

Spring 2010

# PERSPECTIVES

News Magazine of the University of Missouri-Kansas City



**Starting Over** Personal challenges led these students to rediscover their ultimate purpose

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## Free membership has its privileges

If you're a UMKC graduate, no one has asked you for Alumni Association membership dues for three years. That's a big deal, and here's why.

The Alumni Association board made the decision to eliminate annual dues. Instead, the Association asks alumni to direct their giving to the UMKC Alumni Fund, which provides direct scholarship and support to students. Thanks to the Association's support and the thousands of alumni who got behind the Alumni Fund, UMKC has had record-high alumni giving for the past two years. And the funds donated through the Alumni Fund go directly to students in all UMKC schools.

But without annual dues, the Association needed new ways to support its many outreach efforts, including alumni awards events, sponsorship of athletics and initiatives in the academic units. The board looked for respected affinity partners that would offer alumni discounts while also returning a percent of sales back to the Association.

Several new partnerships are up and running. The UMKC Alumni Association was the first in the nation to enter into a partnership with LifeLock, the identity-theft protection company, which provides alumni a discount. Alumni looking to purchase invitations, cards or personalized stationery can create and purchase them at the online alumni printshop, and 20 percent of proceeds benefit the UMKC Alumni Association. Ever wanted to show your Roo pride with a UMKC alumni credit card featuring your school or college? It's here, along with a great rewards program with proceeds coming back to support UMKC. Details about these programs – including travel and insurance partnerships – are on the Alumni Association Web site's benefits page.

The Association takes its privacy policy seriously: communications about these opportunities come from the Association, so your information is never sold or shared with anyone.

Three years ago, the Association took a bold step to direct financial support to UMKC students rather than its own operations. And the Association's decision means all alumni are members ... enjoy your privileges!

LISEN TAMMEUS

## Cover story

- 4 **Second chances**  
Students beat the odds to pursue their dreams



On the cover: (clockwise top right) Osher Scholars Angela Dimond, Damion Alexander, Shauna Tuiono-Horn and Adania Godwin are pursuing degrees at UMKC.

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Prairie Village, Kan., HyVee Catering Manager and alumnus Ryan C. Bryant (B.A. '03)

# From our kitchen to yours

Alumni and friends share their favorite recipes

## Baked “Feta”ccine

From the kitchen of Ryan C. Bryant (B.A. '03), catering manager at Prairie Village, Kan., HyVee

*“My love of cheese is beyond compare. I ate an entire package of feta in front of some friends one day, as a dare, to prove how much I love it. Much to their dismay, I ate the whole thing! So I decided to create a dish around the cheese, that was not too overpowering, and perfect in flavor. Hence, Baked ‘Feta’ccine.” -Ryan Bryant*

PREP TIME: 25 minutes

COOK TIME: 20-25 minutes

### Ingredients

1 pound fettuccine  
1 16-ounce jar tomato and basil marinara sauce  
½ pound crumbled sweet Italian sausage  
1 8-ounce container crumbled feta cheese  
1 8-ounce container shredded mozzarella

### Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat, about 8 to 10 minutes; prepare pasta al dente.
3. As pasta cooks, heat marinara sauce on medium heat and brown the crumbled Italian sausage. (To ensure proper cooked meat, cook the sausage to 165 degrees). Keep meat warm until all other items are cooked thoroughly.
4. Drain pasta and place items in a large mixing bowl along with the crumbled feta. Using a spatula, mix items together. Place mixture into a large pyrex pan leaving about a half inch of free space from the top of the pan. Cover with a small layer of mozzarella cheese on top.
5. Bake until cheese is melted and golden, about 20-25 minutes. For an added effect of color, add dried basil, garlic, salt and pepper to the top of the cheese prior to serving.

## Texas Caviar

From the kitchen of Kerry D. Kanatzer (B.S.Ci.E. '90)

*"(It's) a secret recipe stolen from Texas and good for all occasions, be it an office party, tailgate, picnic or breakfast," Kanatzer says. "If I can make it, anybody can."*

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

READY IN: 1 hour 15 minutes

### Ingredients

3 16-ounce cans of black beans, drained  
2 8-ounce cans small white corn, drained  
2 16-ounce cans of Rotel, drained  
1 bunch of green onions, diced  
1 yellow pepper, chopped  
1 green pepper, chopped  
1 red pepper, chopped  
2 cups tomatoes, chopped  
¼ cup red wine vinegar  
Juice of one lemon  
Dash of cumin  
1 garlic clove, minced  
Cayenne pepper to taste  
Chili powder to taste  
Garlic salt to taste  
1 bunch of cilantro

### Preparation

1. In a large bowl, mix black beans, white corn, Rotel, green onions, peppers, tomatoes, vinegar, lemon juice, garlic and seasonings together.
2. Chill in the refrigerator for at least an hour.
3. Toss with desired amount of fresh cilantro and serve with chips.

## Andy's Lamb Marinade and BBQ

From the kitchen of Andrew G. Saffas (B.A. '45)

*"Prior to getting married, I was invited to the Andronico residence [soon-to-be wife's family] for a special Sunday dinner – Greek-style marinated lamb. [Her father] Master Chef Andronico emphasized that one of the most important ingredients in Greek cuisine is the juice of fresh lemons," Saffas says. "While I appreciated his enlightening discourse about lemons, I was more interested in his youngest daughter, Nikie, a real peach. One year later, I married the peach, but I never forgot about the lemons, which I use abundantly whenever I marinate lamb." -Andy Saffas*

PREP TIME: 3 hours, includes marinade time

COOK TIME: 1 hour, or until meat thermometer reads 150-155 degrees

### Ingredients

1 6-pound leg of lamb, boned and butterflied, at room temperature

### Tangy marinade

4 teaspoons crushed garlic paste  
4 teaspoons sea salt  
2 teaspoons oregano, ground between palms  
½ cup extra virgin olive oil  
1 cup fresh lemon juice

### Preparation

1. Three or more hours before grilling, unwrap leg of lamb, remove netting (if any), rinse lamb and dry with paper towels. Place lamb in roasting pan.
2. In a two-cup glass-measuring cup, stir together the marinade ingredients and whisk until creamy. Mixture should taste tangy; add more lemon if desired. Pour over leg and set lamb aside, unrefrigerated for at least two hours. Turn meat every half hour to baste.
3. Preheat grill to 300-325 degrees (front and back burners on medium; center burner is off). Place lamb on center of rack, inside/cut side up; baste well with brush. Every 15 minutes thereafter, baste leg with marinade from pan and turn.
4. In one hour, insert meat thermometer into the thickest part of the meat. Temperature should read between 150-155 degrees. Remove leg from grill and place in a clean pan. Let meat cool for 10 minutes.
5. Slice leg into ¼-inch slices and overlap them on a platter. Squeeze with fresh lemon and cover with juices from the pan.

## Chocolate Gravy – Country Bumpkin Fondue

From the kitchen of D. Douglas Hall (Pharm.D. '01)

*"This is a southern recipe that has been passed down from before my great grandmother to my grandmother and then to my mom and my aunts," Hall says. "I grew up with this as a Saturday morning breakfast treat. It is more common in southeastern Oklahoma." -D. Douglas Hall*

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 15 minutes, or until sauce thickens

### Ingredients

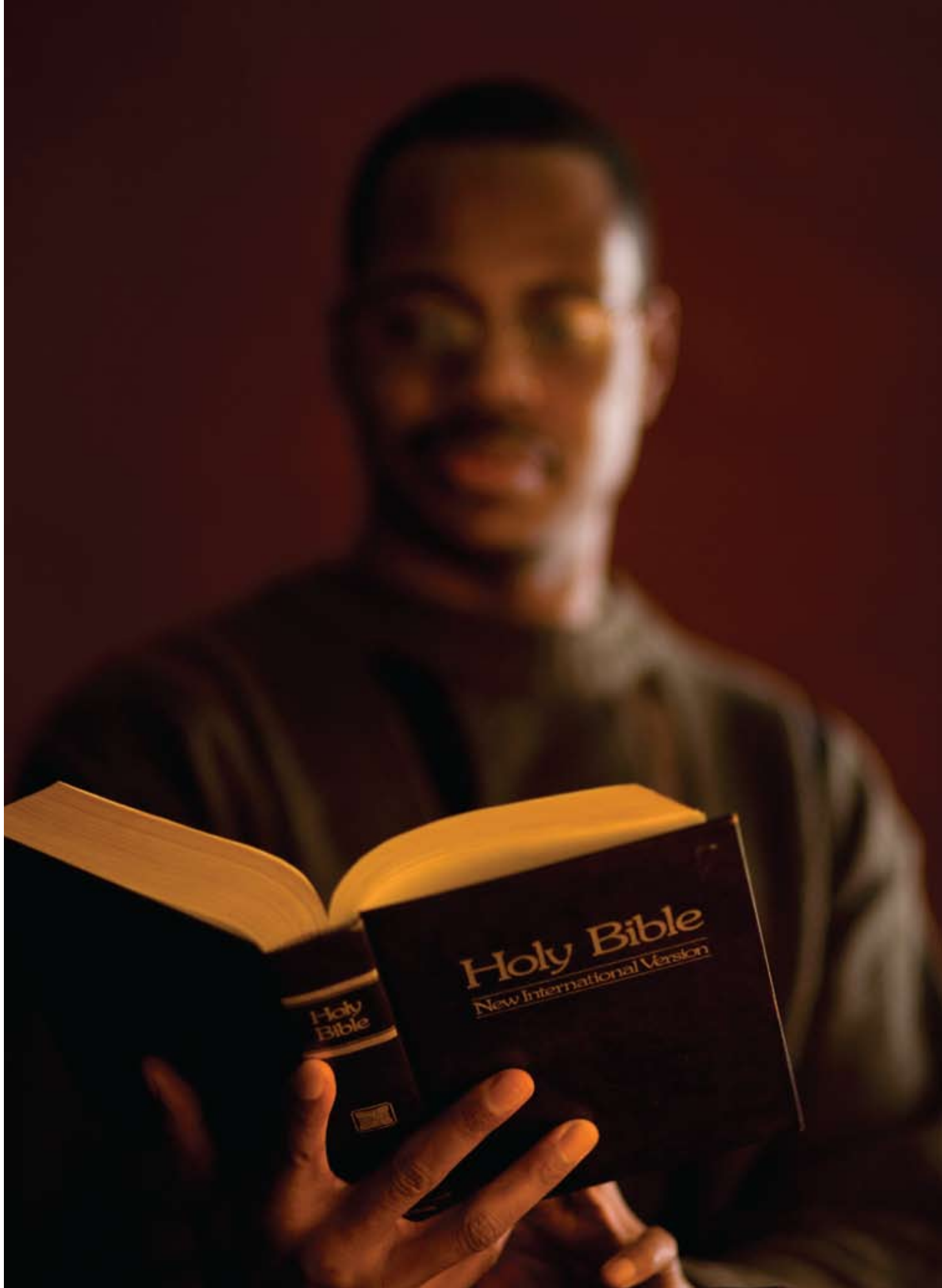
¼ cup flour  
¼ cup of Hershey's cocoa  
1 cup of sugar  
1 ½ cups milk  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

### Preparation

1. Mix flour, cocoa and sugar in a medium size saucepan; stir in milk and vanilla extract.
2. Cook on medium to high heat until the sauce begins to boil and thicken into a gravy like consistency; stir frequently.
3. Serve over biscuits.

Find more recipes online for empanadas, game hen, cheesecake, cinnamon rolls and more! Or submit your own recipe online.

PERSPECTIVES.UMKC.EDU



# Second chances

For select students, a reentry scholarship program gives new meaning to starting over

by KARA PETROVIC

As the cell gate slammed shut, Damion Alexander listened to the bars rattling behind him. There he stood in the cold 8x12 foot, near-empty prison cell. A toilet, a sink, a metal bunk bed, a Bible and walls were all that surrounded him.

He'd been caught with contraband, cell phones to be exact, which earned him time in the "hole," solitary confinement. The prison scene wasn't new to Alexander. He'd been incarcerated a year after his conviction for selling cocaine in 2000.

He'd never been a religious man, but he says that changed after six months in isolation. "I was tired of trying to make decisions on my own," he says. "I picked up that Bible and read it from beginning to end."

He says he'd never used drugs, and that he only turned to selling cocaine to support his family. Soon after graduating from high school in 1994, he started working full time and met his girlfriend, Kesha. When they had their first daughter, Khadijah, complications early in the pregnancy revealed problems with the baby's brain development. The umbilical cord had wrapped around her neck, and Khadijah now suffers from cerebral palsy.

"I was trying to work full time after her birth, but I kept getting calls to leave and come to the hospital because of the baby," Alexander says. "I started selling drugs to support my family. The way I was raised, I didn't think a man should have his family on Medicaid. I'd always been a 'Say no kid,' but for me, it was the best option at the time."

His "best option" landed him eight and a half years behind bars.

Alexander was released from an Arizona state institution in May 2008 and transferred to a halfway house in Kansas City. Once he stepped outside the prison walls, Alexander says he was "determined to do whatever it took not to go back."

A year into the work force, Alexander was holding true to his promise. His job at CKS Packaging started at \$7.65 an hour, but he continued to land raises and was promoted from front packer to machine operator. Prior to his incarceration, he'd attended the University of Alaska Anchorage. He loved education but says the idea of going back to school after his release never seemed realistic.

However, Alexander's former senior parole officer says she knew he had potential and handed him an application for UMKC's Benard Osher Reentry Scholarship Program.

"I first learned about the scholarship through one of our community partners," Chee King says. "Some offenders express interest in going back to school, and when they don't, we still encourage a degree and a career. I knew that Damion had some former college experience."

At first, Alexander says he didn't want to give up his full-time job and return to school because he thought it was too late to earn an education.

"I prayed a lot about it. I asked God what I should do, and he led me here. I'm glad I applied and happy they saw something in me. Not only am I getting a do over in life," he says, "but I'm beginning to realize that I have a purpose."

Alexander enrolled in his first communication classes through the UMKC College of Arts and Sciences last fall to pursue a communication's degree. He wants to share his story as a motivational speaker and says the scholarship will help him do just that.



Damion Alexander

“Not only am I getting a do over in life, ... but I’m beginning to realize that I have a purpose.”

-Damion Alexander

Alexander isn't the only awardee benefiting from the scholarship program that provides 10 nontraditional students – aged 25 to 50 – the chance to start over. The program, which began in fall 2007 thanks to a \$50,000 gift from the Osher Foundation, targets students who have experienced an interruption in their education of at least five years.

Candidates must also be a newly admitted or continuing student at UMKC, enrolled in a minimum of 12 hours, demonstrate financial need and maintain a 2.5 GPA. Awardees receive \$7,000 a year.

“For many of these students, the Bernard Osher Scholarship is their educational life line,” says Liz Barton, scholarship coordinator. “It provides our students a second chance to not only receive a bachelor’s degree, but the chance to do so with less monetary stress. The scholarship opens the door for nontraditional students to get involved and make an impact on campus by enriching classroom discussion and changing the way we as an institution interact with nontraditional students.”

The scholarship has helped other Osher Scholars discover their purposes as well. Although each scholar’s journey to UMKC varies, they’re all reaping the same rewards: second chances.

## Moving on

If there’s one thing in life that Osher Scholar Angela Dimond wanted, it was the chance to start over.

Her mother, Joyce, split soon after her birth. She was raised by her grandparents. Joyce always promised to visit, but by age 13, Dimond says she could count on one hand the number of times she’d seen her mother. Yet when Joyce began writing and calling regularly to check in, Dimond hoped to rekindle the relationship.

“By this time, I knew my mom had been making progress,” Dimond says. “She’d been in rehab and told me that she wanted a relationship with me. I’d always wanted to know her, so when she invited me to California to live with her, I jumped at the chance.”

Dimond says her mother soon realized that having a teenager in the house was more than she could handle.

One morning, the house was unusually quiet when Dimond woke up. She slid out of bed to find Joyce.

“Mom?” she called. No answer.

“Mom?” she called again as she headed into the living room, but again no answer.

She headed back toward the bedroom hallway and pushed the door to her mother’s room open. She expected to find Joyce in bed, but an empty room met her gaze instead. All that remained was a crumpled piece of paper on the bed’s mattress and hangers in the closet.

The letter was short.

*I’m moving to Wisconsin with my ex. Rent is paid up until the end of the month. Have a nice life.*

“It had only been four months, so at that point in the relationship I wasn’t surprised,”

Dimond says. “Instead, I started thinking ‘How am I going to survive? Take care of myself?’”

Returning to Dallas to live with her grandparents was out of the question, as her grandfather was sick and in and out of the hospital. With no other family to turn to, Dimond dropped out of school and followed her boyfriend to Washington state. The relationship lasted only five months, and afterward Dimond found herself “couch hopping” at friends’ apartments back in California or sleeping on the beach while working a telemarketing job by day.

Weeks before turning 17, Dimond was arrested for violating probation and spent two weeks in juvenile hall. She’d been caught at 15 stealing a bottle of vodka. Still a minor after her release, Child Services placed her into foster care for the next year.

Dimond was wed two months later at age 18. Dimond says she went from “street rat to Suzy Homemaker” in a matter of weeks. The marriage, however, was short lived.

During the separation, Dimond began dating her friend and now fiancé Tommy. The couple learned they were pregnant and moved to the Kansas City area to be closer to his family. After her son was born, Dimond says her priorities changed.

“I was holding my three-month-old son, and I began to wonder how he sees me,” she says. “And all I could think of was that he’s going to see me as a complete mess. Although I’d gotten my GED, I never thought college would happen for someone like me. But then I said to myself, ‘Why are you just settling? You can make yourself who you want to be.’” She registered for classes at Maple Woods Community College the next day.

“I still remember coming home from kindergarten saying, ‘I want to be a paleontologist,’” she says. “Some advisers tried to persuade me from taking geology as my first class, but I took



it anyway and quickly realized that it was exactly what I wanted to do with my life. Makes sense I guess. I was the only girl I knew who had a rock collection."

Dimond received the Osher Scholarship and began studies at the UMKC College of Arts and Sciences last fall after graduating with her associate's degree from Maple Woods in 2008. Dimond says her favorite geology teacher at Maple Woods, who is also a UMKC alumna, recommended UMKC's geology program. She hopes to earn her bachelor's degree by 2011, but says graduation may be pushed back with a new baby at home.

"Thanks to the scholarship, I'm able to go to school and be a mother at the same time," she says. "I'm able to work harder in my classes, because I'm not having to work a part-time job. My life hasn't been predictable, but it's turned out pretty well."

## Never giving up

Osher Scholar Adania Godwin will be excited to graduate from the School of Nursing next spring, but the 34-year-old says it's been a long road. Her struggles started with a rap at the door that turned her life upside down.

*Knock. Knock.*

*"Mrs. Adania Godwin?" a man asked.*

*She nodded.*

*"You've been served."*

"With a knock on the door, I found myself facing an unexpected divorce," she says. "Words of divorce were never spoken. An argument never occurred. I was dependent on my husband at that point. I wasn't working because I was focused on school. He took the money and told me to get out. He left us with nothing."

Desperate to keep it together for her three young girls and with nowhere else to turn, Godwin sought out her counselor at the UMKC School of Nursing who put her in touch with the Osher Scholarship Program.

"One door closed but another one opened, and the Osher Scholarship stepped in. I'm here today because of the generosity of strangers," she says. "This scholarship has blessed and changed the life of my entire family."

Godwin says this isn't the first time she's had to start over. After graduating from high school in 1994, she enrolled at Wichita State University, but she dropped out after a year and a half. She eventually returned to Kansas City and landed a job as a patient care technician in the rehabilitation department at St. Luke's Hospital – a position she held for nine years.

After Godwin had her first daughter, she says she wanted a change and started thinking about going back to school.



Angela Dimond is following her childhood dream and studying geology at the College of Arts and Sciences.



School of Nursing student Adania Godwin says hardwork and determination has paid off. “I didn’t know if I could do it, but so many people were pushing me along,” she says.

“One door closed but another one opened, and the Osher Scholarship stepped in. This scholarship has blessed ... my entire family.” -Adania Godwin

“While working at St. Luke’s, I knew I liked nursing,” she says, “but I was frustrated, because I was in an assistant role. I didn’t have a lot of options or flexibility. I didn’t have a voice, but I knew I could be the nurse.”

Godwin enrolled in some classes and tried to juggle them with work and raising her daughter, but she eventually dropped out. It took another six years before she tried college again.

“I finally got really serious with my schooling in 2003,” she says. “I was married and had two more young girls at home, but I was determined to go back to school and finish. I didn’t know how, but I was going to do it.”

Godwin applied to UMKC and was awarded a general scholarship from the UMKC Bloch School of Business and Public Administration, which awards more than \$130,000 annually to its students.

“I began general studies in fall 2005,” she says. “I learned so much about myself and got back so much confidence. People here encouraged me where I didn’t believe in myself.” The encouragement, she says, got her through one of the roughest times in her life: her divorce.

In January, Godwin pushed graduation back a year to pick up a minor in humanities and healing, and says she will continue working as a student nurse at Kansas City’s Veterans Affairs Medical Center until graduation. Her hard work is paying off. Godwin already accepted a full-time job with the VA starting next May. Yet with graduation within reach, Godwin says her educational journey is just beginning. She plans to work at the VA for a year before returning to UMKC to pursue a master’s degree in nursing education.

“I want to be the next voice that pushes somebody along, just like the ones I had who encouraged me,” she says. “I want to be able to give back and say, ‘Don’t give up. If I could do it, you can do it.’”

## Staying strong

Osher Scholar Shauna Tuiono-Horn will never forget the first time she saw her fiancé, Justice, collapse to the floor and uncontrollably convulse for six minutes. The seizures began a few years after Justice was assaulted in an attempted robbery in North Carolina.

He was only 20 when three men approached him outside a gas station with the baseball bat. One blow to the head crushed the right side of his skull. It took surgeons hours to remove all the skull fragments from his brain tissue. He wasn’t expected to make it through the night.



For Shauna Tuono-Horn, an education means the opportunity to provide for her husband, Justice, and children, Justice Jr. (left), Shanice and J'shon.

Horn didn't know him then. The couple didn't meet until two years later when the two struck up a conversation in a Wal-Mart break room.

"It was love at first sight," Horn says. "We were engaged six weeks later. I'd always been a very headstrong person. I initially wanted to go and finish college, but he came along and changed all of that."

Horn says they were inseparable until mid-July when she boarded a three-hour plane ride to Arizona. Earlier that year, she'd been recruited and awarded a full ride volleyball scholarship to Eastern Arizona College. A couple of months later, Justice's seizures began.

"I got a call at school that he was in the hospital," she says. "The surgeons who worked on his brain injury told him that seizures were possible later in life. After the first one, he began having them more frequently. I left school with all intentions of going back, but after I saw what was happening I couldn't go back."

The following June, the couple had their first son, Justice Jr., and welcomed their daughter, Shanice, 10 ½ months later. Throughout their marriage, money was tight. Horn couldn't work in fear of leaving the children with Justice, whose seizures continued. Their third child, J'shon, was born in 2001.

Horn eventually took a pharmacy technician job in 2002 after doctors found a medication to help control Justice's seizures. A year later, Horn says she knew an education was the answer she'd been searching for, and she enrolled part-time at UMKC as a pre-pharmacy major.

"I wasn't happy doing pre-pharmacy, so I looked into other things," she says. "I knew I wanted a bachelor's degree and began thinking of other things that interested me. I knew I always enjoyed speaking with the pharmacy representatives at work, so I decided to pursue a business degree through the Bloch School."

Just when the stress of work, school and motherhood began to wear on Horn, she got a call from UMKC's Program for Adult College Education, which provides nontraditional students help with arranging academic courses.

"They called and told me that the University was looking for students who fit the Osher Scholarship's criteria," she says. "I received it, and I can't say 'Thank you' enough. Through my struggles, my kids have learned how important an education is, and they are sold on going to school one day."

"I'll never take my education or the opportunities it's awarded me for granted. My experience – thanks to the Osher Scholarship – has been priceless." ■

"I can't say 'Thank you' enough. Through my struggles, my kids have learned how important an education is..."

-Shauna Horn

# Getting down to business

## Venture Creation Challenge opens doors to students' business ideas

by ERICK R. SCHMIDT

In times of financial uncertainty, finding solid footing for a new business is one of the largest conundrums facing entrepreneurs. A competition within the UMKC Bloch School's Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation is putting an emphasis on new venture creation, and teams from within the institute have shown reason for hope.

The Regnier Family Foundations' Venture Creation Challenge is a University-wide competition with teams made up of students from all academic areas. Teams develop original or existing concepts and present them to investors, entrepreneurs and business owners from around the area. The program's goal is two-fold, aiming to get fresh ideas into the market as well as preparing the next generation of Kansas City's entrepreneurs, says Phil Needles, programs manager at the institute. [Continued on page 12](#)



### 2. Put in the work

"You have to do your due diligence before people will want to help you. Do the leg work. The hardest parts come first. Research it, then go ask for help. Once you've done the work, people are more willing to provide that help."

- Chad Owen, Lovesick Clothing

### 1. Get going

"There's never a better time to start a company than where you are right now. You can come up with any type of excuse. If you're about to get married ... if you're about to have a baby, that can be an excuse not to get started, but those are always going to come up."

- Steve Timperley, Tencap Tennis



Timperley



Owen

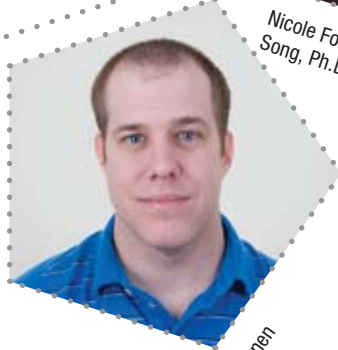
### 3. Go “all out”

“Go at it all out, because that’s what it takes: dedication, drive and initiative. You’ve got to find a way when things are tough like this.”

- Ryan Konen, *Fun Flotations*



Nicole Forsythe, Ahsley Earnest, Michael Song, Ph.D., Ryan Konen and Katie Gunn



Konen

### 4. Know the business

“There are all kinds of surprises that can come at you, and having a plan and knowing that business well enough to respond and survive is key.”

- Becky Sandring, *Chef Burger*



Sandring

## 5 secrets to start-up success

Starting a business takes an innovative spirit, capital, a business plan — and in an economic climate like the current one, it takes guts. Who better to share the keys to entrepreneurship in trying times than those who have been there and done it? For the past four years, teams at the Bloch School’s Institute of Entrepreneurship and Innovation have pitched, developed and built businesses for the annual Venture Creation Challenge. Here, in the words of previous winners, are five keys to succeeding in a less-than-ideal market.



O'Shaughnessy

### 5. Be mindful, not scared

“One of the downfalls of what’s happened (in the economy), is that we always have to be mindful of the economy, which sort of puts in a false fear. Don’t let it create fear.”

- Brendan O'Shaughnessy, *Lovesick Clothing*



Lovesick Clothing

"When you're there to pitch your idea to 50 business owners with experience, that's real. Let's give them that experience before they're outside of school," Needles says. "It's our objective and our obligation to do exactly that."

The competition began in 2006 but has recently undergone a structural makeover. In the past, winners received a cash prize and an option to use the student incubator, among other perks. Last year, it was restructured into a \$15,000 launch package that winners received only if their idea was launched.

Needles says the challenge fits perfectly with the institute's goal to create an ecosystem where all varieties of business can flourish. The challenge brings together multi-disciplinary teams from across UMKC.

"It's about the business of entrepreneurship," he says. "We're giving them the tools to be successful at some point. We strive to have them go quickly into venture creation, but that's not everyone. Hopefully they leave with the tools to do it when it is right for them."

Steve Timperley (M.B.A. '07) is one of the challenge's success stories, though he quickly points out that his business is still in the growth phase. Timperley was one of the event's winners in 2008, earning a chance to further develop his business in the institute's student incubator. His company, Tencap Tennis, began as software to measure the skill level of players and has grown to a social networking tool that helps players find one another.

"There's a very good chance that had I not gone through the Venture Creation Challenge, I may not have started the business," Timperley says. "The challenge was an awesome vehicle for me to put the business plan together."

He says competing in the challenge helped him put the theories he developed in the classroom to work.

"You're actually getting the experience," he says. "You're in a trade show and you've got to sell your product to investors. It's very different from learning the theory in the classroom."

Brendan O'Shaughnessy (B.A. '09) and Chad Owen (B.A. '10) are friends who took an idea developed during high school and turned it into a Venture Creation Challenge winner. Though Owen was a business major at UMKC and O'Shaughnessy a graduate of the

UMKC art department, they were able to collaborate on their entry. Lovesick Clothing is the Christian-themed T-shirt company they created for the challenge, and they both have enjoyed the ups and downs of their first experience as entrepreneurs.

"It forced us to formulate our thoughts cohesively," O'Shaughnessy says. "Now the big hurdle is having to reformulate now that we're finishing school. We've seen it become successful by putting in time and effort, and we want to continue to push forward."

Owen is careful to temper his thoughts about the success of the company, which he hopes to grow into a national brand.

"Before, if we failed, it didn't matter. Success is still relative, but being in the position where we want to be, we haven't accomplished yet," Owen says. "We have always been extremely positive and illogically optimistic, but now that's balanced with a realistic view of what's going on."

"... had I not gone through the Venture Challenge, I may not have started the business. (It) was an awesome vehicle for me." -Steve Timperley

Student Ryan Konen is another example of a student who may not have considered venture creation if not for the challenge. He learned about the Venture Creation Challenge through a course called Technical Entrepreneurship in the UMKC School of Computing and Engineering. Konen says that while he was able to see the project from an engineering perspective, he learned there was much more to starting a business, including the business and legal sides.

"You're thrown into a group of people who you might not typically work with, but you learn to work together," Konen says. "It's like the real world, being hired into a team atmosphere. That's a great experience."

Konen's team, Fun Flotations, won one of the 2009 launch packages with their electric watercraft designed for social lounging. Though the team elected not to pursue a full launch, Konen's interest in venture creation was piqued by the challenge.

"I go through every day wondering how I could make things better," he says. "If I think of something (in the future), I have a better idea of how to pursue it."

The Bloch School's emphasis on entrepreneurship has paid off, as the Princeton Review named the school one of the top 25 graduate entrepreneurship programs in the nation. The ranking was based on academics and requirements, students and faculty, and outside-the-classroom experiences. It was UMKC's first appearance on the annual list.

"IEI has one of the largest and highest quality entrepreneurship faculties in the world," says Institute Executive Director Michael Song, Ph.D. "We continue to develop new paradigms for entrepreneurship research and education, creating models others will follow." ■



Chancellor Leo E. Morton (left) and Institute Executive Director Michael Song, Ph.D., (right), joined student presenter Ron Cocker at the 2009 Venture Challenge.

# Expert insider

## Q&A on the economic crisis

by KARA PETROVIC

William K. Black, UMKC's associate professor of economics and law, is a leading economic crisis expert. Best known as the senior regulator during the heart of the savings and loan crisis, he's appeared on several political news stations and in Michael Moore's documentary *Capitalism: A Love Story*. *Perspectives* sat down with Black to talk about the financial crisis and his view of bailouts and the stimulus efforts.

**Who's/what's to blame for the housing/financial crisis? Former President George W. Bush; the Democratic-controlled Congress, which had oversight for two years; consumers; the financial industry; Wall Street; or a combination of everything?**

This is primarily crisis brought on by "accounting control fraud," which is where seemingly legitimate organizations are used as a weapon to defraud. The FBI began warning in September 2004 that there was an "epidemic" of mortgage fraud by lenders, and said that if was not perfected that it would lead to an economic crisis. The FBI also says that 80 percent of losses occur when lenders are involved. So, it's this epidemic of mortgage fraud by lenders that hyperinflated the bubble and led to the worst of the crisis.

**Do you have budgeting tips for consumers?**

Consumers are generally doing the appropriate thing and that creates what's known as the "paradox of thrift." From the standpoint of any individual consumer, on average, they have been badly over expended – too much credit card debt and too expensive of a house – and what consumers are now doing overwhelmingly is consuming less and trying to pay down their debt. This is a perfectly rational thing for any consumer, especially when scores of millions of them do it at the same time. However, it accelerates the economic decline and unemployment. But to fix the economy, you can't simply go around saying, "Hey consumer, for the good of the country you should start spending and go back into debt." That doesn't make any sense, and that's why fiscal stimulus at the federal level makes an enormous amount of sense. It can defeat that "paradox of thrift," which would otherwise turn the "Great Recession" into the second Great Depression.

**Which of the bailouts (if any/all) were absolutely necessary?**

Very little of the bailouts were necessary. Conservatives, progressives and people in the middle seem to find that the bailouts were handled very poorly. The things that made sense to do were increasing the insurance limit and deposits, and at least temporarily spending insurance limits to money market mutual funds. Those actions will probably involve minimal cost to the tax payers and were probably essential in preventing runs that would have been extremely destructive. But most of the infamous bailouts, like AIG, were economically insane.



**How would you explain budgets/deficits/spending/ etc. to non-academics and what's an easy way to illustrate \$1 trillion?**

\$1 trillion is bigger than the entire annual economic production of the great bulk of nations. The estimates are that this crisis caused more than \$4 trillion in losses. That's bigger than the entire economy of all but about five nations. It's pretty amazing to have that happen. If you don't want deficits, deal with unemployment because unemployment is pure waste of human beings and all of their productive potential. Unemployment produces enormous budget deficits. People will tend to cut back on their spending for obvious reasons. But if a lot of people do this at the same time, it makes the recession even worse and then you absolutely need government deficit spending to replace that lost demand or you'll spiral downward into a really severe recession and maybe into a depression.

**Where should people go to better understand economics? Monetary policy?**

The UMKC economics department has a superb blog, Economic Perspectives from Kansas City (<http://neweconomicperspectives.blogspot.com>), that people should look at. The department at UMKC has one of the top programs in the entire nation if you judge programs by people who get it right rather than by people who get it wrong. Our chair, Jim Sturgeon, has a wonderful slogan, "UMKC economics: the people who got it right probably will get it right again."

Read the entire interview online.

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



John Brewer, piano; Hermon Mehari, trumpet; Ben Leifer, bass; William Sanders, tenor saxophone; and Ryan Lee, drums

# Finding their rhythm

Jazz group Diverse hits the right notes

by KARA PETROVIC

**T**hey never expected to win the recording contract or to see their self-titled CD “Diverse” reach No. 49 on the JazzWeek Charts in early September.

Members of the jazz quintet, Diverse, knew they had talent, but their dreams were modest.

Four of the five members – Hermon Mehari, 22, trumpet; Ben Leifer, 23, bass; and cousins William Sanders, 23, tenor saxophone; and Ryan Lee, 21, drums – are studying at the UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance with jazz musician and composer Bobby Watson.

The students officially formed the group in 2007 after playing their first gig together in Mehari’s hometown of Jefferson City, Mo. During the fall semester, the group approached Watson for help. The group members no longer wanted to perform separately at the Conservatory; instead the students wanted the band to become an independent quartet.

“I knew they had talent,” says Watson, UMKC’s William D. and Mary Grant/Missouri Distinguished Professor in Jazz Studies and Director of Jazz Studies, “so I wanted to help them not only perform together, but also to get credits for performing.”

The judges at the 2008 Gene Harris Jazz Competition held in Boise, Idaho, saw something they liked in Diverse, too – a uniqueness that set the group apart from 11 other seasoned bands competing from around the country.

Mehari began researching the Idaho jazz competition in January 2008 and immediately took the competition details to Sanders, Leifer and Lee, as well as pianist John Brewer, 29, friend and teacher, who occasionally played with the group. Brewer even offered up his van to transport the group to Idaho.

“When I heard them play the day before they went to Idaho, they had really developed a repertoire,” says Watson, who has performed with jazz greats Max Roach, Louis Hayes and George Coleman. “I had a good feeling about them. I didn’t know they were going to win, but I had a good feeling that they could win.”

## Round one

The rules were simple. Each band had 15 minutes to perform original compositions.



"I was intimidated as heck," says Sanders, a jazz performance major. "I was ready to go home. I thought if we can make it through this first round, let's pack our bags."

Unexpectedly, Diverse sailed through round one to secure a spot in round two the following day.

## Round two

Round two was no different. Diverse preformed three new songs and earned a spot in the final round. "We were thinking 'Are you kidding? Don't you have anything better to do?'" Sanders says.

With the final round that night at the Knitting Factory Concert House in Boise, Sanders says the group knew there was no turning back and decided together, that if they wanted to win this competition, they had to pull out all the stops.

## Final round

Up against two other bands from Seattle and L.A., Diverse composed "Boise," and learned Brewer's arrangement "Dead Writing" that same day. With only a couple of hours of "diversals" (the band's coined term for rehearsals) under their belts, Diverse took to the Knitting Factory's stage.

After making it through the first two rounds and beating out some stiff competition, Diverse was close to winning the grand prize, a recording contract with Origin Records. Nerves were on edge as the last song ended, but the audience's applause sealed the deal.

"We knew we'd won by the smiles on everyone's faces," Sanders says. "I think there was a peace that came over everyone like, 'We actually did it.'"

The next six months flew for Diverse as the group delved into weekly "diversals," composed some new songs and honed in on

previous pieces they agreed to record. They entered the studio on Jan. 2, 2009. With only two days of recording time available, the band completed the album in 10 hours.

"When the possibility of them recording became a reality, I wanted to help," says Watson, who produced the album and is guest artist on one of the tracks. "They needed someone who was going to listen for tightness and spirit, along with the groove and the feeling of the music. When I heard it, I encouraged them to move on. Each song only took one or two takes."

Origin Records released the CD in July 2009, and more than 500 have been sold.

"We've gone plastic," Mehari jokes.

In October, more than 50 alumni, friends and jazz lovers helped the group kick off the CD in style at Catalina Bar and Grill in Hollywood, Calif.

So, how does the band sum up the CD?

Simply put, Lee says, "It's tight."

Mehari, who agrees with Lee's interpretation, says the CD is also a combination of everyone's different backgrounds and styles. "When we play together we naturally try to play what fits us best as a whole, while still being true to ourselves and true to our music."

Throughout the coming months, the band will continue to travel and promote the album. In April, the band will return to Boise and play at the 2010 Gene Harris Jazz Competition. And if all goes right, Diverse hopes to finalize a tour in New Orleans this spring, as well as some possible tours in Europe over the summer.

"I think that they are going to go far," Watson says. "Diverse is a launching pad into the world of jazz for all of them. They are going to be a group that will make a mark and be remembered in the jazz world."

For more information about Diverse or for a list of upcoming events, visit [www.diversejazz.com](http://www.diversejazz.com). ■

# Motion detectives

## UMKC's Human Motion Lab is moving to change the world

by PAT McSPARIN

One relatively modest grant might not seem like enough to change the world. But in the hands of researchers at the UMKC School of Computing and Engineering (SCE), it can help build a better knee, a better bicycle, better concrete, help prevent osteoarthritis, help the elderly recover from falls and even identify who's telling the truth and who's hiding something.

Thanks to a \$263,685 grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF), SCE's Human Motion Lab is being put to work finding those solutions. The grant, titled "Major Research Instrumentation: Acquisition of an Experimental Platform to Support Research and Educational Activities in Human Motion," was authored by SCE assistant professors of mechanical engineering Greg King and Trent Guess, and assistant professors of electrical engineering Reza Derakhshani and Walter Leon-Salas. It is one of about 11,500 awarded from a pool of approximately 44,000 requests.

"The lab consists of three main pieces of equipment," King explains. "Six motion capture cameras that emit near infrared light. The light is reflected off of markers on the subject's body and triangulated so we can calculate the position of the markers.

"Then there are four force plates in the floor. These are like really expensive bathroom scales, but much more accurate. They measure the vertical and horizontal force your body is exerting on the scale."

The third piece of equipment used in the Human Motion Lab is the EMG, or Electromyography system. The EMG is a series of sensors that measures and evaluates the electrical signals that the brain sends muscles when they contract.

The researchers shared the common goal of the grant, but their intended uses of the Human Motion Lab are quite varied.

"Dr. Leon-Salas is interested in developing wearable hardware that can be used to track motion," King says. "Dr. Derakhshani does a lot of biosignal processing and biocomputation, using a computer algorithm

called a neural network to look at biological signals."

King and Guess both use the lab to study musculoskeletal biomechanics, King from a more experimental point of view and Guess for computational modeling.

"One of the projects I'm working on is related to studying balance in the elderly," King explains. "Specifically, I'm looking at what older people do to regain their balance in a fall situation. As they're falling, often times they'll take a step to regain their balance. I do some work to study age differences and the step that people take to regain their balance."

King's research could lead to innovations and therapies that will help the elderly recover faster from falls and even avoid them altogether. Guess' research is focusing on knees and osteoarthritis.

"We have a project going with University of Missouri-Columbia looking into osteoarthritis," Guess says. "There are a lot of factors that go into OA, but one of those factors is the mechanical loading on the cartilage. There probably won't ever be a cure for OA, but if you can notice something in the way a person walks, maybe you can slow the progression of osteoarthritis through intervention or physical therapy."

The Human Motion Lab could also have a hand in national defense.

"We're using what is called 'the deception paradigm' in conjunction with the faculty in the psychology department," King says.

"Essentially, we're looking at the changes in posture that people exhibit when they're being deceptive. We instruct the person to tell a lie or not to tell a lie and then we'll study those differences in posture. So it could have applications for homeland security."

In addition to research projects, the lab is being incorporated into several classes, and may eventually have applications for athletics.

"The UMKC golf coach hasn't called yet," King jokes, "but it's definitely something these labs are used for."

One of Guess' classes is using the lab for a project that merges science with competition.

"We're using it in a human-powered vehicle design class," he says. "It's for the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Human Powered Vehicle Challenge."

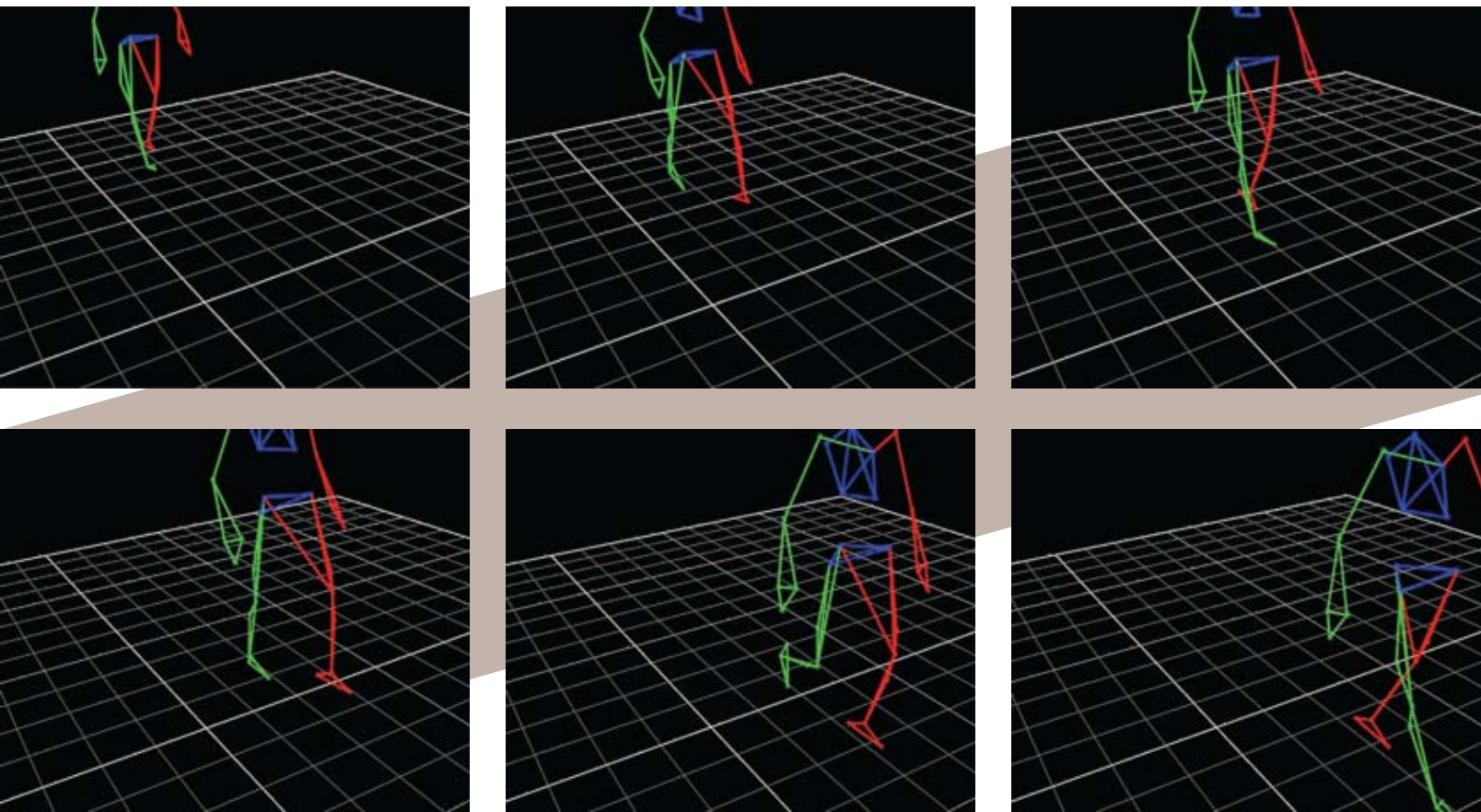
The ASME Human Powered Vehicle Challenge (HPVC) is a competition of aerodynamic, human-powered vehicles designed, engineered and built by student teams. The vehicles must be usable in everyday activities, and among the scoring criteria are elegance, ingenuity, practicality and safety.

Hosted in spring 2010 by California State University-Northridge and Central Connecticut State University, getting to the HPVC competition might be as big a challenge as the design itself, but the team is hard at work on its vehicle.

"It's basically a recumbent bicycle that we're building a fairing around," Guess says. "Universities around the country compete. But we have this nice (human motion) lab, so we can actually put a subject on



Left: Greg King. Right: Trent Guess. Opposite: These six images depict video captures from the Human Motion Lab.



a bicycle and actually measure the muscles being used during cycling.”

“The lab lets us see the duration of muscle activity,” says Joe Terriquez, a senior mechanical engineering student and the project manager for UMKC’s 2010 Human Powered Vehicle Team. “We can actually map the body components and how they move in time, so we can further understand the manipulation of angles of the rider’s position and how his muscles are used. It really helps from an engineering standpoint.”

The real world experience is something Terriquez and the team are not taking lightly.

“It’s a fierce competition, and the amount of technology that goes into it is startling. It gives UMKC students the opportunity to put on their resumes that they’ve used these materials. It makes them better engineers.”

The School is also using the Human Motion Lab with the University of Missouri-Columbia College of Veterinary Science in a canine gait study, and with the University of Kansas to research knee loads to improve artificial knees. Even UMKC’s civil engineering program is putting it to use in a project to develop a pervious concrete that might result in a safer walking surface.

At first glance, the NSF grant seems modest. But with the Human Motion Lab playing an integral part in so many research projects, UMKC researchers say the grant’s impact will be great. ▀

“... if you can notice something in a way a person walks, maybe you can slow the progression of osteoarthritis through intervention.” -Trent Guess

Watch motion videos from the School of Computing and Engineering’s Human Motion Lab online.

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





# Honoring our own

## Recognizing the recipients of the 2010 Alumni Awards and the Chancellor's Medal

by PAT McSPARIN

### DOUGLAS ENDERLE

#### Alumnus of the Year

To perform at the “happiest place on earth,” one must look the part. And for 28 years, Douglas Enderle (M.F.A. '81) has been an integral part of the Disney magic.

A senior costume designer at Walt Disney Entertainment, Enderle's designs are all over the Magic Kingdom – from its theme parks in Paris, Tokyo, Hong Kong, California and Florida to tours and television. For his innovative costume creations, Enderle has received many honors, including an Emmy in 1992 for his costumes in ABC's “Walt Disney World Very Merry Christmas parade.”

Enderle's career in costume design was thrust upon him as a UMKC undergraduate, working under professor and former Kansas City Rep scenic designer Howard Jones.

“Halfway through that first semester,” Enderle says, “the costume designer dropped out of school and there was no one to replace her. Howard told me I would be the costume designer from there on out. He set up the sewing machine and challenged me to learn.”

He did learn, and today, his team is responsible for designing and creating the costumes for the domestic Disney theme parks, the Disney Cruise line and Disney's touring shows in the United States. But costume design for Disney goes far beyond sewing.

“I work with new technology firms in the development of costumes made to incorporate deep water life preservation capabilities, as well as those that will allow characters to pilot ultra light aircraft,” Enderle says. “My occupation allows me to design everything from a single pianist on Coke corner in the Magic Kingdom to more than 20,000 individuals for the opening ceremonies for the Pan American Games.”

Scenic Designer Jason Coale worked with Enderle on the 2008 Themed Entertainment Charrette in Orlando. “He lives as an example of where training and dedication can get you,” Coale says of Enderle, “and his eagerness to help others share in that joy puts him at the top of the list.”

Enderle, who has been at Disney since 1982, says his favorite design is “the next one that's due,” and his favorite part of costume design is the research that goes into it. But what is the most rewarding part of his career and personal life?

“All of those times when I have been able to find the correct balance between my relationship with my career and with my home,” he says.

For his career achievements, Enderle will be honored as the 2010 UMKC Alumnus of the Year.

## CAMERON LINDSEY

### Bill French Alumni Service Award

When Cameron Lindsey (Pharm.D. '98) saw that donated medications from pharmaceutical companies were not making it to patients at the Jackson County Free Health Clinic, she acted. Lindsey formed the Patient Medication Assistance Program, and a decade later, the program helps coordinate paperwork with drug manufacturers, provides medication education, and teaches insulin and glucose monitoring for about 60 patients per week.

Lindsey is an associate professor at the School of Pharmacy and practices at the Kansas City Veterans Affairs Medical Center, where her residency program trains students in combating cardiovascular disease, diabetes, heart failure and anti-coagulation. The School's student and faculty volunteer work has resulted in nearly 17,000 patients served, more than 20,000 prescriptions provided, more than \$2 million in savings and 33,000 people educated since 2007.

Lindsey was also the driving force in the School of Pharmacy's being honored by the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy's (AACP) 2010 Transformative Community Service Award, the 2009 ACCP Student Community Engaged Service Award and the 2007 AACP Crystal Apple Award. UMKC's School of Pharmacy is the only school in the nation to receive all three AACP awards.

Among her other career honors, Lindsey is a three-time UMKC School of Pharmacy Teacher of the Year recipient ('05, '06, '09). She was also named the UMKC Campus Advisor of the year in 2008 and received the 2010 Missouri Governor's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

"She is able to see what students are capable of," says pharmacy student Kristin Fish, "and finds ways to bring out the best in each of us."

Lindsey has been honored with many awards from the American Pharmacists Association Academy of Student Pharmacists (APhA ASA), including National Outstanding Advisor of the Year award in 2009, and was one of *Ingram's* magazine's Heroes in Healthcare in 2004.

For her outstanding service to UMKC, Lindsey will receive the 2010 Bill French Alumni Service Award, named in honor of UMKC's first vice chancellor for University Advancement.





Ashley Cleveland (M.A. '08), Elizabeth Cleveland (M.S.W. '04) and Carl Cleveland III (B.S. '70)

## THE CLEVELAND FAMILY

### Legacy Award

The name's synonymous with chiropractic care. The Cleveland family pioneered not only chiropractic medicine, but also chiropractic education, beginning with the 1922 founding of the Central Chiropractic College, now Cleveland Chiropractic College. And three generations – a total of seven Clevelands – attended UMKC, including Cleveland College President Carl Cleveland III (B.S. '70) and his wife, Elizabeth Cleveland (M.S.W. '04), and their daughters Ashley Cleveland (M.A. '98) and Alexandra Cleveland (M.S.W. '04), and son, Carl Cleveland IV.

"I hold my role as a teacher and mentor as a sacred trust," says Ashley Cleveland, who serves as provost at Cleveland Chiropractic College. "My job is not merely to convey content, but to challenge students to learn how to be responsible for their own lifelong learning, for developing the skills that will allow them to continue to grow intellectually long after they have passed my courses."

Cleveland family members also give back to the community through personal service and the Cleveland Chiropractic College. Elizabeth Cleveland serves as the executive director of the Cleveland College Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the college. The foundation has helped organize campus blood drives, community wellness seminars, health fairs and motorcycle rides to raise money for spina bifida. The Cleveland Chiropractic College also offers complimentary scoliosis checks for children, and chiropractic students provide chiropractic care at Kansas City Free Health Clinic and the Kansas City Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

For their achievements and tradition of attending UMKC, the Cleveland family will receive the 2010 Legacy Award.



## RITA BLITT

### Spotlight Award

Rita Blitt (B.A. '52) first caught the passion for art as a little girl copying floral line drawings by her grandfather. Since then, she has lived a life filled with creativity and achievements.

"When I create," she says, "I feel like I'm dancing on paper."

Today, her paintings, drawings and sculptures have been featured in exhibitions in Singapore, Israel, Germany, Japan, Taiwan and Norway. She also has permanent exhibits in museums, galleries and public settings throughout the world.

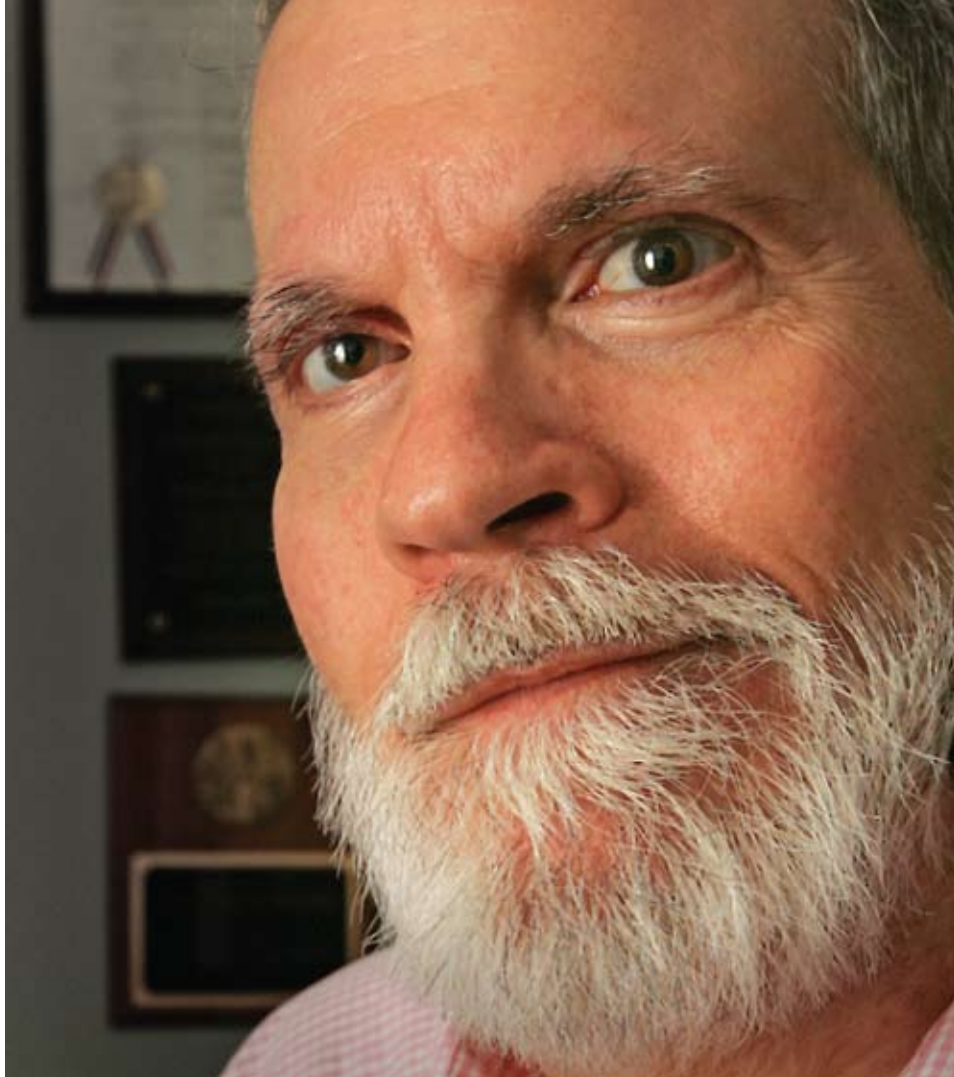
Blitt's passion crosses many genres. She has forged partnerships with The Parsons Dance Company and the Sante Fe Ballet, and she collaborated with other artists to create films including "Blur," "Visual Rhythms" and "Caught in Paint," which was shown at the 2008 Cannes Film Festival and invited to more than 130 others. Blitt also authored *The Passionate Gesture* and *Reaching Out From Within*, and she has written for many magazines, journals and newspapers around the country.

Blitt's art goes beyond the aesthetic to her efforts to make the world a better place. Her "Kindness is Contagious, Catch it!" poster started as a gift to the STOP Violence Coalition, but its world-wide popularity resulted in Blitt presenting prints to every member nation of the United Nations. The Blitt family underwrites the Blitt Family Creative Arts Center at Synergy Services, a violence prevention and intervention center in Parkville, Mo.

The Conservatory of Music and Dance has benefited from Blitt's creativity through her donation of two major sculptures, through financial support and through her service as honorary chair for the annual Crescendo! fundraiser.

"As another alumna of UMKC," said Robin Winner, executive director of Synergy Services, Inc., "I am proud to share my alma mater with Rita Blitt, and I know that she well-represents the goals and aspirations of the University."

For the attention her work and service has garnered, Blitt will receive the 2010 Spotlight Award.



## PAUL LEVY

### Defying the Odds

While fighting multiple sclerosis, Paul Levy (B.A. '71) became a powerful force in improving the lives of people with disabilities. He made his mark in the region's media world, working in newspapers, magazines and advertising, but his legacy lives on in his efforts to help others. Levy helped make Kansas City, Mo., and UMKC facilities and programs accessible to current and future students, and he worked to improve transportation throughout the city.

Levy, who died in November at the age of 63, founded The Whole Person Center for Independent Living, an organization that helps people with disabilities live productive, independent lives, and Andrew's Way Transitional Housing for people with mental illness. He also helped launch the Rehabilitation Institute's Independent Living Services program, served as director of the Coalition for Independence and used a grant to establish training programs for in-home care providers. For his initiatives, civic organization Kansas City Consensus presented him with the Dorothy Davis Citizen Award.

Levy was also honored with the National Multiple Sclerosis Achievement Award and the Missouri Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities presented him with the Distinguished Service award.

An avid writer, Levy authored the book *Rising up, Falling, Then Rising Higher*, poetry and more than 2,000 articles for regional and national newspapers and magazines.

"In life, sometimes we are fortunate to find a real hero who affects our way of thinking," says retired Missouri Representative Bill Boucher of Levy.

For his work and accomplishments in the face of adversity, Levy will be honored posthumously with the Alumni Association's 2010 Defying the Odds Award.

## Alumni Achievement Award Winners

### College of Arts and Sciences

Janet Vaughan (M.A. '81)

### Conservatory of Music and Dance

James Jordan (B.F.A. '00)

### Henry W. Bloch School of Business and Public Administration

Brian D. Birdwell (M.P.A. '96)

### School of Biological Sciences

Diane Beatty (B.S. '87, Ph.D. '94)

### School of Computing and Engineering

Harold Sprague (B.S.Ci.E. '80)

### Division of Dental Hygiene

Caren Barnes (M.S. '74)

### School of Dentistry

Ray Storm (D.D.S. '78)

### School of Education

Paul Rutherford (Ph.D. '99)

### School of Law

Robert Larsen (J.D. '73)

### School of Medicine

Marianna Martin Sockrider (M.D. '83)

### School of Nursing

Lois Hopson (B.A. '74, B.S.N. '83, M.S.N. '98)

### School of Pharmacy

Benjamin Bluml (B.S.P. '84)

The Alumni Awards Luncheon is April 22. Call 816-235-1563 for tickets.

Read more about this year's award winners online.

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

## HUGH ZIMMER

### Chancellor's Medal Winner

Though Hugh Zimmer has logged thousands of hours on campus, he's not an alumnus. But he will receive one of UMKC's highest nonacademic honors.

As an advocate and a UMKC Trustee, Zimmer has worked alongside deans, faculty, students and volunteers to build programs that have changed the landscape at UMKC. Today, for his service and dedication, he is the 2010 recipient of the Chancellor's Medal.

Born and reared in Kansas City, Zimmer entered the real estate industry in 1953. And he hasn't stopped building. He's a leading developer, responsible for more than 2,400 acres of business parks and more than 28 million square feet of commercial buildings throughout the region.

A member of the UMKC Trustees board, Zimmer was instrumental in the founding and development of the Trustees' Scholars program, which he sees as vital to the University and the entire community.

"The Trustees' Scholars program was designed to retain the 'best and brightest' in Kansas City," he says, "so that we would have an opportunity to retain them in our workforce after their graduation.

"In addition to the small number of Trustees Scholars," he continues, "other bright students are attracted to UMKC after having been exposed to the University through the application process. It would be my hope that, over time, this would have an effect of raising the overall academic level of our student body."

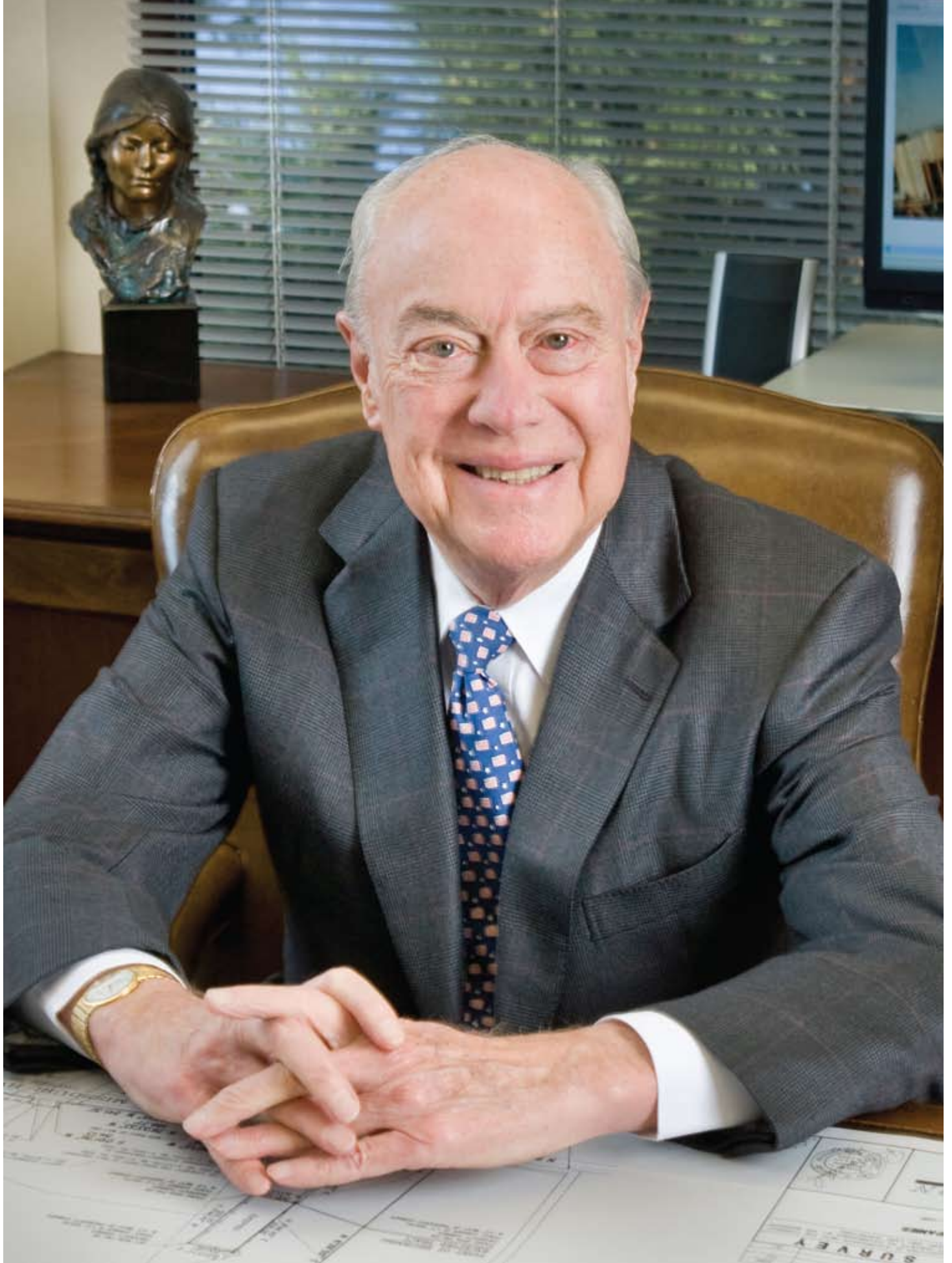
Zimmer serves on the board of the UMKC Foundation and on the advisory board for the UMKC Institute for Urban Education – a program he says plays an important part in building a powerful and effective workforce for Kansas City.

"My interest in workforce development and recognition of the problem that faces Kansas City and every city in the education of young people from our urban core led to my interest in the Institute for Urban Education," he says.

Zimmer says he believes the relationship between the University and Kansas City is essential to the success of both.

"Great strides have been made by all parties realizing that UMKC can play a pivotal role in Kansas City's future," he says, "and that both the academic community and the business community have much to gain from a positive relationship and joint goal in working together."

"...the academic community and the business community have much to gain from a positive relationship and joint goal in working together." -Hugh Zimmer





Phil Glynn (M.P.A. '07) and Chris Vukas (M.P.A. '08)

# People power

## Alumni spark growth in neglected communities

by PAT McSPARIN

In 21st century America, the idea of a community of 400 families living without electricity sounds impossible. But that was the situation in the Navajo Nation until Bloch School graduates Phil Glynn (M.P.A. '07) and Chris Vukas (M.P.A. '08) of Travois New Markets stepped in to help.

Located in downtown Kansas City, Travois New Markets is the certified Community Development Entity (CDE) arm of Travois, a leading American Indian housing and economic development financing firm. Founded by David Bland in 1995, Travois has found a niche working with American Indian communities. Since its founding, Travois has helped 50 tribes from coast-to-coast secure \$400 million worth of housing and economic investments. In 2009, Travois New Markets received an \$80 million allocation of New Markets Tax Credits, a U.S. Treasury program to spur private sector investment in distressed communities by providing a tax credit in return for qualified equity investments.

As a CDE, Travois New Markets uses equity investments to arrange financing for qualified low-income community businesses.

"If you develop affordable housing, you get low income tax credits. If you rehab a historic hotel, you get historic tax credits," explains Glynn, who serves as Travois New Markets director. "New Markets is the same basic principal. But our investors don't actually get any tax credits for putting money into projects, they get tax credits for making equity investments into our company."

"With these projects, larger companies are able to invest and take advantage of these and invest in low-income communities that just didn't have access to equity before," says CDE manager Vukas. "We only fund projects that benefit directly tribal lands or are being built to serve or help tribal clients in urban areas. We're looking for projects that facilitate economic development, from manufacturing projects that produce well-paying jobs to construction projects that provide and create the necessary infrastructures for rural communities."

The Navajo Nation has benefitted from Travois New Market's commitment. Home to about 175,000, the Navajo Nation covers approximately 27,000 miles. Development to serve that population was being hampered by a lack of infrastructure problems, including electrical service.

"They had two electrical substations and one of them was 45 years old," Vukas says. "They had a number of new developments that were supposed to go in – a women's shelter, an adult treatment center, schools, apartment complexes. But they didn't have the electrical capacity for these new installations."

The Navajo Tribal Utility Authority used a \$6.4 million New Markets Tax Credit investment through Travois New Markets to build and repair the substations without raising customers' rates.

"We funded these two substations, and they're going to be able to expand," Vukas says. "There are other businesses that they'll be able to import, and there will be 400 homes connected to the grid. That's 400 families that didn't have electricity."

The project's success earned Travois New Markets and the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority the Community Development Award from the Novogradac Community Development Foundation. The award is given annually to honor community development programs and organizations that "establish positive change in the nation's communities."

The success Glynn and Vukas have built together didn't begin at Travois New Markets – it began at the Bloch School.

"Chris and I met at the orientation for the Bloch School," Glynn says.

"We sat next to each other in our first class," Vukas says. "And here we are – how many years later? Four? Five?"

They began working on class projects together, and from there up the partnership bloomed. The Coastal Villages Region Fund, representing 23 villages on the Bering Sea coast of Alaska, built a salmon processing plant in Platinum, Alaska, with investments from Travois New Markets. The Goodnews Bay Regional Plant created 210 construction jobs and created or maintains 669 permanent jobs, including a network of 600 fishermen.

Travois New Markets also helped the Bois Forte Community Redevelopment Corporation of the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa in Minnesota secure new markets tax credit funds to build a new, energy efficient community and government services facility after

the old building was destroyed by fire. The project helped retain 70 permanent jobs and created 139 construction jobs while providing more than 45,000 square feet of new community space.

"We are going to make a big push with this \$80 million allocation to work with tribal colleges," Glynn says. "Tribal college enrollment is up, but a lot of these campuses need to go through a building boom in order to keep up with it, and we'd really like to be the company that can really help these tribal colleges build new housing, new classroom space and athletic facilities."

**"Why couldn't Kansas City be the Manhattan of community economic development and finance?"** -Phil Glynn

"We'd love to find local investors that want to invest and reduce their tax liabilities in these types of projects," Vukas says. "It doesn't have to be a bank, it can be any large corporation with a large tax liability. It'll help them generate a yield, and enable them to help Indian communities."

Glynn and Vukas want Kansas City and the Bloch School to learn what they've learned, too.

"Kansas City is becoming kind of a hub to these new market tax credit allocations," Glynn says. "There's no reason why we couldn't start to build a local investor base around the CDE's. Why couldn't Kansas City be the Manhattan of community economic development and finance? And I think that's a place that the Bloch School should take a leadership role."

"Young people are getting out of school and looking for a way to fill a need to do something – to have the opportunity do something that does make a positive difference. Students look for ways to say, 'How can I change the world while making as much money as I want to make?' That's what I see as the future for community economic development and the real future for the Bloch School to grow." ■



Left: Last August, Travois worked with the Coastal Villages Region Fund to complete a salmon processing plant in Platinum, Alaska.



Right: New Markets Tax Credit fund was used to construct two electrical substations in New Mexico, which brought power to 400 families.



# Detour of duty

Stranded in a foreign country, Mohamed Nur's promising military career was over, but his journey was just beginning

by ERICK R. SCHMIDT

**M**ohamed Nur can't help but wonder what might have been. It's not unreasonable to think that a man like Nur, whose life has turned out so differently than the one he originally planned, might have some qualms with the way his future unfolded. But as with most things in his life, Nur has moved on from the past and made the best of an unlikely experience.

"Any problem you have can be an advantage or a disadvantage," Nur says. "I didn't want to use my situation as an excuse or opportunity to fail."

"One day I was high-ranking, the next I was literally homeless. The hardest part was not knowing if my family members were safe." —Mohamed Nur

Nur (M.P.A. '99) serves as director of operations at Della Lamb, a social service agency that focuses on low-income Kansas Citians. It's a position he takes pride in, and one that comes naturally to the father of six. Still, it's a far cry from the life he once imagined when he arrived in the United States from his native Somalia in 1990.

Nur came to Kansas City to study in the Command and General

Staff Officer Course at Fort Leavenworth. The prestigious program prepares future leaders of foreign nations for their roles in military. It's a two-year program, at the end of which Nur expected to return to Somalia as a high-ranking official with an opportunity to perhaps reach the highest positions in his country's military.

But when conflict broke out back home just before his graduation from the program, Nur's plans suddenly changed. It was 1992, and he realized he would not be able to safely return to Somalia. To this day, he hasn't been back.

"God had a different idea, and I had nowhere to turn, really," he says.

With no plan for the future and no contacts in the United States, Nur stayed on the military base for a short time, then applied for political asylum. Given only one real option, Nur elected to stay in the United States and become a naturalized citizen in Kansas City, the only place he had ever known outside of Somalia. He said he was happy to be out of the conflict, but unhappy being apart from his family.

"One day I was high-ranking, the next I was literally homeless," Nur says. "The hardest part was not knowing if (my family members) were safe."

Luckily, his immediate family was safe — or at least as safe as one can be in a war-torn nation. His wife, Asha Adam Dirir, escaped to Kenya, and Nur petitioned to allow her into the United States. It wasn't until 1994 that his petition was accepted and she was able to join him. In the meantime, Nur was forced to keep up with the war by only reading newspapers and on the Internet at local libraries. Next, he did the only thing he knew that could reflect his previous life in Somalia — he pursued an education.

## The next step

Before coming to the United States, Nur possessed a bachelor's degree in civil engineering, but it was impossible to find a job because the degree was not recognized by U.S. employers. Nur enrolled at National American University, where he earned his bachelor's degree in applied management of human relations. From there, he enrolled at UMKC's Bloch School of Business and Public Administration to pursue his master's degree in public administration with an emphasis in human resources.

Taking the leap to pursue higher education in the United States was intimidating, he recalls. With the help of several professors and counselors at UMKC, he was able to focus on his studies. He tells the story of a professor taking him aside and instructing him to calm himself and gather his thoughts.

"That really helped. After he told me (to calm myself), it came easier," Nur says. "I knew it was something I could do, but I needed to focus."

When Nur graduated from UMKC in 1999, he got a call from a representative of Della Lamb, who was interested in his international experience. He started managing the international center at Della Lamb shortly thereafter, helping explain the resources available to Somali refugees. It was an important role because he remembered the difficulty in getting started in a city and a country where he didn't know anyone.

"I feel good about helping them find services, (teaching them) how to pay bills," Nur says.

From there, he became the director of human relations, and now serves as director of operations overseeing all departments of Della Lamb, including adult education and the Della Lamb Elementary Charter School.

"It's my passion to help urban kids get an education," Nur says. "So they can be productive citizens in the future, contributing in their neighborhoods and in their city."

He is seen as a Somali elder and is involved even outside of Della Lamb in problem-solving for young kids, especially encouraging education. He recently finished his Ph.D. in education from TUI University, an accredited international online university.

Judy Akers, executive vice president at Della Lamb, has worked with Nur since 1999. She says it is an invaluable resource having the first-hand experience of Nur to lend an assisting hand.

"From our clients' perspectives at Della Lamb, Mohamed has served on both sides of the fence," she says. "He knows what it feels like to be on the other side of the desk, having to ask for help, and his heart goes out to people in need."

Akers says Nur's ability and willingness to treat everyone fairly gives him an air of dependability. Furthermore, she says, everyone at Della Lamb knows that his demeanor transfers over to Nur's home life.

"Della Lamb is fortunate to have him on our staff. His wife is an angel," Akers says. "They are raising their family with the same values and morals that all of the rest of us in middle America want for our families."

Outside of Della Lamb, Nur works with organizations that aim to donate books and show young people a better way to live, including the Somali Development Fund, a local non-profit organization, and the Somali Diaspora Support Initiative. He also works closely with the United Nations and the State Department, providing insight to the experience of refugees.

## A new home

After becoming a naturalized citizen in 1994, Nur thought he might eventually return home to his family and to help reconstruct his nation.

"I don't know if the buildings I remember are still standing. It feels like half of your history is gone," he says. "It goes with you, but you don't have those places to go back to. It gets harder to imagine."

Nur doubts he'll ever return to Somalia to live. He's content to offer advice to other refugees in any way he can. This willingness helped lead him to his current role at Della Lamb.

"What we do, the intellectuals who leave, is to educate young people against Islamic fundamentalists, encourage human rights, teach them to go to schools. The elders encourage them to bring themselves together to talk about things," Nur says. "If you're not educated, you don't have the tools to filter information."

His own children and the other refugees he helps ask him why there is fighting in Somalia.

"I tell them I have no idea. I don't understand the killing. It's been going on since 1991 and nobody understands why they're killing each other," Nur says.

Had Nur returned to Somalia following his training at Fort Leavenworth, he probably would have been involved in the war. He says he believes he would have reached the rank of general, especially having graduated from the prestigious training school at Fort Leavenworth.

"I would have been at war, killing Somalis for no reason," he says.

In Somalia, he would have been forced to choose sides. Neutrality would not have been an option, especially given his military history. Instead, his life in the United States has allowed a very different life, a life of helping others.

In the beginning, he says, the change in culture was a difficult adjustment, but in the past 20 years, it has become a normal way of life. His children were all born in Kansas City, so he tries to inject a sense of Somalia into them by discussing their lives as opposed to what it would have been like in their father's country. He tries to give them an idea of the best parts of Somalia and the United States.

"I'm blessed to be here," he says. "I always had a vision to be successful, and I'm happy with my life here." ■



As Director of Operations of Della Lamb, Mohamed Nur oversees the Della Lamb Elementary Charter School and says, "It's my passion to help urban kids get an education."

# National recognition

President appoints KCUR's general manager to Corporation for Public Broadcasting board



Patty Cahill speaks at an event honoring the 50th Anniversary of KCUR.

Patty Cahill has lent her voice to the local radio industry for more than two decades, and now she's sharing it with a much larger audience. Cahill, general manager of National Public Radio affiliate KCUR 89.3 FM, was appointed to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's (CPB) board of directors by President Barack Obama in August 2009.

Cahill, who teaches communication studies at UMKC, has served as the station's manager for 22 years and is now the lone representative on the nine-person board with public radio experience. The board governs CPB, sets policy and establishes programming priorities.

"I appreciate the opportunity to represent public radio," Cahill says. "They're looking at policies way up in the sky, and now they're able to ask me how it works at the station. When I talk about radio, they listen."

As a board member, Cahill will travel to meetings from Minnesota to Washington, D.C., throughout the year, through 2014. She has been a part of two meetings so far and has been assigned to the digital media committee. She says she was happy with her assignment, and that her role has been "fascinating" to this point.

Her appointment began with a simple call from Missouri Sen. Claire McCaskill, Cahill says, but became much more complicated with the board's vetting process.

A representative from the White House called and asked whether she was willing to be audited. The questions got more detailed: They

wanted her to provide medical records, income tax records and credit history. From there, it was on to a 45-page application filled with information about herself, her relatives, previous marriages, schools she attended, places she lived and whether she had done anything in the past 20 years that would embarrass the President. Fresh fingerprints were also a must.

Cahill was eventually cleared and nominated by President Obama. At the end of July, she testified before the U.S. Senate and began serving her six-year term shortly thereafter. When she attended a November meeting in Portland as a representative of the CPB, she says she received a different reaction than to what she was accustomed.

"People were pulling me aside. I haven't changed who I am or what I do, but I have people pulling me aside asking what I think about different things, where previously it wouldn't have mattered what I thought," she says.

"I haven't changed who I am or what I do, but I have people pulling me aside asking what I think about different things ..." -Patty Cahill

The sudden change in perception isn't her favorite thing, but Cahill says she loves the opportunity to talk about radio and share her ideas, even if it wasn't part of her plan to do it this way.

"The thought never entered my mind," she says. "I wanted to be a rock star. I never thought about being on (the board)." -Erick R. Schmidt

## Pharmacy School names new dean

**Russell B. Melchert, Ph.D., R.Ph.**, was appointed dean of UMKC's School of Pharmacy in February. Melchert will begin his duties at UMKC on July 1.

He is currently the professor and chair of the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) in Little Rock, Ark. He previously worked as an associate professor of pharmacology and toxicology for the UAMS College of Medicine.

Current UMKC School of Pharmacy Dean Robert W. Piepho is retiring after serving 24 years as dean.



Mary Davidson Cohen (center) honored her father's legacy with a new full-ride scholarship at the UMKC School of Law. Celebrating the new Julian Klein Davidson scholarship from left were Bill Prugh, president of the UMKC Law Foundation, Dean Ellen Y. Suni, Cohen, Chancellor Leo Morton and UMKC law student Josh Marrone.

## School of Law receives gift, achieves national ranking

### New scholarship honors alumnus

A new full-ride scholarship at the UMKC School of Law could provide students with an opportunity its namesake never had.

Mary Davidson Cohen established the scholarship in her father's name with a \$1 million gift. Julian Klein Davidson graduated from the Kansas City School of Law (now UMKC School of Law) in 1905 with his LL.B., and earned his Bachelor of Laws from the University of Michigan in 1906. Although he loved the law, his practice was limited to only 18 months. When his father died, Davidson assumed responsibility for the family's mortuary business.

Cohen says she established the scholarship fund at the UMKC School of Law to help recruit top students who will use their education and training to provide excellent service to their clients and their communities.

"UMKC is honored to continue Julian Klein Davidson's legacy through this generous gift," said UMKC School of Law Dean Ellen Suni. "We are most appreciative of the generosity of Dr. Cohen and the impact that her father's legacy through this gift will make in perpetuity."

### School of Law earns value rating

*The National Jurist Magazine* recently ranked the UMKC School of Law one of the nation's top 25 "Best Bang For Your Buck" law schools.

The magazine looked at 65 schools with strong academic programs, alumni and employer connections, and tuition cost. The rankings were measured in in-state tuition, school bar pass rate as compared to the state's bar pass rate and percentage of graduates employed. UMKC's in-state tuition (\$13,681), school bar pass rate (90 percent) and employment rate (88.7 percent) put the school at No. 25.

Law School Dean Ellen Suni says the ranking measured many of the top priorities of the school.

"Value captures it. It's a combination of affordability combined with excellent outcome," Suni says. "This survey looks at passing the bar and getting jobs in law, and that's what people go to law school for. We're very happy about it."

While Suni says she didn't know the survey was being done, she was thrilled to see the results published in the magazine.

"We've always believed that we offer a high quality of education at a comparatively low cost," she says, "and this confirms that."

-Erick R. Schmidt

## Passings

**Richard Cass**, former professor emeritus at the Conservatory of Music and Dance, died Nov. 29. Cass joined the Conservatory faculty 1975. He was one of Kansas City's most influential musicians and teachers and was well-known for his solo recitals, chamber music and orchestral appearances. He was also known for his longtime performing partnership with violinist Tiberius Klausner.

**Louise Lillian (Katz) Doylem**, former professor emerita at the School of Education, died Dec. 8. Doyle taught at UMKC from 1966 until her retirement in 1997. She was a Cub Scout leader, avid Chiefs fan, gardener and golfer.

**George Ehrlich**, former professor emeritus of art history, died Nov. 28. He taught at UMKC, chairing the department from 1964

to 1975. As author and photographer of *Kansas City, Missouri: An Architectural History, 1826-1990* and co-author of *Guide to Kansas Architecture*, he was one of the Midwest's leading advocates of historic preservation. The Historic Kansas City Foundation offers an annual Achievement in Preservation Award in his name, and UMKC offers a George Ehrlich Scholarship for art history majors.

**James M. Phillips**, former professor emeritus of physics, died Nov. 8. Phillips was known for his love of books – especially obscure physics texts. Books on art, theology, literature, philosophy, history, woodworking, fly fishing and guitars formed the backbone of a lifetime collection. He retired from UMKC in 2006. The James M. Phillips Scholarship in Physics at UMKC carries his name.

# Ensuring integrity

## UMKC Athletics adds new team, receives accreditation

UMKC Athletics welcomed 15 new athletes to campus as the first women's soccer team took the field this fall.

Anita Rodriguez was selected as the first head coach of the women's soccer program in February 2008. Prior to joining UMKC, Rodriguez served on the coaching staff at Kent State University from 2001-07.

The women Roos inaugural season ended with a 1-17-1 overall record and a 1-8 standing in the Summit League, but Athletic Director Tim Hall says the women showed a strong commitment to the game.

"For the first season, I think it went really well," Hall says. "You have to remember, everything they did and encountered was new and that there was a first time for everything. There was a new coach, new recruiting and new students. Their first practice was everyone's first."

"Someone once told me that 'If you don't get what you want, that you get experience.' Regardless of the wins or losses, we're moving forward to turn defeats into victories."

Hall also says a larger fan base attended both the men's and women's soccer games this year in part to the new Durwood Soccer Stadium and Recreational Field, which was dedicated last October during homecoming weekend. The project was funded primarily through a \$5 million gift from the Stanley H. Durwood Foundation.

In addition, UMKC Athletics was awarded Division I certification by the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA). This news came after a two year, campus-wide study of the University's athletic program.

During the study, the NCAA focused on UMKC's academic and fiscal integrity, governance, rules of compliance, commitment to equity, student-athlete welfare and sportsmanship.

"We've made a lot of strides in the last couple of years," says Hall. "This certification is important because it means we're doing everything right. Prior to my arriving at UMKC, we were certified with conditions, but now we're strictly certified. That's a great feeling."

UMKC was initially certified in February 2000. The NCAA in 1997 began requiring all Division I schools to complete a full athletics certification process every 10 years.

As for talks of a baseball team in 2011, Hall says that addition has been put on hold. "It's not completely off the table," Hall says, "but we are focusing our attention in other areas right now." -Kara Petrovic



Freshman Britta Alpen defends the ball against South Dakota's Katie Quiñones at Durwood Stadium in September. The Roos and the Coyotes tied the game at 1-1. The Roos ended the inaugural season with a 1-17-1 overall record.

## Energy research garners attention

Efficient, inexpensive and sustainable are three keywords in the development of new energy sources, and one word might make all three possible: dendrimer. UMKC Chemistry Professor Zhonghua Peng's research into dendrimers was recently published in *Science* magazine.

Working with professors Valerie Kleiman, Daniel Kuroda and C.P. Singh from the University of Florida, Peng and his fellow researchers are studying dendrimers – branched molecular structures that can be used to capture energy. Their research could result in solar cell advancements that will make harvesting light less expensive and more efficient.

While other dendrimers have been studied, they usually had symmetrical branching structures.

"Our dendrimers are unique," Peng says, "in that there are different branches, some short and some long, just like a tree with a trunk and branches of various lengths. Such a structure offers the absorbed energy various pathways."

Peng joined the UMKC faculty in 1998 as an assistant professor, becoming a professor in 2003. He's a past Veatch Award winner, a Trustees' Faculty Fellow and a Trustee Faculty Scholar. The article, "Mapping Excited-State Dynamics by Coherent Control of a Dendrimer's Photoemission Efficiency," appeared in the Oct. 9, 2009, edition of *Science*. -Pat McSparin

# Calling all writers

## College of Arts and Sciences launches innovative program

Looking to attract literary talent to UMKC, the College of Arts and Sciences launched its interdisciplinary M.F.A. program in creative writing and media arts last fall. UMKC's program is only the second program of its kind in the region.

Program Director Michael Pritchett says the first discussions about bringing an interdisciplinary M.F.A. program to UMKC began in the early 1990s. Now after years of discussion and planning, 30 students are enrolled in the 42-hour program, which offers a combination of existing programs in English, communication studies and theater, as well as emphasis areas in poetry, fiction, screen and playwriting, and creative nonfiction.

Pritchett says the program is designed to prepare students for careers as authors, copywriters, book editors, magazine or newspaper writers, technical writers, public relation specialists, broadcasters, screen and stage writers, media buyers and corporate communicators.

"The program is going well," Pritchett says. "The students are very happy and pleased to see how cohesive the program is and how well the departments are working together. The students have also been very pleased with the support here at UMKC and around Kansas City."

Pritchett says his students will have multiple opportunities to network and land internships as they work with various literacy resources at UMKC and throughout Kansas City. From the University's on-campus magazine *New Letters* to KCUR's *New Letters on the Air*, to working with *The Kansas City Star* and local museums, Pritchett says, "UMKC is unique in that it's a center for the arts in this region."

In the coming years, Pritchett says he hopes to see an increase in the number of students and the number of full-ride scholarships that the College is able to award each year.

"I want to see this program grow. We're unique. We're offering a holistic approach," Pritchett says. "We are encouraging the students to think for themselves not only as poets or as professional writers, but as artist within a community. We're also challenging them to think about what they offer in the arts, not only spiritually but creatively." -Kara Petrovic

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## New holiday musical sets Rep record

Artistic Director Eric Rosen took a chance by putting the Kansas City Repertory Theatre's beloved holiday production of *A Christmas Carol* on hold for a year, but his gamble paid off.

The Rep's world premiere of *A Christmas Story, The Musical!*, which Rosen directed, became the highest-grossing production in the theater's 45-year history, earning more than \$883,000. The Rep also experienced single day record-breaking ticket sales of \$47,000 when tickets were first released to the public Oct. 1. Previous first day sales for *A Christmas Carol* averaged about \$34,000.

The musical – based on the popular 1983 classic movie *A Christmas Story* and short stories by Jean Shepherd – follows 9-year-old Ralphie Parker, who only wants one thing for Christmas: "an official Red Ryder carbine-action 200-shot range model air rifle with a compass in the stock, and this thing which tells time."

The Rep opened the show Nov. 20. The musical, originally scheduled to conclude Dec. 27, was extended an additional week due to popular demand.

"Developing and directing this show has been a wild ride," Rosen says. "It was a calculated risk to put our time-honored production of *A Christmas Carol* on hiatus for a year so we could develop this new musical, but the decision has paid off in more ways than we ever anticipated. The numbers prove that audiences – first timers and long-time devotees of our previous holiday show – loved *A Christmas Story, The Musical!*" -Kara Petrovic



"You'll shoot your eye out, kid!" Nine-year-old Ralphie Parker, played by Zachary Carter Sayle, asks Santa for an official Red Ryder BB Gun.

## Class notes

### 60s

**Sherry Buchanan** (B.A. '69, M.A. '75, Ph.D. '80, School of Education) of Joplin, Mo., was appointed by Gov. Jay Nixon to fill a vacant seat on Missouri Southern State University's Board of Governors. Buchanan is a retired psychologist and a former college professor, having taught at Missouri Southern and at Pittsburg (Kan.) State University.

**Phil Watlington** (B.B.A. '68, M.B.A. '70, Bloch School) of Leawood, Kan., recently published a new book, *The Rise of Powerful, Influential, and Caring Women*. He is also the author of *The World is at Your Door*. Prior to retiring, Watlington served as a senior manager for the General Electric Company.

### 70s

**Patricia (Pat) Antonopoulos** (B.A. '74, M.A. '82), of Parkville, Mo., is the co-author of *Four Ordinary Women*. Antonopoulos is retired from the Shawnee Mission School District.

**Barbara J. Arnold-Feret** (B.A. '79, School of Biological Sciences), of Roanoke, Texas, was awarded the Society of Plastics Engineers President's Cup in 2009, which honors outstanding individuals within the plastics industry and Society members. Arnold-Feret has held several key positions within the society.

**Marie R. Deveney** (B.A. '72, College of Arts and Sciences), of Ann Arbor, Mich., was named one of Michigan's "Top 50 Women Super Lawyers for 2009" by *Law and Politics*. Deveney practices with Dykema law firm in Ann Arbor. Her areas of practice include gift, estate and generation skipping transfer tax planning; probate and trust administration; will and trust agreements; and retirement distribution planning.

**Michael Donovan** (B.A. '79, College of Arts and Sciences) of St. Louis, Mo., has been named assistant director of the Missouri Arts Council. Donovan will fill the combined positions of assistant director for programs and for administration in his new job. Donovan previously worked as a publications editor for non-profit organizations.

**Michael Martens** (M.B.A. '77, Bloch School) of Blue Springs, Mo., was named chief financial officer for Mediware Information Systems, which develops software to help clients manage blood and medication. Martens previously served as CFO of the money transfer division of the Leawood-based Euronet Worldwide Inc.

**Patrick Rose** (M.S. '75, School of Biological Sciences), of Casselberry, Fla., was one of 29 animal conservationists nominated to receive the 2010 Indianapolis Prize, the world's leading award for animal conversation. Rose is an award-winning aquatic biologist with more than 30 years of experience protecting manatees and aquatic ecosystems.

**Mikel Rouse** ('78, Conservatory of Music and Dance), of New York City, preformed his show "Gravity Radio" in Fayetteville, Ark. Rouse is a composer, filmmaker, director and performer. He is best know for his trilogy of operas, "Failing Kansas," (inspired by Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*), "Dennis Cleveland," and "The End Of Cinematics."

**David V. Wiksten** (D.D.S. '70, School of Dentistry), of Topeka, Kan., celebrated 40 years in dentistry with friends and family in February. Former staff and colleagues hosted the celebration. Wiksten has served as a Topeka dentist and a member of the Kansas Dental Association.

### 80s

**Rod Bingaman** (B.A. '86, College of Arts and Sciences), State College, Penn., produced the film "Chasing Butterflies," which was released on DVD by Vanguard Cinema in December. The film is the third feature produced by Ma & Pa Pictures' Bingaman and Maura Shea. Bingaman is currently a senior lecturer of film/video at Penn State.

**Jay A. Daugherty** (J.D. '81, School of Law), of Kansas City, Mo., was elected chair of the ALS Association's National Board of Trustees. He previously served as president of the organization's Keith Worthington Chapter in Kansas City, Mo.

**Larry Katzif** (M.A. '82, School of Education), of Prairie Village, Kan., was named director of student services for the

Olathe School District in Olathe, Kan. He will begin this new position in July. Katzif currently serves as principal at Olathe's California Trail Ridge Junior High.

**Nancy Mellard** (J.D. '80, School of Law), of Shawnee Mission, Kan., and her husband, Ken, served as presidents of the 36th Annual Snow Ball gala benefiting Catholic Charities Foundation of Northeast Kansas in January. The Snow Ball is historically the largest revenue generating philanthropic event in Kansas City and proceeds from the event provide programs and services for 85,000 people in need.



Ken and Nancy Mellard at the 36th Annual Snow Ball gala.

**Patricia Seligson** (M.A. '83, School of Education) of Overland Park, Kan., authored an article last March in *School Nurse News* entitled, "Little Known Facts about Shawnee Mission School District (SMSD) Nurses."

### 90s

**Matthew J. Beem**, C.F.R.E. (M.P.A. '95, Bloch School), of Independence, Mo., was named president and chief operating officer of Hartsook Companies. Beem is now responsible for the firm's day-to-day management. He joined the firm in 2001. Hartsook's Chairman and CEO Bob Hartsook said he plans to name Beem CEO in 2011.

**Mark Corey** (B.A. '98, College of Arts and Sciences) of Santa Fe, N.M., received the 2009 Rocky Mountain Emmy for investigative reporting. Corey is an investigative producer at KRQE-TV News 13 in Albuquerque, N.M.

**Patrick Dobson** (B.A. '91, College of Arts and Sciences), of Kansas City, Mo.,

wrote the book *Seldom Seen, A Journey into the Great Plain*. Dobson is a freelance writer, former journalist and a member of Ironworkers Local Union No. 10 in Kansas City, Mo. He is pursuing a doctorate degree in U.S. environmental history and American literature from UMKC.

**Denise Farris** (J.D. '91, School of Law; B.L.A. '89, College of Arts and Sciences), of Stilwell, Kan., was named the 2009 Kansas Women Business Advocate of the Year by the Kansas Department of Commerce's Office of Minority and Women Business Development. Farris received the award for advocacy on behalf of women-owned businesses through her involvement in local and national organizations, including the board of directors for Women Impacting Public Policy. Farris owns her own firm, Farris Law Firm LLC, in Stilwell.

**Maria Finn** (B.A. '91, College of Arts and Sciences), of Sausalito, Calif., promoted her memoir, *Hold Me Tight and Tango Me Home*, around the Kansas City area in February.

**Chris Gentry** (Pharm.D. '91, School of Pharmacy), of Norman, Okla., won the Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists 2009 Impact Paper in Infectious Diseases Pharmacotherapy Award for his original contribution "Adverse outcomes associated with the use of drotrecogin alfa (activated) in patients with severe sepsis and baseline bleeding precautions." Results of his paper prompted the FDA to release an early communication warning on the use of drotrecogin alfa in patients with bleeding precautions.

**Jan Marcason** (M.B.A. '99, Bloch School), of Kansas City, Mo., was appointed to the Missouri Women's Council by Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon. The council address issues affecting the economic and employment status of women in Missouri. Marcason is currently the city councilwoman for the fourth district of Kansas City, Mo.

**Karen A. Payne** (B.A. '90, College of Arts and Sciences), of Blue Springs, Mo., was appointed to the Advisory Council on Aging by Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon. The council investigates and advises the governor regarding the needs, concerns and potential of Missouri's elderly population.

**Gary Schwartzhoff, Ph.D.**, (D.M.A., '90, Conservatory of Music and Dance) of Eau Claire, Wis., was awarded the Morris D. Hayes Award for outstanding contributions to choral music in Wisconsin. Schwartzhoff is a professor of music and director of choral activities at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

**Debbie White** (M.S.N. '99, School of Nursing) of Independence, Mo., has been named chief nursing officer of Saint Luke's Health System. White previously served as St. Luke's Hospital's vice president and chief nursing officer.

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**Aladdin Ashkar** (B.B.A. '02, Bloch School) of Basehor, Kan., was elected president of the Basehor Chamber of Commerce. Prior to his new appointment, he served as the chamber's vice president. Ashkar is also currently vice president and commercial lending officer for Community National Bank in Basehor.

**Jessica R. Beever** (J.D. '06, School of Law), of Kansas City, Mo., joined the Kansas City law firm of Evans and Dixon, L.L.C. as an associate in its workers' compensation and civil litigation practice groups. Previously, Beever practiced commercial and business litigation.

**Joshua G. Decker** (J.D. '09, School of Law), of Springfield, Mo., joined the law firm of McAnany, Van Cleave & Phillips as an associate in the workers' compensation department.



**Jason M. Kueser** (J.D. '05, School of Law, M.B.A. '99, Bloch School), of Lee's Summit, Mo., opened the Kueser Law Firm in Lee's Summit. The firm focuses on representing clients in securities arbitration, consumer fraud and commercial litigation.

**Anthony Ladesich** (B.A. '00, College of Arts and Sciences), of Kansas City, Mo., had four films featured at the YWCA's second annual KCK film fest in 2010. Ladesich's featured films were "Studio A," "Be It Ever So Humble," "Crate Diggers" and "Such

Subtle Beauty." Ladesich is owner/director of Mile Deep Film and Television.



**Jeffrey Meisenheimer** (M.A. '00, Ed. Spec. '06, School of Education), of Lee's Summit, Mo., was selected as the Missouri Assistant Principal of the Year as part of the National Association of Secondary School

Principals (NASSP)/Virco Assistant Principal of the Year Program. Meisenheimer is currently assistant principal at Lee's Summit High School. He previously taught and served as an assistant principal at Ruskin High School in Hickman Mills School District.

**William R. Venable III** (M.P.A. '06, Bloch School) of Kansas City, Mo., has been promoted to assistant dean of the School of Business at Park University. Has has been an assistant professor of marketing and management since August 2006. He has also been accepted into the second cohort of the Executive Doctorate of Business Program at Georgia State University.

**Matthew D. Wilson** (J.D. '05, School of Law), of Jackson, Mo., joined the St. Louis law firm of Baird, Lightner, Millsap & Harpool, P.C. as an associate attorney on the multifaceted business litigation team. Wilson previously practiced law with Bryan Cave, LLP law firm in Kansas City.

## Submit a class note

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# Courtwarming 2010



Sophomore Dajana Kovacevic (left), pre-dentistry major, was named Ms. Congeniality 2010 during the Coronation Ceremony Feb. 27. During a Roos timeout, students and Courtwarming Royalty joined in the Chicken Dance.



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