms of medical problems,” he says. “We must change the focus and treat the underlying problem. For instance, it’s very common for autistic kids to have sleep disorders. Too many practitioners say, ‘He’s autistic, so he doesn’t sleep well.’ That’s not an answer.”

To help caregivers find the answers, the Division of Developmental Disabilities at the Missouri Department of Mental Health and the Thompson Foundation for Autism developed Autism Spectrum Disorders: Missouri Best Practice Guidelines for Screening, Diagnosis, and Assessment. Kilo served on the project leadership team during the document’s development.

Kilo says the guidelines were written as a consensus document with input from therapists, educators and parents to help Missouri health and education professionals and families of persons with ASD make informed decisions regarding identification, diagnosis and assessment of the disorders.

“In order to make accurate diagnoses and get children with autism into the right services,” Kilo says, “we have to have a consistent way to approach this population: to screen them in pediatric offices, to refer them to subspecialists, make accurate diagnoses and then initiate the correct set of interventions.”

Kilo says the guidelines will help with what Buie described as changing the focus.

“We wanted to say (to physicians) that when working with this population of kids, you can’t just treat ‘em and street ‘em,” Kilo says. “You can’t just say, ‘Hey, I think you’ve got autism. See you later. No, you don’t need to see me again.’ And then send the family out into the street. The family would be absolutely overwhelmed and devastated. And the guidelines will help families know what to expect.”

“It’s a good explanation for families,” Buie says of the guidelines. “It’s a wonderful thing for the state of Missouri to set these standards. Other states will follow.”

“We wanted to say (to physicians) that when working with this population of kids, you can’t just treat ‘em and street ‘em.” -Michele Kilo

# Right direction

## School of Education dean sees local school closures as progress

by KARA PETROVIC

Faced with bankruptcy, the Kansas City, Mo., School District made national news last March when its board voted to close 28 schools to eliminate a \$50 million shortfall. Wanda Blanchett, Ph.D., shares why the district plans were not only feasible but “critically important.”

### **Why did the School of Education support the Kansas City, Mo., School District’s decision to close 28 schools?**

It wasn’t so much that we supported the district’s decision to close 28 schools, but instead we supported the district’s Right Sizing Plan, which wasn’t necessarily about closing schools but really about how the district could better situate itself to meet the needs of students in a far more systematic format than it had in the past. We supported the district in recognizing that it had far more buildings and staff than it had students, and that the district had to adjust costs, so that the 16,500 students who remain will continue to get a high-quality education.

### **Do these closures hurt or help?**

No one wants to see schools close because schools represent hope. Whenever you have such a large number of buildings in an urban setting already struggling to provide a positive climate, you hate to see those buildings needing to be closed. But at the same time we certainly can’t use buildings as a proxy for high-quality education. So for the buildings themselves, if something fabulous isn’t occurring there and students aren’t learning and developing, then there is no reason to worship buildings. The closures will certainly hurt the community, but I think we have to do a cost-benefit analysis. Do we keep these buildings open just to keep them open? Or do we want to make sure something great is occurring there that will prepare our young people for the challenges we know they will face in this global, diverse society?

### **Can you put the decision in a national context and why this was a historic decision/watershed moment for the district?**

It’s historic because, at least in the Kansas City, Mo., public schools, we’ve needed some kind of drastic approach to dealing with the fact that students were leaving the district, but the district’s operations continued to be at a level significantly higher than what would be warranted given the number of students served. I think it’s



historic because up until this decision was made or at least proposed to the board, no other school district in the United States, to my knowledge, had ever proposed to do something so drastic in the best interest of providing a better quality education. Since this has occurred, we’ve heard from a number of districts around the country that they are in similar kinds of plans. This is the result of years of inappropriate management at the district level and not being accountable to children, family and the larger community.

### **What are the most significant results (positive or negative) that the community will see after the district closes nearly half of its campuses?**

Only time will tell whether the full impact will be positive or negative. But I think all of us in education, even if we aren’t in the field of education as a profession, need to be concerned about the future of our country, our citizens and the economy, and we have to keep our fingers crossed that the board’s plan is the beginning of a new course of action for the Kansas City, Mo., schools. We need to see the quality of education go up and see young people graduating with a diploma that actually means something. If this happens, we’ll see them prepared for college and won’t have to spend an enormous amount of remedial resources to make sure that they are prepared to be successful college students when they get here. The district is putting children first and ensuring that they have a quality education. I’m hopeful, because I don’t think this city can afford more failure as far as public education is concerned.

### How have education students, faculty and staff reacted to the district's decision?

They are all hopeful in the plan, but we are all sad about the massive closure of schools. We are hopeful that this plan will give the district an opportunity to right itself, literally, and to better serve children. We all hope to see a positive impact in the quality of schooling afforded to some of Kansas City's most needy children in terms of economic status.

### In your view, what are some of the key factors/best practices in shaping a successful approach in urban school districts?

One of the most significant factors is having the right leaders. Having a superintendent who is willing to work collaboratively with all of the entities involved, including the community and its organizations and businesses is very important. Another component of a successful urban school district is having a community that understands what it takes to have a first-class urban school district. We didn't get in the predicament that we're in overnight, so it's going to take steady progress to get us out of it. I hope the community will give Superintendent Covington and his team enough time to demonstrate that they are on the right course. And I also hope that we will be able to work with Superintendent Covington and his team in bringing about the kind of public education system that we all know we need and more importantly that our children deserve. We are partners in this, but it's important to remember that at the School of Education we don't run school districts. We prepare individuals for them. We are making sure that those who come through our building are prepared for the unique strengths found in urban schools, as well as the challenges.

### Many community members are deeply concerned about these issues and the short- and- long term impact but are not sure what the answers are in urban education or how to best help. What would you say or suggest to them?

In order for the community to help, it has to start doing its own PR. Once the larger community recognizes that positive changes are being made, I believe we'll start to see more people who are willing to send their children to Kansas City, Mo., public schools. The community can really help by believing that the young people we're investing in really are worth the investment and worth the time that it will take to turn this district around. We have to believe that all children can learn and ensure and recognize that children growing up in the urban environment already have so many obstacles against them. Urban education has to be holistic. We have to stop complaining about what students come to school with or without and instead educate the whole child. So as a community, if we are really going to do something about the significant gap in student learning and achievement, then we have to be willing as a community to do some things we haven't done before.

### How can UMKC and its students have an impact on the local school district?

The most significant impact we can have is sending the districts highly prepared educators. We have a number of partnerships going on with area public schools, and this gives us another opportunity for impact. Our long-term hope is to be an educational research clearing house for some of the most significant challenges that face our area.

### Where there once was a teacher shortage, we're now seeing teachers being laid-off. How should students considering education as a career today best prepare themselves for a more competitive job market?

At the end of the day, I don't want to see any young person or returning adult shy away from teaching because of what we've seen recently with the district downsizing or economic down turn. Teaching is such a rewarding career, and I hate to see people turn away for fear that there won't be jobs. We'll always need teachers who are prepared. I am hopeful that the quality of our curriculum, with our urban focus, that people will continue to come to us. Education is still a good, solid career for people who think they can make a difference.



Westport High School was one of nearly 30 schools that the Kansas City, Mo., School District voted to close. The school officially shut its doors June 3.

### About Dean Blanchett

Wanda Blanchett, Ph.D., was named dean and Ewing Marion Kauffman Endowed Chair in Teacher Education last August for the UMKC School of Education. She previously served as associate dean at the University of Colorado-Denver and has a national reputation in urban education and issues of social justice.



# Debating the facts

Little-known facts about the UMKC Debate Team's winning traditions

## 1936

Year the first mention of the debate program appeared in the Kansas City University yearbook.

## ONE

Number of topics covered in a season. The central topic is debated the entire season, with each team debating both sides.



Walt Disney's drawing of

## Kasey

Kangaroo was created for the debate team in 1936.

## Sixteen students and Two

coaches, Matt Vega and Malcolm Gordon, make up the squad

## 7

diverse degree programs are represented on the debate team

- Business
- Communications
- Political Science
- Pre-Law
- Pre-Med
- Pharmacy
- Philosophy



## 200

words per minute

typical speed a debater argues.

## 2.5

 hours

average length of one debate

The farthest distance traveled to a tournament last season:

## 1,313 miles

(Winston-Salem, N.C.)

# '94, '95, '97, '06

## National tourney **champs**



## Brian "Baby Jo" Johnston

member of the UMKC 1994 National Championship team for whom CEDA's National Debater of the Year award is named. Johnston passed away in 1997.



## Beating the big names

- In the 2005 National Tournament, the Roos defeated a Harvard University team ranked No. 2 in the nation.
- Other past victims include Dartmouth College, Cornell University, Columbia University, University of Michigan, New York University and many more.

Paper pages of evidence used in a typical debate. The team was one of the first to replace thousands of pages of research with laptops. In addition to the environmental benefits, less paper means easier and cheaper travel.

Coach Malcolm Gordon (B.A. '07) was the Cross Examination Debate Association (CEDA) National Tournament Top Speaker in

# 2007

## Trash talk

Never happens. Debates are hypothetical, and teams argue both sides of the issues, so it's almost never taken personally.



# Library's transformation in progress

Renovations add new technology and study space

by ERICK R. SCHMIDT



This artist's rendering shows how the expanded Miller Nichols Library will accommodate not only comfortable quiet study spaces, state-of-the-art technology and wireless Internet access, but also a robotic retrieval system that houses materials in about one-seventh the floor space used by conventional open-stacked shelving.

When the Miller Nichols Library unveils its latest renovations this fall following a \$20 million update, the robotic retrieval system will surely pluck as many headlines as it does books. After all, it's a four-story system that helps library patrons pinpoint exactly the resources they need and effortlessly delivers them to the circulation desk for pickup. But there's much more to this redesign than the robot.

**"The level of excitement here is pretty high."** -Sharon Bostick

"Even though the robot is the cool, new, visible part, the most significant changes happening here will be after the robot," says Mark Mattison, advancement officer for UMKC Libraries.

The robot and current renovations are considered to be Phase One of the library overhaul. Another key aspect to the renovation is the amount of room that will be repurposed into flexible space for library patrons. Mattison says that as the collections have grown the past

40 years, room for library patrons has been pushed out. The robot will eventually store as much as 800,000 of the library's more than 1 million items in its bins and shelving, allowing those materials to be stored on-location but also out of the way of patrons.

Along with the robot comes enhanced browsability of the online catalog. The ultimate goal is a search function similar to Amazon.com, including looks at the insides of books.

"By the end of this academic year," he says, "you won't recognize the first floor of the library."

Dean of Libraries Sharon Bostick said she understands the fascination with the robot. In fact, she's as excited for its debut as anyone on campus. But Bostick says she is most excited to share with the UMKC community years of hard work, planning and progress as the entire library system returns with substantial upgrades throughout, including everything from more user space to increased research database access to, yes, the robot.

"The level of excitement here is pretty high," Bostick says. "The ideas are really flowing."

Bostick says the project has been made possible in large part through the partnership and support of the Miller Nichols Charitable Foundation.

"When the economic realities set in, the Foundation helped us re-envision the overall project, which we've now broken into phases,"



Bostick says. "It was a priority for everyone to keep this moving — the chancellor has deemed it the University's top capital project because it's so integral to UMKC's enrollment goals."

The future phases of the project will include further renovations to the other floors, Bostick says.

Of course, the ultimate goal of the library is making research easier and more effective. Bostick says she wants the area to be a destination for students. To make that a reality, there are plans for group study rooms, which Bostick says have skyrocketed in popularity. By April 2011, there will be a full-service café. For the more traditional library patrons, there will also be a quiet floor for studying. The goal is to incorporate every learning style into one library.

"We're spending a lot of money on our technology and on more databases and more items that you don't have to come in and use," Bostick says. "That's a big deal."

As the library grows into more of a living thing, accessible from long distance, it becomes even more reliant on one key ingredient: librarians.

"For the past 30 years, librarianship has changed so quickly that if you stayed in the profession, you had to learn to change, and they're doing that."

Bostick says that today's librarians are responsible for fully immersing themselves and becoming experts in 21st century technology. Librarians now spend time scanning literature and discussion boards to look for buzz on new tools, and when they hear of new tools or databases, they test them to see if they will be a viable option for any of the University's libraries, Bostick says.

UMKC Librarian Laura Gayle Green says her natural curiosity helps her integrate new technology into the library before she helps adjust students to upgraded resources as they become available.

As head of the Music/Media Library, located within Miller Nichols Library, Green is responsible for identifying the latest technology, instituting it into the library system and then helping students get acclimated to the newfound resources.

Green says in the ever-changing field of library technology, it is vital that she and other librarians stay ahead of the curve by making sure the renovations work for the library's staff and its patrons.

"The library can offer a customized, personal experience," Green says. "And we can help with that."



Librarian Laura Gayle Green's role continues to shift as new technology emerges.

## Embracing the digital world

A venture into librarian Laura Gayle Green's office tells you everything you need to know about the library's new age. There is no card catalogue for her. Instead, her office contains two computers, a netbook, her Blackberry and a landline. Welcome to the new library. Welcome to the new librarian.

"If the librarians are not able to make that transition easy for faculty and students, the process doesn't work," she says. "This is what I do now. You learn to deal with the new parts as they come at you."

Green is accessible to students through face-to-face contact, but she also maintains a campus presence via the Internet. She uses a blog on the library's website and the library's Facebook account, where she offers instant research assistance and general study tips. Offering that help can be a monumental assistance to students who, through the power of the Internet, seemingly have an endless sea of resources available.

"The amount of information, the incredible content at their fingertips is wonderful," she says. "I would have loved it when I was in grad school."

Whether working in-person or via another form of instant communication, Green maintains that her favorite part of the job is working with people and sharing that "light bulb" moment when they realize they've found what they need.

"Even with all the technological changes," she says, "the personal component is still there."



The robot can retrieve occasionally or little used materials from racks to the check-out desk within minutes. This robotic storage also provides more floor space for study areas.

# Par-fect

## Freshman wins championship

Nobody would have blamed Korbin Kuehn in May 2009 if he'd given up on golf, a sport he had played his entire life and competitively since the sixth grade. He had just finished his freshman year at Kansas State University and was back home in Overland Park, Kan. Out of high school, he hadn't received any serious offers to play collegiate golf and had only golfed twice in nine months while at K-State — a telling sign of his unhappiness.

Being away from the game and away from his golf-happy family had left Kuehn at a crossroads. He made a name for himself playing in Kansas City-area tournaments the summer after his freshman year. He eventually earned a scholarship offer from UMKC golf coach J.W. VanDenBorn. Less than a year later, Kuehn was in Utah putting the finishing touches on an unlikely rejuvenation as only the second Summit League golf champion in UMKC history.

"It was a really good feeling," Kuehn says. "To know that I can still do it and compete at this level is nice to know."

Kuehn put himself atop the leaderboard after the first round of the three-day Summit League Championship by shooting a 69, a round he calls one of the best of his life.

"Those last couple holes were tough," he recalls. "I was making it easy, just hitting it on the green."

By the third day, his play had dipped a little, and he knew he had little room for error. Kuehn was +4 after four holes of his final round and thought his chance was gone. After a birdie on the 16th hole, though, he thought for the first time that he might have a chance to win. When his opponent made a putt on the 18th hole to sink the UMKC's team title hopes, Kuehn reluctantly moved on to a sudden death playoff for the individual crown.

"Our team was pretty disappointed because that was a putt to beat us," Kuehn says, "but all of a sudden I was on the first hole again."



Transfer student Korbin Kuehn became the second UMKC golfer to win the Summit League Men's Golf Championship in April.

Still devastated that the team had come so close to accomplishing its season's goal, Kuehn had trouble moving past the disappointment. But he says VanDenBorn told him to forget about it for 15 minutes and not dwell on what had happened.

Those 15 minutes turned out to be long enough, as Kuehn sunk a par putt to win the tournament on the first playoff hole.

"It felt really good," he says. "I wasn't even nervous over it. I was just surprised that it had actually happened."

It was the perfect ending to a wild season for a young player who transferred to UMKC for a chance to play for the Kangaroos just before the season's start. Now he can focus on his academic aspirations at UMKC and on next season. He says the exciting finish has left him hungry for next year's team to accomplish the goal of a team championship.

"I'll keep doing what I'm doing, practicing and playing in summer tournaments," he says. "We have a good chance to win it as a team."

ERICK R. SCHMIDT

## Passings

**Kuang Cheng**, professor emeritus of chemistry, died March 30, 2010. Cheng earned his doctorate in analytical chemistry from the University of Illinois at Champaign before he was recruited in 1966 to teach at UMKC, where he spent nearly 50 years. Over the years, Cheng published numerous papers and obtained several patents for inventions. He also had a dedicated following of students. At UMKC, Cheng is remembered for his generosity in helping others by providing scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students in the chemistry and physics departments.

**Robijn Hornstra**, professor emeritus of psychiatry, died May 21, 2010. Hornstra was known regionally and nationally as a founder and leader in community psychiatry at the UMKC School of Medicine. He served as the first chairman of the UMKC School of Medicine Department of Psychiatry, and he continued to mentor and teach at the school even after retiring in 2000.

## CASE honors Bloch service

The Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) named Henry W. Bloch (Honorary Doctorate '89) the 2010 CASE Distinguished Friend of Education Award Designee. This international award honors an individual whose leadership has strengthened CASE member institutions and their communities.

"Henry Bloch embodies entrepreneurship at its highest form," said Bloch School Dean Teng-Kee Tan, "having started as an entrepreneur himself, building an empire through H&R Block, and completing the continuum by giving back to the community and to higher education. We could not be more proud to continue Henry's legacy through the Bloch School."

Henry's, and his wife Marion's, support for higher education extends throughout Kansas City. In addition to Henry's service as past director, trustee or board member for many civic organizations, the Blochs founded The Henry W. Bloch Scholars Program and have also provided support to the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, including funding for the Bloch Building.

## 2011 Alumni Awards

### Campus-wide award winners

#### Alumna of the Year

Cynthia Watson (B.A. '78)

#### Bill French Alumni Service Award

Michelle LaPointe (B.A. '80)

#### Defying the Odds Award

Mutuku Mutinga (M.S. '68)

#### Legacy Award

The Salazar Family

#### Spotlight Award

Jacki Witt (M.S.N. '87, J.D. '92)

### Alumni achievement awards

#### College of Arts and Sciences

Durwin Rice (B.A. '78)

#### School of Biological Sciences

Stephanie Karst (Ph.D. '00)

#### Bloch School of Business and Public Administration

Joe Freeman (B.S. '93)

#### Conservatory of Music and Dance

Mikel Rouse (Cons. '78)

#### School of Computing and Engineering

Len Rodman (M.S. '78)

#### Dental Hygiene

Ann Battrell (M.S. '07)

#### School of Dentistry

Paulette Spencer (D.D.S. '78, Ph.D. '93)

#### School of Education

Steve Obenhaus (B.A. '88, M.A. '96)

#### School of Law

Pete Levi (J.D. '69, L.L.M. '71)

#### School of Medicine

Mamta Reddy (M.D. '98)

#### School of Nursing

Debra White (M.S.N. '99)

#### School of Pharmacy

Samuel Strada (B.S.P. '64, M.S. '68)

Awardees will be honored April 27, 2011.



# HOMECOMING 2010

## EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

### Saturday, Sept. 25

8-11 a.m. UMKC Community Service Day

### Sunday, Sept. 26

1 p.m. UMKC vs. Missouri State (women's soccer), Durwood Stadium

### Monday, Sept. 27

6 p.m. Guinness World Record Robot Dance, Durwood Stadium

### Tuesday, Sept. 28

6:30-8 p.m. Starr Community Conversation – Work and Life: An Intergenerational Conversation

For a complete list of UMKC's homecoming festivities, visit [www.umkc.edu/homecoming](http://www.umkc.edu/homecoming).

## Homecoming 2010

Alumni and friends are invited to a fun-filled week during Homecoming 2010. Festivities kick off Saturday, Sept. 25, and run through Saturday, Oct. 2.

Big events planned throughout the week include the Miller Nichols Library Robot dedication on Wednesday, Sept. 29.

On Friday, Oct. 1, the new Student Union will be dedicated, and afterward alumni can show their Roo spirit at the UMKC pep rally. Be sure to catch the

official homecoming game that night, as the men's soccer team battles Oral Roberts at Durwood Stadium.

Events conclude Saturday, Oct. 2, with the University of Kansas City Reunion Breakfast followed by special mini courses offered by faculty, and the Richard Cass Tribute Concert in White Recital Hall that evening.

Visit [www.umkc.edu/homecoming](http://www.umkc.edu/homecoming) for more event details.

## Spreading transplant donor awareness



After doctors diagnosed Mel Tyler, vice chancellor for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, with multiple myeloma — a cancer of the plasma cells — in April 2009, he kept his medical condition private. Yet when

doctors informed him that a bone marrow transplant might be needed, colleagues urged him to ask for help.

"I've worked with Mel for over 13 years," says Jennifer Dehaemers, assistant vice chancellor for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management. "He's been a good friend and mentor during that time. I wanted to help him find a donor."

Tyler says sharing his news with the University community last April allowed him to educate others about the disease.

"When I learned there weren't that many people on the national registry list, I decided to help," Tyler says, "I want people to know that getting tested isn't painful."

According to the National Marrow Donor Program, registry members for diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds are needed. Most patients must also match someone of their own race or ethnicity.

To help, a "Team Tyler Donor Registry" team formed at UMKC and sponsored two "Be the Match" donor drives in April and raised more than \$6,000, Dehaemers says.

"I'm touched by the support I've gotten from everyone," Tyler says, "and appreciate everyone's support for this initiative."

Visit [www.bethematchfoundation.org](http://www.bethematchfoundation.org) for information or to join the donor registry.



# Epic career's final chapter

Popular history professor retires after 43 years



"I was nervous," he says. "Am I going to be a good teacher? Have I got the information down? And I don't think in the first two or three years I had it down very well. Every time a hand would shoot up the first couple years, I was just terrified."

He explains that he quickly developed ways to learn and organize information, and to not be afraid to say, "I don't know."

What made Falls' classes special, colleagues say, was the attention he paid his students. Even in the largest class, he left no student unnoticed. His Western Civilization 1600 course usually had about 150 students enrolled, and he says he would learn every face and name in every class.

"Education is an odyssey. I've learned a lot, and I still continue to learn." -Jim Falls

"He's not only here, accessible and informal, but he's retained students by showing genuine and sincere concern for them," says Professor Lou Potts, who has worked in the University's Department of History with Falls since 1971.

Falls helped pilot the Department of History ship as a mentor to other professors and by encouraging diverse teaching methods. By tying lessons to popular culture, current events and issues, the department makes coursework interesting and accessible to students of every major. His innovative methods and dedication helped earn him the 2010 Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

"Education is an odyssey," he says. "It's a learning odyssey. I've learned a lot, and I still continue to learn."

Potts describes Falls' career commitment to teaching with a historic twist: "He came. He saw. He taught."

Falls' contribution to life at UMKC wasn't limited to the classroom. He founded the University's award-winning history honorary, Phi Alpha Theta, as well as the UMKC History Club. He also served as adviser to Delta Chi fraternity and was instrumental in the development of tele-instruction at UMKC.

The University and College of Arts and Sciences took several measures to properly honor Falls' contributions to UMKC. At a ceremony in mid-April, Royall Hall room 104 — the lecture hall where Falls reached so many students over the years — was renamed Jim Falls Auditorium.

Also announced at the celebration was the establishment of the Jim Falls Honorary Scholarship. For information on how to contribute, contact Karen English, advancement director at the College, at [englishk@umkc.edu](mailto:englishk@umkc.edu).

PAT McSPARIN

The Greeks have Homer's *Odyssey*. The Romans have Virgil's *Aeneid*. UMKC has the career of Jim Falls, Ph.D. After a 43-year journey through academia, the associate professor of history announced his retirement this past spring.

Falls' travels began at the University of Alabama, where he earned his B.A. in history. He then continued to Mississippi State University, where he completed his M.A. in Ancient Rome studies and his Ph.D. in Medieval Civilization in 1967. His next stop was UMKC's Department of History, and once he arrived here, he says he never looked back.

Upon arriving at the University, Falls immediately began taking his students to a place far beyond the average college classroom. His lessons were punctuated with disc after disc of photographs related to the subject, all of which he took on his personal travels.

"When I first started teaching at UMKC in '67," Falls says, "I used to walk across campus carrying maps, slide projectors, slide trays — I mean, I could have gotten a hernia."

Falls did not launch his career with the over-confidence of Homer's hero, Odysseus, however.

## Big changes in the works for the Bloch School

The Princeton Review once again named the Bloch School of Business and Public Administration as one of the 2011 “Best in the Midwest.”

This follows on the heels of last fall’s Princeton Review ranking of the Bloch School’s Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation as a top 25 graduate entrepreneurship program nationally. This marked the first time Bloch had been ranked in the top tier of entrepreneurial colleges and business schools.

The focus on entrepreneurship education is part of the School’s makeover in progress under the leadership of new Dean Teng-Kee Tan. Tan has led the development of a new strategic plan for the School that seeks to infuse entrepreneurial and leadership skills across the curriculum.

“Employers need employees who can function in an increasingly global setting with holistic knowledge, integrated skills and an innovative mindset,” Tan says. “We want our graduates both to lead and participate in diverse global teams in multi-cultural environments.”

Tan says the School’s vision is to be Kansas City’s nationally preeminent school of management, focusing on entrepreneurial and innovative thinking as the foundation for transforming talent and achieving sustainable growth.

Tan says the mission is to develop purposeful, entrepreneurial and innovative leaders to meet global demands.

“In thinking about the 21st century challenges our students will face, the need for the School to excel is critical,” Tan says. “Through achieving our mission, realizing our vision and successfully implementing the strategic initiatives outlined in the new plan, we ensure not only the future of our students, but that of the School, the University and the Kansas City region.”

View the Bloch School’s strategic plan in its entirety at [www.bloch.umkc.edu](http://www.bloch.umkc.edu).

VICTORIA PRATER



Professor Carter Enyeart selected James Mitchell as the first student to use the Conservatory’s new cello.

## The gift of music

### Conservatory alumna donates rare cello

Since the age of 11, Conservatory of Music and Dance student James Mitchell has dreamed of being a cellist for a national symphony. And now, thanks to a “rare and valuable” donation by alumnus Marcia Whitcomb (B.M. ’60, cello and music theory), Mitchell says his dream may eventually become a reality.

When Mitchell first arrived at the Conservatory in 2008, he brought his own cello he’d purchased from a pawn shop in Oklahoma. And while that cello suited his needs in high school, he says he never imagined outgrowing it by the end of his freshman year or using one of the school’s instruments so soon.

This past fall, however, Carter Enyeart, professor of Cello and Chamber Music and UMKC’s Rose Ann Carr Millsap/Missouri Distinguished Professor, selected Mitchell as the first student to use the school’s newly donated circa-1780 cello made by William Forster, one of England’s most respected names in instrument making and publishing.

“I wanted to select a student who, first of all, has the most need for a better instrument and also who was the most deserving, and as of right now that’s James,” Enyeart says. “There comes a point when a student reaches the maximum that he or she can do with the equipment they have. If students can’t reproduce what they have in mind in terms of sound and expression, then equipment becomes very important. I’ve seen it happen time after time. When students get a new instrument it changes their whole educational trajectory.”

Whitcomb first contacted Enyeart four years ago about the cello she’d purchased her senior year at the Conservatory from a shop in Philadelphia. After years of debating whether or not to donate the cello, Whitcomb says it was that initial conversation with Enyeart that encouraged her to follow her intuition.

“I’ve had that cello for many years and been very successful with it,” she says. “I finally decided last fall that it was time to pass it along. I’m 71 years old, and the arthritis in my hand isn’t getting better. Donating the cello now also gives me the opportunity to know which deserving student is using it.”

For the next three years, Mitchell will continue to maximize his artistry on the cello.

“Within the first few weeks, I noticed a huge difference,” Mitchell says. “This cello is completely different from ones I’ve previously played on and has a very rich sound. I can’t thank Mrs. Whitcomb enough for her generous donation.”

“James is exactly the type of student I hoped for,” Whitcomb says. “He has a lot of ambition and is definitely willing to work hard. Students who attend schools on the East Coast don’t have to worry, because their schools already have excellent instruments. But schools in the Midwest always seem shortchanged. I hope my gift will encourage someone else to give back to help draw more students to the Conservatory.”

KARA PETROVIC



Nine graduates from the School of Education's Class of 2010 were hired to teach at Johnson Elementary School in Kansas City, Mo. Front: Megan Barrett, Hannah Van Ausdal, Kate Oslica and Stacia Deckard. Back: Micah Sally, Stacey Howard, Principal Kay Hoff (M.A. '92), Sean Riley, LaKeisha Moore and Chelsea Smedvig.

## School of Medicine assistant wins big on *Jeopardy!*



*Jeopardy!* host Alex Trebek and Alison Roberg

*Final Jeopardy! Round:* "This concept dates to a 1783 paper by John Michell, who theorized about a body with the sun's density and 500 times its diameter?" Alison Roberg's answer, "A black hole."

Roberg's answer was the beginning of her three-day winning streak on the country's No. 1 quiz show this summer. After four days of play, Roberg — an administrative assistant in the School of Medicine's Council on Curriculum Office — won \$87,000.

"For years people were telling me to try out for *Jeopardy!* since I know a lot of random facts, and I finally decided three years ago to see if I could do it," Roberg says. "I started taking the yearly 50-question online contestant test in 2006, but I never heard from anyone until last December and was thrilled when I finally did."

Roberg flew to Los Angeles for an in-person interview and audition last January. She says she left the audition feeling good, but didn't know what would happen. When her phone finally rang at the School of Medicine in February confirming her contestant taping dates, however, Roberg says that's when the hard part began.

"I've always liked trivia, but I was never a huge fan of *Jeopardy!*," she says. "When I finally learned I was going to actually be on the show, I started taping it and playing along at home. I used a pen to practice buzzing in. I'm now hooked on watching it."

Roberg says she was shocked when she won the first game's taping. She was in third place going into the *Double Jeopardy! Round*, but says she turned it around with the "Presidential Math" question "Reagan times Monroe" ( $40 \times 5 = 200$ ).

"At the end of Round 1, the show's producers were giving me pep talks and telling me it wasn't over," she says. "I bounced back after I nailed a Daily Double and wagered \$3,000."

Roberg says she is now in the running to return and play in the show's Tournament of Champions next year.

So what's next for this trivia savvy gal?

"My husband wants me to try out for *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*," she laughs.

KARA PETROVIC



# Toxicology buff

## Media consults with pharmacy professor



Marcus Iszard likes to hear his phone ring. It usually means that someone needs help — and that's something he can offer.

Iszard, an expert in environmental toxic contaminations, works as director of assessment and as associate professor in pharmacology and toxicology at the UMKC School of Pharmacy. He has appeared on radio and TV stations for locally well-known stories like the proliferation of brain tumors

in Cameron, Mo., and an ongoing investigation of environmental contamination at the Bannister Federal Complex in Kansas City.

"I'm representing the University, and I always want to put the University in the best light," he says. "If I just happen to be a part of the UMKC family and institution, then that's all well and good."

Iszard brings an energy and an enthusiasm to his work, and also says he tries to work with a sense of humility. He prefers to consider himself a "community resource" rather than a media expert. He says he often receives calls from people who have seen him on a news

broadcast, hoping he can answer their personal questions.

He says he has helped people better understand a medical situation their family member suffered from or given them peace of mind about a loss they have suffered. One woman worried that her father's death had been a result of exposure to dangerous carcinogens in his workplace. Iszard says he determined that her father's death had likely been of natural causes.

"If I can, I'm always willing to certainly help them," he says.

Before he came to UMKC, Iszard worked at Xavier University in New Orleans. His research helped uncover issues of ecological damage being done in the city long before Hurricane Katrina in 2005. In October, he will submit his final proposal for a five-year, \$1 million grant that he says would help further answer questions about the issues in Cameron.

"I'm no big company. I'm a scientist who can hopefully answer some questions on some serious health concerns," he says. "It could bring peace to those who are most worried and to those who are most affected by this."

ERICK R. SCHMIDT

## Engineers answer industry call

The School of Computing and Engineering is working to answer a need voiced by the city's local engineering community. The school added a construction management emphasis area under its current civil engineering master's degree this fall in an effort to provide the city with skilled project managers.

"Local engineering and construction companies need engineers, who in addition to their technical knowledge, have a good understanding of topics such as project controls, finance, contract laws and different project delivery methods," says Ceki Halmen, assistant professor in the department of civil and mechanical engineering.

Halmen says engineers who have completed a traditional four-year engineering program and have some work experience are the ideal candidates to benefit from this new 30-hour construction management track.

"Students will gain important skills like planning, scheduling, estimating, risk management and other skills required for successful management and conclusion of engineering projects," he says. "By signing up and completing this master's program, engineers who are currently employed in the Kansas City-area engineering firms can improve their careers and provide a very important and needed resource to their companies."

The School is also starting to discuss the possibilities of creating a construction management master's degree, Halmen says.

"We choose the emphasis to meet the needs right away," he says. "This is our initial step. Eventually, we hope to offer a master's degree under civil engineering."

## NIH grant funds scientific study



Erika Geisbrecht, assistant professor of biology at the UMKC School of Biological Sciences, received a three-year \$50,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health's department of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases to study the role of the Limb-Girdle Muscular Dystrophy TRIM32 protein that over time causes a loss of muscle bulk and strength around the hips and shoulders. Geisbrecht is using the fruit fly as a model to study how defects in TRIM32 function may result in muscle wasting in humans. "My hope with this grant," Geisbrecht says, "is to expand our research program into trying to identify more proteins that are required for muscle maintenance."

# All smiles

## New dental ceremony celebrates crowning achievements

The dental hygiene class of 2011 and the doctor of dental surgery class of 2012 were welcomed into clinical practice during the “Transitioning into the Profession” ceremony — a new “tradition” started by School of Dentistry students, faculty and staff this June.

During the ceremony, 100 dental students received embroidered white coats and 30 hygiene students received embroidered scrubs to wear while treating patients in the School’s clinic. More than 400 families and friends watched students recite and sign their class-written code of ethics that stresses ethical practice and social responsibility for all patients.

“This new ceremony sets the stage for these students as they transition from the primary role as a student learner to a student in the clinic providing patient care, and as they progress in their educational journey,” says Marsha Pyle, D.D.S., dean of the School of Dentistry. “As these students enter the clinic, there is a significant trust that the public puts in our dentist and hygienist, and it was important to honor these students and their accomplishments.”

Brianna Ganson, third-year dental student, dental surgery class vice-president and committee member, says initial ceremony discussions began in January and that a 10-member committee soon formed to hash out all of the ceremony details.

“I really believe that everyone was excited to be a part of this ceremony. After two hard years of book work, it was nice to be honored before starting in the clinic,” Ganson says. “The embroidered white coat is more than a piece of fabric to us. It is a symbol of who we are becoming. It’s a badge of honor, a small



Connie White (D.D.S. '81) helps dental student Susan McDonald into her white coat.

reminder that we are professionals and must act with the utmost integrity and honor as we serve our community.”

After the ceremony, students, along with family and friends, gathered for a reception at the School of Dentistry for clinic tours and faculty introductions.

“What really made this ceremony special was that we got to share it with our family and friends,” Ganson says. “During the reception, our guests were able to walk around the school we’ve been spending so much time in and see what we’re doing.”

Ganson says she’s already met with the Class of 2013’s class president to make sure the ceremony continues next year.

“This has been a great tradition for us to start here,” Pyle says. “This ceremony is a truly special moment in their careers and something they will always remember.”

KARA PETROVIC

## Nursing emergency fund grows

Pursuing a nursing degree can be stressful enough — but throw in an unforeseen emergency, and it can seem impossible.

The School of Nursing’s Student Emergency Fund — made possible through alumni donations — was developed in 2000 to provide one-time assistance to students who encounter an emergency or unforeseen expenses during their studies, says Minda Mason, director of major gifts for the school.

“This fund is intended to help students over an emergency hump,” Mason says. “Sometimes \$100 is a big deal or getting a flat tire can blow an entire day. This emergency fund allows our students to stay focused on school and not make their crisis a major issue, but instead a bump in the road.”

One alumnus recently pledged \$5,000 for the next five years to the Student Emergency Fund, Mason says.

“This alumnus understood that his gift would help current and future students succeed,” she says. “Our students rarely seek out this fund themselves. Instead, our School’s social worker starts the conversation with them. It’s nice being a small school, because we get to really know our students.”

## Law program’s success recognized

As more and more law firms around the country downsize as a result of the economic recession, the School of Law continues to use a combination of classroom and hands-on learning techniques to prepare students for solo and small firm practice.

While other schools are trying to figure out how to educate students for this type of practice, UMKC has been offering its program for seven years, says Ellen Suni, dean of the School of Law. Suni says that since its inception, the program has received rave reviews from students, many of whom are now successfully practicing in solo and small firm settings.

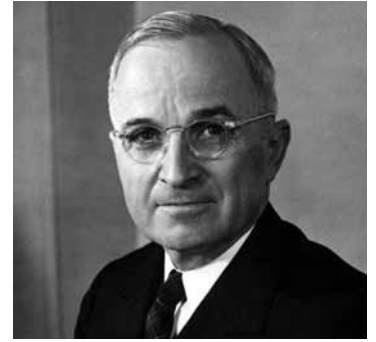
“We recognize that 70 percent of attorneys practice in firms with 10 or fewer lawyers, yet few law schools prepare students for this type of entrepreneurial practice. With our innovative courses, experienced faculty and the strong support of the Missouri Bar Solo and Small Firm Committee and local practitioners, we are uniquely positioned to address the need to develop creative methods of preparing aspiring lawyers for the business side of practicing law.”

Suni says the School plans to expand its Solo and Small Firm program in the coming year.

# Brushes with fame

## Alumni share tales of famous encounters

by KARA PETROVIC



### Dining with the president

In 1961 during my senior year in high school in Brooklyn, N.Y., I had applied for a number of scholarships to go to college and was supposed to select the scholarship I had been awarded by the end of February. I flat forgot to select my scholarship, as did two of my friends. The school counselor called us into his office and told us that he felt badly he hadn't reminded us to select our scholarships but told us that he had sent our transcripts to a recruiter at the University of Kansas City (UMKC's predecessor) and that we'd already been accepted into the school. The three of us didn't know where Kansas City was.

We each boarded the train from New York to Kansas City with \$50 in our pockets, (money that was supposed to last the whole year) and a sack lunch. Our sack lunch was supposed to last us the entire trip, but about 40 miles outside of New York we had already eaten everything in our bags. We got hungry again and went to find the dining car to see how much food was. But when we got there, we didn't want to use our 50 bucks, so we got away from the table and sat against the wall. As it got later, there were fewer people in the car and when people would leave the dining car, we would help them along to finish their plates. At one point, the porter came up

and said, "The man over there would like for you to join him for dinner." But before we boarded the train, we'd been warned about strange men on trains, so we told the porter no thanks. However, he was very insistent and kept pointing to his right, telling us it was safe.

I finally looked around him and I saw former President Harry S. Truman and his wife, Bess, waving at us. I yelled, "It's Harry Truman," and my buddy John replied, "Who is Harry Truman?" My other buddy George responded, "Truman, you know the guy who beat our Gov. Dewey."

We finally joined Harry and Bess at their table, and they basically adopted us. They started telling us everything about Kansas City, how great the University was, about the weather and how nice the people were. We spent the rest of the evening chatting with them, and he wanted to know everything about us. They bought us the best meal on the train, and we got a lot of great meals on the train thanks to Harry and Bess.

Michael J. Albano  
B.A. '65, J.D. '68

Go online to watch Albano share the rest of his encounter with President Truman, and tell us about your own famous run-ins.

[PERSPECTIVES.UMKC.EDU](http://PERSPECTIVES.UMKC.EDU)



Michael J. Albano stands outside the historic Truman Home in Independence, Mo. "Harry became my hero," Albano says.





## Importance of thank you notes

As a young state representative in the early 1980s, I represented the Claycomo Ford Assembly Plant in north Kansas City. The Ford plant had recently been re-tooled to provide employment for 5,000 residents in my district. After the re-tooling and as a suggestion from the Clay County economic director, I wrote a thank you letter to Donald Petersen, the president of Ford Motor Company. At the end of my letter I stated, "If you would ever like to come to Jefferson City to our state capitol, I would be honored to show you around." I soon forgot about the letter.

The following week, I received a telephone call from Petersen's administrative assistant who explained that Petersen had never received a thank you letter from anyone in government before and had decided to visit Jefferson City. Petersen also requested a tour of the Kansas City plant — a first for the plant — before flying to Jefferson City.

When I received Petersen's itinerary, I bet it looked similar to a U.S. president's — "Mr. Petersen will disembark the limousine at 12:15 p.m. Mr. Petersen will be in the State Capitol lobby at 12:20 p.m., etc." Petersen addressed the State Senate that day, and every Ford dealership owner was in Jefferson City to hear Petersen speak. TV cameras, reporters from all over the state came to Jefferson City for his visit.

When Petersen visited my office and I handed him a state manual, you would have thought I handed him the crown jewels. What a gracious and humble man.

Later that day, Gov. Kit Bond and I flew into Kansas City with Petersen to view the first Ford Topaz and Tempo roll off the line. When I used to speak to school children, I would tell them, "Never doubt the importance of one thank you note."

Sandra Lee Reeves  
M.B.A. '98

## A cosmic encounter

In November 1962, I was a sophomore at Park College (now Park University) in Parkville, Mo., when Carl Sagan gave a four-lecture series on life in outer space. As a reporter for the *Park Stylus*, the university's newspaper, I caught up with him after the lecture. Because of my keen interest in his topic, I was thrilled to talk with him. At that time, Sagan was nationally famous but not yet world famous. His international fame didn't occur until his award-winning 1980 television series *Cosmos: A Personal Voyage*, which he narrated and co-wrote, aired on Public Broadcasting Service.

During my interview, I asked Sagan about the possibility of life in outer space. His response, "The general conclusion which I draw is that the universe is teeming with life, and that in the next few years we will for the first time set foot on other worlds and make contact with the life that is on them."

Barbara McDowell Whitt  
M.A. '68

## Questioning America's mystery

In 1974, during my first year at the UMKC School of Medicine, I had lunch with the mother of Lee Harvey Oswald. I became interested in the Kennedy assassination after attending a lecture in college and put together a slide and video presentation of my own. Still left with questions about the case, I decided to visit Dallas.

When I first contacted Marguerite Oswald, she wanted to know how I got her phone number. It was listed in the Fort Worth directory. She had a grandmotherly appearance but had become cynical and bitter about history's verdict on her son. She also refused to take a picture with me, and it was clear she had been burned over the past decade by freelancers and the tabloids.

However, she mellowed considerably when I invited her to lunch. She insisted her son had nothing to do with President John F. Kennedy's murder, citing what she termed "inconsistencies" in the Warren Commission report.

Oswald, a former licensed practical nurse, told me she couldn't find work because of her name and sold her son's memorabilia to support herself.

Had I envisioned today's eBay world, I would have snapped up the entire collection. The gray fedora that Jack Ruby was wearing when he shot Oswald was auctioned in 2009 for \$53,775. Ruby's murder weapon, a .38-caliber Colt Cobra Revolver that he purchased in 1960 for \$62.50, went for \$220,000 in 1991.

Her parting words to me were, "You should change hotels every night you're here. Now that you've been seen at my house, the people who killed my son may try to get you."

Lou Kartsonis  
M.D. '77

## A tranquil fall

It was 1970 and in the midst of the Vietnam War, I worked part time on freight docks and drove freight trucks locally in the Kansas City area to help pay my expenses. I was preparing to graduate from the newly constructed dental school and in accordance with Federal law, I had been deferred from the draft for my four years of undergraduate work and my four years of dental school. On the day of graduation, I would be a 1-A-immediate induction into the service. One of the instructors in the dental school had served 27 years in the U.S. Public Health Service and recommended that I apply. He gave me a good reference, and I was accepted into the U.S. Public Health Service and stationed at the Northeast Penitentiary in Lewisburg, Pa.

I was a general dentist working on the inmates. One day I was informed a very important patient was scheduled, and I was shocked when I saw a short, thickset man in an ironed and

starched set of prison kakis, as it was exceptionally unusual for inmate clothes to be pressed. As I stared at him, he appeared to have a visible aura around his persona, which startled me. I instantly knew who he was and invited him to sit in the dental chair. After the initial exam, I informed him that he needed a filling and explained a local anesthetic would be provided. He stopped me, went into a self-induced hypnotic trance before asking me to proceed. He never moved while I prepared the tooth.

When I finished, I shook his shoulder and said, "Jimmy, it is time to wake up." He woke up, shook my hand and thanked me. That patient was Jimmy Hoffa.

Saunders Steiman  
B.A. '66, D.D.S. '70

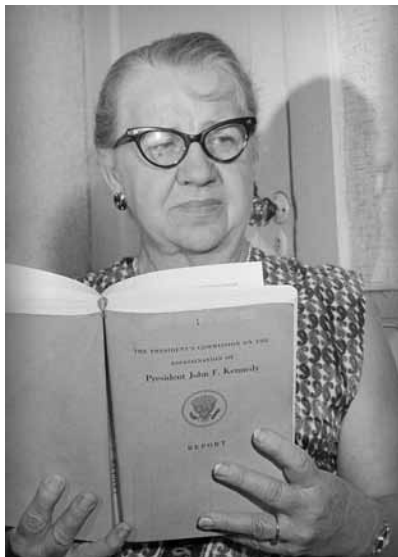
## Sweatin' it

I used to work for my father at his dentist office in Beverly Hills during the summers. Dad had a number of celebrity clients — Mae West, Richard Kline, Tracy Scoggins, Jack Klugman, etc. But the encounter I remember most vividly involves exercise guru Richard Simmons.

One of my main tasks was to fetch lunch for the office staff from the deli next door. One day as I headed back to the elevator with our food — hot pastrami on rye with mustard and fries for Dad, a burger and fries for me and a packet of M&Ms for dessert — in popped Richard Simmons wearing his signature striped shorts and tank top.

Smelling the food, he glanced over and proceeded to lecture me on how horrible all that food was for my body and how I needed to eat better. Knowing we were headed to the same place, I took as long as I could to get out of the elevator and snuck in the back door hoping he wouldn't see me. I managed to avoid him the entire time he was getting his teeth cleaned, but I'm sure he got a glimpse of Dad eating his pastrami sandwich.

Kerianne M. Tupac  
M.P.A. '95, M.F.A. '96







# Class of 2030

## What does the future hold for UMKC?

by PAT McSPARIN

**A**s the Class of 2011 begins its senior year this fall, the staff at *Perspectives* started wondering what the world looks like to these students. The average member of the Class of 2011 doesn't remember the Berlin Wall or Johnny Carson hosting *The Tonight Show*. They've also never lived in a world without cell phones or Women's Studies majors. This made us ask: What will UMKC and higher education be like when today's infants walk on campus in 20 years? Given the enormity of this question and our close proximity to some of the brightest minds in Kansas City, we decided to find out. An eclectic mix of four well-known campus leaders joined us to debate and help answer our questions.

**Perspectives:** With the University having just completed its 2010-2020 strategic plan, we thought we'd take a leap even further into the future, to 2030. Paint us a picture.

**Truman:** There will be more dormitories. There will always be a certain number of non-traditional students who will commute, but for the University as a whole to move forward with quality research and educational programs, we're going to have to have a certain number of full-time freshmen coming in every year who stay for the full four years.

**Bonewald:** Our culture is going to change dramatically because of all the advancing technology. Long-distance learning is probably going

to be the norm. There will always be certain things that students have to physically attend, like the arts and the Conservatory. But I think the main reasons students will come together will be for social reasons. We're going to have a lot of online learning that the University is going to have to prepare for.

**Truman:** There's going to be a different way that we learn and teach. Online will be great for the type of content that is delivered, memorized and learned in that fashion, but we'll have much more collaborative space where people come together and discuss; where people come together and work on projects together.

**Witte:** I think the differences between what's online and offline is





## Meet the panel

### 1 Kevin Truman

Dean of the School  
of Computing and  
Engineering

### 2 Lynda Bonewald

Interim Vice Chancellor  
for Research, Curators  
Professor and Lefkowitz  
Professor in Oral Biology at  
the School of Dentistry

### 3 Peter Witte

Dean of the Conservatory  
of Music and Dance

### 4 Maria Meyers

Director of the UMKC  
Innovation Center

about our generation. That's not a distinction that the class of 2030 will make. You're right that there are things that online learning does well. It doesn't do everything well. It's great for pushing knowledge. It's not great at strengthening skill. But knowledge isn't everything. There's a place in the world for skill.

**Meyers:** Information is going to be overly abundant, so the best functional people in 2030 are going to be the ones who can filter through that information and determine what's important, and then act on it. The world of 2030 is going to be very global, because information will be very available globally, and how our students play in the global world and how they filter information is going to be very important.

**Perspectives:** Now that anyone can make a movie, publish work, be a journalist, etc., how will we know real talent and how will students find their niche?

**Witte:** We've rarely known talent in our own time.

**Bonewald:** You have to die first.

**Witte:** There are as many people who were missed in their lifetimes as were celebrated. It is also true that the people who were celebrated are not necessarily the people who lasted. It's not a problem for a 14 year old who is working on his or her third film on a laptop to change. So instead of consuming culture, we make culture. That's not a problem. It's not a problem for the art form.

**Bonewald:** Do you think talent is taking any media and using it creatively?

**Witte:** Yes.

**Meyers:** But don't you think it's also just a different way of communicating? It used to be you could talk to each other. Then you could use a piece of paper and write to each other. Then you could

pick up a phone and talk to each other. Now you can create a video and take a picture. So you might make movies, but it doesn't mean you'll be on the big screen. It just means that's the way you share.

**Witte:** Right. And the notion that media mediate relationships does not necessarily mean that the most recent talent is superior talent. In 2030, we'll still be reading Shakespeare. We'll be listening to Bird. That's the real puzzle for us — and it's terrifying: How do we pull culture forward?

**Bonewald:** Do you think that the reason we still read Shakespeare and still talk about Galileo and Michelangelo is that these individuals came up with these incredible ideas in a very scarce environment? I think that's the reason why we continue to teach that Pasteur had an open mind when he looked down a microscope. It's a teaching tool with regards to being open to what's around you when it comes to interpretation and being creative.

**Meyers:** Those are key innovations that occurred in history — key right turns that were made.

**Bonewald:** They say that we gain information by making incremental gains, or we can take a giant leap. Those were the leapers. Those are the ones we remember.

**Witte:** And punished them in their time.

**Truman:** I think how we view these people speaks to the fact that technology is changing. Things have become much more collaborative and much more incremental. You can think way outside the box, but quite honestly, people are taking minor steps to each one of those areas today. It's different.

**Perspectives:** So, how will students in 2030 find their niche?

**Witte:** They'll create it. Is there going to be a "job for life" in 2030? Is there one in 2010?

**Bonewald:** We're seeing this change with every generation. When I was 18, you went to college, you got married and you got a job. You always knew what you were going to be. I think in 2030, students will be able to sample all kinds of potential careers before they finally decide what their niche is. They'll be able to have remarkable experiences before making some kind of decision as to what to call themselves.

**Meyers:** The business world is going to change, too, jump-started by this recession that we're in. We're going to see more people develop their talent at something they love to do, and they'll shop it out to many organizations as opposed to looking for any one organization. We'll see more corporations hiring contract workers as opposed to hiring lots of full-time people. We're seeing it already.

**Truman:** A portfolio career is not a stigma before the way it used to be. It's actually a badge of honor. Today, it means everybody wants me. And this question hits on the fundamental premise: Is the purpose of education a meal ticket or to create one's life? It's the difference between education and vocation. And it's difficult for me to imagine a world in which you can walk out of college and expect to have one job your entire career.

**Bonewald:** (laughing) Can I tell you about the dental school?

The conversation continues at

[PERSPECTIVES.UMKC.EDU](http://PERSPECTIVES.UMKC.EDU)

# Growing impact

Assignment in Iraq reaps cultural and personal rewards for USDA's Glenn Brown

by PAT McSPARIN



Glenn Brown left his “hobby farm” near Cameron, Mo., in 2001 to volunteer for a 16-month assignment in Iraq with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Teaching and farming have gone hand-in-hand for Glenn Brown (Ed.Sp. '93) for decades. Before joining the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in 2001, Brown was a dairy specialist for the University of Missouri Extension in St. Joseph, Mo. He was also running his own small farm near Cameron, Mo., and working for the USDA's Export Verification Program, a safety inspection service, when he realized something was missing.

“After I left Missouri Extension, I felt that I really wasn't helping individuals,” Brown says. “I was sitting in front of a computer, probably doing some good somewhere for the system, but I couldn't see the impact of what I was doing.”

“(The Iraqis) taught me a lot about being grateful. They have been through so much that we can't even begin to imagine.” -Glenn Brown

Brown said he learned of the position in Iraq through the USDA and was intrigued.

“It's kind of weird to describe it, but it was like a spiritual thing,” he says. “I just felt inside that I really needed to do it. I can't put any more reason on it than that. I felt I should do it. I asked my wife, and she said if you feel that strongly about it then you need to follow up on it, apply for it and see if you get accepted.”

Brown did get accepted. He traveled to Iraq and completed training with the USDA, then was placed on a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) to help Iraqis rebuild the physical and institutional infrastructure of its agriculture industry.

During a 16-month voluntary assignment to Iraq with the USDA, Brown learned that the reward can far outweigh the sacrifice.

As a PRT member, Brown helped The Green Mada'in Association for Agricultural Development (GMAAD), an agricultural cooperative that provides valuable training and technical assistance to farmers in four townships in Mada'in Qada, east of Baghdad. The not-for-profit co-op gives members access to low-interest credit lines to purchase agricultural equipment, seed, fertilizer and supplies.

“(GMAAD) is very similar to American farm co-ops,” Brown says. “Members have to pay an annual membership fee, and they can buy products at a discount off of the regular market price because they're trying to buy a larger volume. The co-op buys what the farmers want and what the members need.”



Brown says the quality of the Iraqi education system surprised him. "At first glance it may not seem like it, but I made some good friends there, and they held Ph.D.s from places like the University of Nebraska," he says. "One was a very good soil scientist from Iowa State University. These guys (were educated) in the U.S. 30 years ago, then they went back to Iraq and went through Saddam's regime, which was devastating to everybody.

"But they held on and kept going, and now that they're finally able to do things, I think we're going to see a lot of improvement. And it's going to be from the educational system and the young people."

While Brown was impressed with his Iraqi counterparts' level of education, he says they still needed help from the USDA.

"There's a need for anybody with agriculture background of any kind," Brown says. "They're making major decisions on million dollar projects for irrigation, for packing houses, milking systems, all kinds of variety of agribusiness, and a lot of times they were taken advantage of because they didn't understand the agriculture part. The biggest problem we saw was a lack of any agri-business experience. There wasn't anybody who could run a company."

Brown explains that Hussein's administration allowed advanced education, but the government strictly controlled how Iraqis could use that education.

"They lost a generation of people and farmers because the government subsidized everything. They didn't allow them to have their own products being sold. The government would pay for the seed, and they'd pay when it was harvested. They'd do everything for them," he says. "It was very much a communistic system for agriculture. They weren't allowed to succeed or fail. Like American farmers, they want to get the most they can for their product."

Brown says Hussein's regime held them back, but he says success is in the making. According to the USDA, the GMAAD has more than 800 members and is growing by 10 percent every month.

## Teaching and learning

Brown says his work with Iraqi farmers was successful due in part to his studies at UMKC.

"I learned in the adult education class I took (at UMKC) that the environment must be conducive to teaching," he says. "That's where learning happens. That's when ideas are exchanged and knowledge is passed along. And that's a beautiful thing when it happens."



Glenn Brown (third from the left) and the USDA's Baghdad PRT East team worked with the Iraqi farm organization Umm Al-Been to build successful agriculture operations.

Yet the teaching and learning went both ways, Brown explains.

"(Iraqis) taught me a lot of things about the heat and the lack of water and how to survive in that environment," he says. "It was a tremendous experience."

He says he also learned a great deal about farming in these hostile conditions.

"Everything has to be irrigated because they don't have the rainfall," Brown says. "They really have excellent soil, they just can't get the water to it. And in some areas we were in, like in east Baghdad, the water was very salty; the salinity is very high in it. They do things like put phosphoric acid and sulfuric acid into the water coming out and that pulls out the salt so it's less harmful on the plant. It was pretty amazing. I'd never seen that."

But Brown says the most important thing he learned in Iraq wasn't about farming.

"They taught me a lot about being grateful," he says. "They have been through so much that we can't even begin to imagine and taught me a lot about caring for and helping each other."

"We misinterpret so much in the media today because we think they're just killers and they just care about extremist religious points of view, but that's a very, very small minority. Most of them are just beautiful, caring people who are so grateful for what you do for them and with them."



Left: An Iraqi woman measures water in a stock tank. Right: Glenn Brown (second from left) worked with 40 elementary schools in Iraq to plant palm trees – a sign of peace. USDA advisers like Brown help Iraqi farm organizations and producer cooperatives rebuild the country's agriculture industry by providing training and technical assistance.



# A career highlight

National association honors pharmacy alumna with prestigious award



Lt. Col. Stacia Spridgen received the 2010 American Pharmacists Association's Distinguished Federal Pharmacist award. Spridgen has served for more than 20 years.

**W**eeks before members of the U.S. military deploy overseas, they run through a long checklist to make sure they have everything they'll need. Lt. Col. Stacia Spridgen (B.S. '89) and her center ensure one important item isn't left out — their medications.

As director of the Department of Defense Pharmacoeconomic Center at Fort Sam Houston in Texas, Spridgen oversees the program responsible for ensuring military treatment providers and pharmacies have the tools available to meet service members' prescription needs before, during and after deployment. For her work, she was recently named the 2010 American Pharmacists Association's Distinguished Federal Pharmacist. It's the latest award in a long line of commendations for Spridgen.

She has been in the U.S. Army for more than 20 years and was honored in 1999 as the research pharmacist of the year. Still, Spridgen calls this year's award the "highlight of my career" because colleagues from across federal agencies made the selection.

"It's very nice to be recognized by your peers," Spridgen says. "I don't do this and a majority of people don't do it for the recognition. They do it because it's the right thing to do, and they're passionate about it. I get a lot of satisfaction about my day-to-day contributions to our pharmacy beneficiaries, most especially our deployed service members."

In her current role, Spridgen helps make pharmacy services more accessible for service members and their families. With the help of her department, service members are able to easily order the prescriptions they need overseas and when they return. They serve as the liaison to the military treatment facilities, the TRICARE mail order pharmacy, and providers and pharmacy officers in theater to ensure necessary medicine are readily available. Providing that assistance to service members can also help ease the transition upon return from active duty, she says.

"They have someone they can talk to and not just e-mail to talk about any issues that may come up," Spridgen says. "It makes all the difference in the world. If they have someone to talk to, it cuts down on the red tape."

Before she enrolled at UMKC, Spridgen was pursuing a degree in nursing. She joined the U.S. Army Reserve in an effort to find a career where she could make a difference, and at the time she thought that would be as a direct care provider. But a friend who graduated from UMKC sparked her interest in pharmacy as a different way to be involved with health care. She got involved through the D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) campaign, other campus activities and found a passion for helping others. Spridgen says the support she received from faculty, staff and peers at the School of Pharmacy helped her adjust in the early stages of her career.

"It laid the foundation for me with pharmacy and what I wanted to do with my career goals," she says.

Spridgen has been in active duty in the U.S. military since 1989. She has worked as a deputy pharmacy consultant and in the office of the Surgeon General prior to joining the Pharmacoeconomic Center. She met her husband, Mike, a sergeant major, while in the Army Reserve before she came to UMKC. They have spent much of the past 20 years separated by service duties, but joined by their desire to make a difference.

In October, Spridgen will learn whether she has been promoted to colonel, a move she says would be bittersweet because she enjoys her current colleagues. A promotion could change her job duties, but she would still be heavily involved in providing medication assistance and education to service members.

"I'm enjoying what I'm doing, and I think we're contributing a lot to the mission," she says. "I'd like to stay here as long as I can."

ERICK R. SCHMIDT

# A humble patron

## Gary Cagle's humanitarian service aids battered countries

For years, Gary Cagle (B.A. '85) has traveled the world, aiding countries ravaged by conflict and Mother Nature. From Rwanda and Somalia to Iraq and back home to the flooded streets of New Orleans, his humanitarian efforts have helped countries and cities most devastated by natural disasters start over.

Cagle spent nearly two months in Haiti earlier this year helping the non-governmental organization Team Rubicon and the World Health Organization (WHO) with medical disaster relief response planning and management. He currently serves on the Team's Board of Advisors, and as an international liaison, interfacing with the United Nations, WHO and other international organizations such as Doctors Without Borders.

Last December, he returned to the United States after six months in Asia aiding the Maldives — a small island nation in the Indian Ocean — as part of a United Nation's disaster relief team. The island and surrounding countries near the southern tip of India were swallowed by walls of water stretching 22 feet high and two miles wide as the destructive 2004 tsunami swept away homes, businesses, cars and more than 157,000 people.

"Helping these countries start over is what makes my missions worthwhile," says Cagle, who served as the U.N.'s disaster management consultant during the trip. "This work has changed my life in ways I never would have expected, and it's shown me how much we all take for granted."

"By watching the Maldivian people start over, I've learned that we are lucky we don't have to worry about catching enough fish to make sure our families don't go hungry. That trip made me even more appreciative of what we have in America."

Prior to his humanitarian work, Cagle served as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army's Medical Service Corps before being medically discharged in 1997. He completed UMKC's Army ROTC program in 1985 and was a member of the University's first commissioned class since 1945. Cagle says his service prepared him for his current duties of disaster medicine planning and relief execution training.

Cagle worked directly with the National Disaster Management Center of the Republic of the Maldives — similar to the U.S.'s FEMA — by providing relief assistance to the organization's minister and teaching Incident Command System certification courses.

"I've done a tremendous amount of training," Cagle says. "With this train-the-trainer program, my Maldivian students who pass the course will, over the course in the next year, go out and each train a new class of 20. This system is set up and designed to simplify and make disaster relief response easier for their fire fighters, police officers and the Maldivian's military National Defense Force."

"This work has changed my life in ways I never would have expected, and it's shown me how much we all take for granted." -Gary Cagle

"The success of my training is what made that six-month mission worthwhile, because we greatly increased the internal capacity of the Maldivian first responders to handle another disaster if and when it happens," Cagle says.

Cagle says he also visited 29 inhabited Maldivian islands and saw parts of the country that more than 90 percent of foreigners never see, because most tourists only see resorts or the few "tourist islands" with representative fishing villages and tourist sites.

"I fell in love with the country and the people," he says. "I went there trying to make a difference and I think I did, and while I don't know if I'll ever go back, I made some lifelong Maldivian friends."

KARA PETROVIC



Left: Gary Cagle (center) spent two months in Haiti with the non-governmental organization Team Rubicon. Right: Cagle transcribes notes during his six-month stay in the Maldives.

## Alumni achievements

### 40s

**John Collins** (B.A. '49, College of Arts and Sciences) of Alexandria, Va., manages the "Warlord Loop," an invitation-only e-mail net he founded in 2001 whose high-profile members debate national security issues. Collins spent 54 years in federal service including positions at the Library of Congress, the National War College and the National Defense University. He is the author of more than 12 books, 15 book chapters and many other articles.

### 60s

**Allan Katz** (B.A. '69, College of Arts and Sciences), of Tallahassee, Fla., was nominated by President Barack Obama and confirmed by the U.S. Senate as an ambassador to Portugal. Katz, an attorney at Akerman Senterfitt, previously served as assistant insurance commissioner for Florida and as general counsel for the state's insurance department. He also served seven years as an elected city commissioner in Tallahassee, Fla.

**Nancy Thayer** (B.A. '66, M.A. '69, College of Arts and Sciences) of Nantucket, Mass., just published her 20th novel, *Beachcombers*, available from Ballantine Books. Thayer is the *New York Times* best-selling author of the *The Hot Flash Club* series and *Summer House*.

### 70s

**Dr. Richard Draper** (M.A. '76, School of Biological Sciences), Hannibal, Mo., was the keynote speaker for the Evelyn Scarborough Linebury Nursing Program at Hannibal-LaGrange College in May. Draper serves as a diplomat for the American Board of Emergency Medicine in emergency medicine, medical director for the Hannibal Regional Medical Group, medical director for the Hannibal Free Clinic and on the board of directors for the Hannibal Area Chamber of Commerce and the Hannibal Free Clinic. He previously served as the medical director of emergency services at Hannibal Regional Hospital.

**Martin Marinaro** (B.A. '71, M.A. '75, College of Arts and Sciences), of Minneapolis, Minn., celebrated his 20th year as president and founder of ON-TRACK, a Human Resources Consulting firm based in Minneapolis. His firm has provided career

transition, leadership development and team building services to major U.S. corporations including *The New York Times*, *The StarTribune*, *Minneapolis/St. Paul Magazine*, Citibank, Chase Manhattan, Allina Health Systems, Health Partners and many others around the country. In May, he conducted a team building retreat for the Asia-Pacific Executive Leadership Team of HB Fuller Corporation in Shanghai, China.

**Randy Rhoads** (M.P.A. '74, Bloch School), of Lee's Summit, Mo., was elected mayor of Lee's Summit in April. Rhoads, a former city councilman, garnered 51 percent of the votes, beating out 16-year veteran Karen Messerli. Rhoads worked for Black & Veatch for more than 30 years before retiring as a senior project manager.

### 80s

**Mark E. Humphrey** (L.L.M. '87, School of Law), of Wichita, Kan., was appointed to the Board of Directors for Catholic Charities in Wichita, Kan. Humphrey is also on the Board of Directors for Ivista, The Bill of Rights Institute and Wichita Wind Ensemble. He is currently the senior vice president of the corporate tax group at Koch Industries in Wichita.

**Toni Klutho** (B.S.P. '80, School of Pharmacy) and her husband, Joseph (B.S.P. '79, School of Pharmacy) of Gulf Shores, Ala., are participating in medical mission trips to rural Cuzco, Peru, which was hit by devastating floods.

**Brian Clay Luedloff** (B. A. '82, Conservatory of Music and Dance) has been granted tenure and promoted to associate professor at the University of Northern Colorado (UNC), where he is the director of Opera Theatre. This summer he taught in the Artists-in-Training program for Opera Theatre of St. Louis and led a workshop Truth in Singing at UNC.

**Pat Patton** (M.A. '86, D.M.A. '93, Conservatory of Music and Dance), of Evansville, Wyo., and his wife, Marci, received the University of Wyoming College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Alumni Awards. Patton is a professor of music and director of choral activities at Casper College in Casper, Wyo., and is the chorus master for the Helena Montana

Symphony Chorale. He has made more than 400 appearances on four continents as guest conductor, adjudicator and workshop clinician and has conducted all-state choirs throughout the United States.

**Teresa Sullivan** (M.A. '87, Ed.Spec. '93, Ph.D. '99, School of Education), of Fairway, Kan., serves as Kansas state president for the American Association of University Women. Sullivan and her husband established the Thomas and Teresa Sullivan Scholarships at the School of Education and at the Kansas City Kansas Community College (KCKCC) for math/computer science education majors.

### 90s

**Matt Beem** (M.P.A. '95, Bloch School) of Independence, Mo., authored the book *Performance-Driven Fundraising: Taking Charge of Your Success*. Beem currently serves as president and COO of Hartsook Companies Inc. in Kansas City, Mo. He was honored in 2008 as one of Kansas City's top "40 Under Forty" by *Ingram's* magazine.

**Janette Cooley** (B.A. '92, M.A. '98, School of Education) of Grain Valley, Mo., principal at Pleasant Lea Middle School, was named Middle School Principal of the Year by the Greater Kansas City Missouri Principals Association. She was recognized at a banquet April 21. Cooley has served as principal since 2005 and previously worked as assistant principal at Lee's Summit West High School and Lee's Summit High School and as an administrative intern at both Summit Lakes and Pleasant Lea middle schools. She has served as an officer and president for the Greater Kansas City Missouri Principals Association.

**Craig Fuchs** (D.M.A. '99, Conservatory of Music and Dance), of Pittsburg, Kan., was named director of the Honors College at Pittsburg (Kan.) State University (PSU). Fuchs previously served as chairman of the Department of Music and as interim chairman of the Department of Art at PSU. Fuchs will continue to conduct PSU's wind ensemble, teach undergraduate conducting and oversee the department's master's program in wind conducting. Before joining the university, Fuchs worked as a public school band director for 10 years. This summer, Fuchs served as the guest



conductor for the National Symphony Orchestra of Paraguay. He was honored with the Distinguished Faculty of the Year Award from PSU in 2001.

**Brian Lowe** (B.A. '90, School of Education), of Olathe, Kan., was named principal of Meadow Lane Elementary School in Olathe. He previously served as principal at Brougham Elementary School in Olathe.

**Kelly McAndrew** (M.F.A. '98, College of Arts and Sciences), of New York, N.Y., played a reporter in the Old Globe Theatre's world premiere of Kenny Finkle's comedy, *Alive and Well*, last March in San Diego.

**Matt Miller** (B.A. '99, M.A. '03, School of Education), of Kansas City, Mo., was named principal of Trailridge Elementary in Lee's Summit, Mo. He previously served as principal of Laurel Hills Elementary School and is working on a doctorate in educational administration at Baker University.

**Tabitha Schmidt** (M.A. '97, College of Arts and Sciences), of Greenwood, Mo., was appointed director of special programs for the The Kansas City Art Institute's main and Northland campuses. Recently, Schmidt was manager of tour programs and associate educator for tours and adult learning at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

**Rebekkah Stuteville** (B.A. '91, M.A. '97; Ph.D. '04, College of Arts and Sciences), of Parkville, Mo., was named associate dean of the Hauptmann School for Public Affairs at Park University in Parkville, Mo.

## 00s

**Gretchen Anderson** (M.A. '02, Ed.Sp. '10, School of Education), of Prairie Village, Kan., was named principal of Oak Hill Elementary in Overland Park, Kan. She previously worked as an elementary principal in the North Kansas City School District.

**Ryan Bryant** (B.A. '03, College of Arts and Sciences), of Greenwood, Mo., currently works as a DJ (Chris Ryan) for Country 94.1 KFKF, and as the catering manager at HyVee in Prairie Village, Kan. Bryant previously served as a manager and trainer for Applebee's restaurants. This August, Bryant married Heather Fischer (M.A. '99).

**Ronald F. Holden II** (M.A. '07, School of Education), of Baldwin, Kan., was named the multicultural recruitment coordinator and admission representative at Mount Union College in Alliance, Ohio. Holden previously worked at Baker University in Baldwin, Kan., where he served as the director of multicultural affairs. He was also instrumental in chartering the first historically African-American sorority and fraternity at the university and was a founding member of the Social Justice Task Force, which was created to address diversity, multiculturalism and social justice at Baker.

**Maria Iliakova** (B.S. and B.A. '09, School of Biological Sciences and College of Arts and Sciences), of Kansas City, Mo., received a Fulbright Scholarship to study biology in Barcelona, Spain, this fall. Iliakova will study development regulation of genetic transcription in *Drosophila melanogaster* — also known as the common fruit fly. She will collect and analyze genetic and protein expression data from a set of gap genes that regulate the fruit fly's embryonic development. She will use this data to develop a quantitative model relating mRNA and protein production in living cells. Iliakova plans to complete her master's degree in biochemistry and molecular biology at Georgetown University.

**Julia D. Kitsmiller** (J.D. '02, School of Law), of Liberty, Mo., was named a firm member at Seyferth Blumenthal & Harris LLC in Kansas City, where she specializes in employment and business litigation and counsels clients on employment-related issues. She is president of the UMKC School of Law Alumni Association, a co-chair of the Western District of Missouri Federal Law Clerk Society, an inn master for the UMKC Inns of Court Program, a trustee of the UMKC Law Foundation, vice-chair of the Missouri Bar Labor and Employment Committee and is a member of the Federal Practice Committee for the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri.

**James Knight** (M.F.A. '02, College of Arts and Sciences), of New York, N.Y., played a Civil War re-enactor in the Old Globe Theatre's world premiere of Kenny Finkle's romantic comedy, *Alive and Well*, last March in San Diego.

**Kelly McCambridge** (J.D. '08), of Greenwood, Mo., received the 2010 Tiera Farrow Community Member Award from the UMKC School of Law Association of Woman Lawyers Student Organization. The award recognizes leadership and community involvement that enhances the lives and position of women in the law and in the community. McCambridge was selected for her work in mentoring women law students. She is the principal attorney at McCambridge Law in Lee's Summit, Mo.

**Samantha Shepherd** (L.L.M. '09, School of Law), of Overland Park, Kan., was elected a director on the Missouri's chapter board of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, a non-profit association that assists lawyers and bar organizations. Shepherd is the founding attorney of Shepherd Elder Law Group, LLC in Kansas City, Mo. Her practice areas encompass elder law, estate planning, long-term care planning and asset protection, Medicaid planning, Missouri Medicaid applications and appeals, probate and trust administration, guardianships and special needs trusts.

**Ryan White** (J.D. '09, LL.M. '10, School of Law), of Kansas City, Mo., won the American Bar Association's Law Student Tax Challenge, a nationwide contest designed to give students the opportunity to research an actual tax planning problem. White, an attorney at Evans & Mullinix in Shawnee, Kan., specializes in taxation, business law, bankruptcy, estate planning, family law and litigation.

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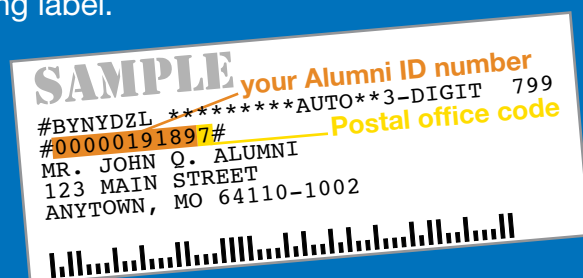


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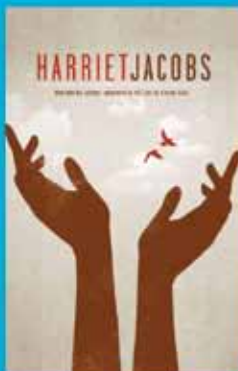
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