

Fall 2008

PERSPECTIVES

News Magazine of the University of Missouri-Kansas City



Off their rockers

For some, retirement marks the beginning of an amazing journey

UMKC's Hawaiian connection • Mighty Mouse • Defending the damned

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Cover story

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From second careers to far-flung travel, some retirees are finding that the end of 9-to-5 life is only the beginning

On the cover and below:

Parker Van Hecke sets off for a new career in Guam;

Bruce Barker is using his retirement to do mission work in Haiti.



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Commencement 2008



What we keep

Our past is not only about who we were,
but about who we've become

My in-laws are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary this year, and they decided to tackle that “someday” project of sorting through photos. There were boxes of photos, some in albums, some in envelopes, dusty stacks of snapshots of their four sons at various stages in life: New babies, spirited toddlers, awkward teenagers, graduations, weddings and grandchildren. Decades of fashions (though bridesmaids' dresses from the '80s may be best forgotten), hairstyles, family vacations, pets, homes, cars and friends. At one point my mother-in-law said she couldn't walk through their living room because five decades of photos were strewn from one wall to the other as they tried to decide how best to organize them.

And somewhere in those aging images is the story of who they are as a family.

I could empathize a bit with their project because we've been doing a little of that here at the University lately. As the University turns 75, it's been the perfect chance to look back at our “family album” – photos, publications, histories. (Fortunately, we have experts in University Archives who make this an easier task ... if only we all had personal family archivists.)

In the alumni office, we brought back the classic Kangaroo mascot on many of our materials to commemorate the unique history of Kasey Kangaroo and his Walt Disney roots. We've traipsed back through yearbooks and celebrated the changing buildings and look of campus. UMKC is also resurrecting homecoming this fall, with the theme “Return of a Classic.” And at alumni receptions and events in various cities, we've toasted the 75 years of the University and what it means to each of us.

A former alumni association president who'd presided over UMKC's 50th jubilee loaned me a notebook he'd compiled since his days as a student. His scrapbook contains correspondence, logos, letters, ID cards and alumni memorabilia that we had a ball looking through. I was grateful for everything he'd kept.

This summer, retired faculty and staff returned to campus for a 75th anniversary reception to reconnect and remember. Some were former professors; others were librarians, and still others had once cleaned facilities, managed scholarship and financial aid paperwork, or made slides for medical students.

As they looked at archival displays of historic documents and photos of the University's history, I realized how different this was from the usual retired employee company reunion. Each of them had played a particular role in educating generations of students. For most of them, their time at the University had been more than just a job, more than a career. It was part of who they were and what they'd given, and it was a pride in being part of something larger than themselves that seemed to connect them.

Sometimes what we keep isn't found in the photos, but in how our time together – as a family or at a unique place like a university – shaped who we are and what we've become.

LISEN TAMMEUS



Editor's note

At press time, Chancellor Guy Bailey announced his resignation to accept the presidency at Texas Tech University. University of Missouri system President Gary Forsee named Leo Morton, chair of the UMKC Board of Trustees, as interim chancellor effective Aug. 1. Former senior vice president and chief administrative officer for Aquila, Morton holds a master's degree from MIT. He is not a candidate for the permanent position. Forsee indicated his intent to launch a search immediately for the next chancellor. For more information and updates, visit www.umkc.edu.

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Readers respond to the spring issue

It's all in the mix

My compliments to your team for a wonderful reading experience with the spring edition of *Perspectives*. This issue struck a wonderful balance of interesting people, unique human interest stories and fascinating new ideas. Although I receive a number of college magazines, few in recent memory have held my attention like this issue did.

Rhonda Wickham
Shawnee, Kan.



Wonder woman

I just had a chance to read the article about Kathy Goggin's work with South African AIDS patients. It is an amazing piece of work both in content and look. Please pass along my congratulations to everyone who has touched this in the process.

Joyce Generali, M.S., R.Ph., FASHP
Clinical Professor
Director, K.U. Drug Information Center

More *Perspectives*, please

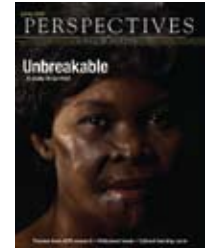
This morning I opened my *Perspectives* and was inspired by your cover article. I brought it to the elementary school where I am a counselor, Ecole Longan, to inspire my students. This afternoon, I went to retrieve it, and it was gone. I think a student was drawn to the cover picture. I like the thought of a student reading the article; that's why I brought it. But I also want a copy of the article. Actually, I was hoping you would send me 15 of them: one for each of my third- through fifth-grade reading students, one for me and a couple to spare. I will make good use of them. This article could make a difference to many lives.

Betty Jean Bingham
Counselor, Ecole Longan
Kansas City, Mo.

Good news

I just finished reading the uplifting spring '08 issue of *Perspectives*. The simple, long-lasting bond between friends; the climb back from near death with the help of devoted daughters, a generous donor and faith in God; the research in Africa; and the stories of international students overcoming obstacles all rewarded me with a sense of goodness in an era that has been characterized as self-absorbed. My deepest respect goes to the individuals chronicled.

Victoria (Hoffman) Chick, M.F.A.
(B.A. '67)



Spring '08 correction

In the last issue of *Perspectives*, we announced the promotion of Frances Connelly, Ph.D., to full professor, but incorrectly stated that she serves as chair of the Department of Art and Art History. In fact, Connelly left her position as chair of the department in fall 2001, and was replaced by the current chair, Burton Dunbar, Ph.D.

Editor's note

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

Letters to the editor may be sent to:

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How do you plan to spend retirement?

For the retirees in our feature on page 14, retirement marked the beginning of a new, exciting phase of life. What will it mean for you – a new career, the opportunity to travel the world or simply the chance to indulge in some well-deserved R&R?

Tell us what your plans are by sending a letter or e-mail to the address at right.



Lessons in longevity

In honor of UMKC's 75th anniversary, we asked alumni and staff to give their expert tips on how to keep going strong at 75.

How to be a millionaire by 75

The easiest thing to do in America is to be a millionaire. Most people don't believe they can do it because everyone tells them they can't, but this is the only country that hands them that opportunity. So look at the competition – there really isn't much. If the vast majority of people don't think they can do it, there's only a very small minority who will.

I'd advise people to get into a field that they really love. If they do something they're passionate about, they're more likely to make money at it – and over a period of time you will accumulate the assets to become a millionaire. Start saving as young as possible: just put away \$2,000-3,000 a year from the time you get out of a university, and you will be a millionaire at retirement. Don't worry about owning the biggest house or the nicest car; just start investing in the stock market as early as you can. Educate yourself about the markets, read *The Wall Street Journal* and talk to a number of investment advisers and brokers.

William Larmer (Pharm.D. '75)

Partner, Larmer & Elstun, L.L.C. investment advisory firm



How to keep romance alive

To make your relationship strong, you have to make it a top priority. This is the case even if you have children; child-focused marriages can become weak relationships because the parents devote most of their energy to the children. Here are a few simple ways to put your relationship first:

- Remember what first caused you to fall in love. After a few years together, it's easy to think of all the things that annoy you about your partner. Look for one thing each day that you enjoy and appreciate about one another and communicate it.
- Spend at least 15 minutes a day (or an hour if you don't have kids at home) of uninterrupted time together – and more time on weekends. You can connect by talking, going for a walk or even just running errands together. Turning off the TV in the evenings is an easy way to find time for your relationship.
- Have a regular date night. Building fun into the relationship acts like shock absorbers on a car and helps get couples through the bumps of life. Pick activities you'll enjoy – think of the things you did together when you first met.

Karen Harrison (M.A. '91, Ed.Sp. '93)
Licensed counselor, Whole Life Center

How to have great teeth at 75

There are several steps that need to be followed in order to have great teeth at 75. It's important to protect and respect the adult dentition early in life. A healthy diet consisting of the four food groups is important; avoid fast food and too many carbohydrates that stick to the teeth.

Proper brushing and flossing on a daily basis is essential for keeping the teeth in good condition. A soft toothbrush is a must and no scrubbing is allowed. In order to prevent problems with the gums, stay away from tobacco smoking and overindulging in alcohol. Regular prophylaxis and check-ups at a dental office are key components to keeping a healthy dentition.

The connection between our mouth and body are closely entwined, so keeping the teeth and gums in shape may also affect the rest of the body. Having a disease-free mouth helps ward off strokes, pneumonia and plaque formation in the arteries.

If all the above goes out the window, then my advice would be to order a dry martini at The Peanut, swish and swallow!

Joseph P. Spalitto (D.D.S. '72)
Private practice dentist and clinical instructor,
UMKC School of Dentistry

How to have a sharp mind at 75

My number one piece of advice would be to be mentally stimulated throughout life. That can be through any number of things – through a challenging career, an active social life, continuing education, travel or pursuing creative interests, for example. This is especially important after retirement. It's essential to have a plan in place for this phase of life because if a person hasn't cultivated some interests throughout life that can be nurtured in retirement, it can be a difficult and unhappy time.

Look after your physical health, too, because a healthy body and a healthy mind are linked. If you have a healthy mind, you're more likely to take care of yourself physically by eating well, exercising and having a balance to your life – but the connection works both ways: Just as having physical health conditions can lead to emotional stress and depression, maintaining good physical health encourages a positive emotional and mental state.

Rose Zwerenz (M.D. '82)

Associate professor, Community and Family Medicine,
and assistant dean, Truman Medical Center-Lakewood Programs

How to make treasured photographs last

Your photographs are a link between the past, present and future. Here are a few tips to help keep them in good condition:

- Do not store photos in attics, garages or basements, which can lead to stickiness, brittleness, and insect or water damage. Storage conditions should not be too hot or too humid.
- Handle photos carefully by the edges, and don't use any PVC sleeves. Other plastics are safe.
- When placing photos in frames, albums or scrapbooks, bear in mind that many actions are irreversible and can shorten the life of the photograph. Light causes damage, so keep framed pictures protected from direct sunlight or fluorescent bulbs. If scrapbooking, scan the original images, print copies (or get quality laser copies) and use those instead. Avoid photo albums with the sticky pages because the tacky glue is bad for photos.
- If you scan pictures, always keep the original and the negative.
- Don't use a pen or marker to write on the back of photos as these can bleed through. If dealing with older photos, a soft lead pencil works well; for modern photos, use a grease pencil. Better yet, write identifying information on a piece of paper and keep it with the photo. Do not apply tape or labels on the photos.
- If you have digital images, always burn a copy onto a CD or store one on an external hard drive in case something happens to the computer's hard drive. For extra protection, give copies of the CDs to a friend in case of loss due to a natural disaster.
- For more information, contact the UMKC University Archives at 816-235-1539.

Tonya Crawford

Senior archives specialist, UMKC University Archives





Russell Tabata is proud to carry on the legacy of the UMKC Hawaii alumni association.



Word of mouth

The Aloha State's dedication to the UMKC School of Dentistry earns its alumni the Chancellor's Medal

by LINDSEY V. COREY

If you asked six-year-old Tina Mukai what she wanted to be when she grew up, she would always answer “a dentist.”

More than 20 years later, she's all grown up and working in a dental clinic at home in Hawaii.

“My mom was a hygienist so she brainwashed me to say I was going to be a dentist instead of all those things little girls usually want to be,” says Mukai (D.D.S. '07). “It just might have worked because once I was getting close to graduating from high school, all I knew was that I wanted to help people, and dentistry kept coming up as the best way for me to do that.”

Mom had a role in making that happen, too. Kay Mukai had taken her dental hygiene skills and insights on the road as a sales rep for Crest and Oral B. Her position introduced her to dentists throughout Hawaii, and she introduced her daughter to those professionals, most of them UMKC School of Dentistry graduates like Russell Tabata (D.D.S. '67).

Tina Mukai remembers her first visit to Tabata's office. Like the hundreds of other potential UMKC students he's volunteered to interview, Mukai listened intently as Tabata proudly told her about his alma mater's history, sharing the stories passed on to him by older Japanese American alumni.

“It all started during the war, World War II, when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor,” Tabata explains. “All the Japanese Americans had to leave their dental schools on the West Coast; they were left with no place to go. But Dean [Roy] Rinehart said he'd take them in. In those days, that wasn't the most popular thing to do, and that took a lot of courage. He basically saved them from the internment camps.”

One report shows how far Rinehart would go to help them. In the early 1940s, Rinehart traveled to California to sign papers releasing a young evacuee from a detention camp and then drove him to Kansas City for class.

“Just imagine how families felt about that,” Tabata says. “Naturally, word spread in Hawaii about how this school in the Midwest welcomed people no matter what their background.”

Generations later, Mukai was moved.

“It means a lot to us,” she says. “My grandpa and grandma were in internment camps so it definitely hits closer to home. And learning the history reinforces the fact that UMKC is a special place that's never judged us or anyone else because of race.”

Neil Furuya, D.D.S. '87, said the dental school's faculty and staff have always had a tradition of welcoming and nurturing its diverse student population.

“It didn't matter where you came from,” says the Honolulu native. “They genuinely care about all the students whether they're from New Mexico or Arkansas or Hawaii. They're good to all their kids up there. It's not just about what you learn, but also how you're treated. You can't help but be grateful for that.”

And so the reputation continues to flourish on Hawaii's islands, where there is no dental school. Since the 1940s, UMKC's School of Dentistry has accepted two or three Hawaiian students a year to its competitive and small classes. Most of them return home upon graduation to practice and continue their relationships with fellow alumni as part of the association's active Hawaiian contingent.

The alumni group got its start in the 1940s with Tabata's father Ichiro Tabata, a 1938 UMKC dental school graduate. He and other area alumni wanted to thank Rinehart for his support so they pooled their money to treat him to a trip to Hawaii.

Before his death in 1996, George Tanaka (D.D.S. '49), said, “We felt the dean trusted us, and it was our job to prove to him that we would not fail him ... and the fact that he took a chance on me, I appreciate.”

“It’s just a feeling you get when you meet people from UMKC. You see how much they enjoyed themselves, so it’s not about saying ‘my school is better’ as much as just sharing their story.” -Brandon Yokota

After Ichiro Tabata’s death in 1970, Tanaka led the Hawaiian alumni association in recruiting students and returned to Kansas City annually to teach in the clinics.

“Dr. Tanaka started all this,” Tabata says. “I’m just a little potato compared to him. If he were alive, I know he’d still be running the show. He set the bar high, and we’ve tried to continue his efforts.”

This spring, Tabata will accept the Chancellor’s Medal, UMKC’s highest non-academic honor, on behalf of the School of Dentistry’s Hawaiian alumni association. Given at the Chancellor’s discretion, the medal honors those who have shown UMKC unwavering support.

The Hawaiian alumni association’s members range in age from their 20s to 80s. They plan professional development opportunities and scholarship fundraisers, regularly host gatherings for current and prospective students as well as parents, and have welcomed School of Dentistry Dean Michael Reed, D.D.S., to the islands each of his 23 years at UMKC.

Furuya arranges for Reed to meet with the 25-member University of Hawaii Pre-dental Club, for which he’s been a volunteer adviser for seven years. He also invites alumni from other dental schools to speak with the prospective students and helps them with their applications.

“It’s important that they get good first-hand exposure to different schools,” Furuya says. “But after they hear from everyone, over and over these kids choose Kansas City as their No. 1 choice, so I’m confident UMKC is getting the best students from Hawaii.”

Reed agrees, saying he wishes he could admit more Hawaiian students.

“There’s a steady stream of highly qualified Hawaiian candidates coming here,” he says. “And it’s because of the incredible alumni push and knowing when they go home, they won’t be alone and will have all the help they need. Each one of our alums goes back with a wonderfully refreshing attitude, and that gives us that extra step in attracting these students.”

Brandon Yokota, D.D.S. ’03, says meeting UMKC alumni was all it took for him to make his selection.

“There’s just a feeling you get when you meet people from that school,” he says. “You see how much they enjoyed themselves so it’s not about saying ‘my school is better’ so much as just sharing their story. Dr. [Dan] Tira [School of Dentistry professor emeritus] and Dr. Tabata had a huge influence on me. They were so nice and caring that it just felt right.”

Reed says every applicant from Hawaii has met Tabata. And, as with all accepted students he has interviewed, Tabata stayed in touch with Yokota during his years at the University.

Tabata had never been to the mainland when he was accepted to UMKC. So his father’s classmate Richard T. Oliver, D.D.S. ’38, suggested he fly to Tulsa, Okla. He put him up for two nights and drove Tabata to Kansas City, where Oliver stayed for a few days to ensure Tabata had everything he needed to start the semester.

By going out of his way to help a new student, Oliver made a big impression on Tabata, so he ensures the tradition continues today.

“When I talk to other students, I realize how lucky we are to have this connection,” Mukai says. “He’s so involved and is always reaching out to us and encouraging us to be involved.”

Tabata notifies current Hawaiian students any time a prospective student from their state will be visiting the Hospital Hill campus. Mukai and Yokota remember getting rides from the airport, being invited to plays and dinners, and having students help them find housing. One particular Kansas City apartment complex has often been home to Hawaiian dental students, who for years have passed their leases on to incoming students upon their graduations.



Above, from left to right: Past Hawaiian alumni association presidents Ichiro Tabata and George Tanaka; former Dean Roy Rinehart.

“All I knew was that I wanted to help people, and dentistry kept coming up as the best way for me to do that.” -Tina Mukai



Graduate Tina Mukai now works in a dental clinic in her native Hawaii.

“It’s funny how we’ve pretty much taken over this place,” Mukai says. “The people in the Midwest are so nice and genuine, and we’ve always felt a connection to them because they create a laid-back atmosphere that reminds us of home. Adjusting is hard, and you miss home, so it’s really nice to have a community of people who understand. We take care of each other.”

Those relationships continue at home in Hawaii.

“You appreciate the opportunity and the history behind it, so in turn, when you graduate, you want to give back,” Yokota says. “When I came home, it wasn’t something Dr. Tabata had to ask, it’s just something you do now that you’re an alum.

“That’s what has kept this alive for so long. There’s always been a good group of people who are truly grateful to have been at UMKC and that experience keeps everything going.”

Tabata recently attended a dental conference where a graduate of another dental school said he was envious of the UMKC alumni group.

“He said, ‘I went to a fine school and all, but if I’d known about this, I would have gone to UMKC,’” Tabata says. “He told me he was envious of how close we are and how much fun we have, so I told him we’d take him. The word of mouth is so positive here, you even hear it from people from other schools.”

Tabata says nearly all recent UMKC dentistry graduates return to Hawaii and become active in the state’s UMKC alumni association.

“Students start to realize that a close-knit alumni group is really a big asset,” he says.

“There are a lot of networking opportunities once you get home. It’s not totally on purpose, but it just so happens that UMKC people are good clinicians so it’s fairly easy to refer to each other. I trust that I can send my patients to them because they’re the very best. My patients are my No. 1 priority, but fortunately most UMKC graduates are very capable and nice.”

Tabata found that to be especially true of Yokota, whom he invited to become a partner in his private practice in January. The Honolulu practice was originally operated by Tabata’s father.

“Over the years, I found him to be very dependable, and always there ready to help,” Tabata says. “I felt he was an honest person and really wanted to do the right thing for people. That’s how I like things done.”

Yokota was flattered by the proposal from the person who had once recommended him for admission to UMKC’s School of Dentistry.

“We’ve become really close, so I wasn’t sure I wanted to go and change things by mixing business and friendship,” Yokota says. “But then I thought of how I’d be working with my mentor. I’d be stupid to turn that down, and it just felt right. Now, it’s hard to imagine where I’d be if I hadn’t met Dr. Tabata.”

That same debt of gratitude is what Tabata feels for his predecessor, Dr. Tanaka. “He is the person really responsible for what our alumni group is today,” Tabata says. “George Tanaka was our mentor and the visionary of the UMKC Hawaiian dental alumni association. We are all just carrying on his vision.” ■

Chancellor’s Medal

The UMKC Hawaiian dental alumni delegation will be honored during a 75th anniversary commemorative luncheon on Oct. 2 on the UMKC campus. On Feb. 13, 2009, the Chancellor’s Medal will officially be presented to the Hawaiian dental alumni at a ceremony in Hawaii.

Legacy letters

Alumni share how their time at UMKC shaped their lives, careers and relationships

And they said it wouldn't last

I have fond memories of UMKC as a graduate student and former administrator and member of the faculty. Drs. Daniel Levine, Edwin Bailey and Mary Lee Marksberry successfully guided me through my dissertation, while holding administration-teaching jobs at Children's Mercy Hospital and starting the Nursing Programs, now the School of Nursing at UMKC. Many naysayers said it would not work. Much history has transpired. The "experimental program" has survived and is thriving.

M. Luisita Archer (M.A. '69; Ph.D. '76)
Thousand Oaks, Calif.

Life in a laboratory

I graduated from KCU in the year 1951. It was the year I entered the U.S. Air Force, and we were at war with Korea. I received a B.A. in biology in 1951. I recall two outstanding professors in the Biology Department that greatly influenced me. They were Harold Burdick, Ph.D., and Anna Koffler, Ph. D., both tremendous in their fields of physiology and microbiology.

I became a clinical laboratory scientist and was laboratory manager in the Air Force. My first appointment was as a laboratory scientist in research doing studies in the effects of radiation in outer space. I served in Keflavik, Iceland, as a laboratory officer in the base military hospital, then after leaving the service I became chief laboratory scientist at what is now Cedars-Sinai Hospital in Los Angeles, then chief of special chemistry at St. John's Regional Medical Center in Ventura, Calif. I spent 45 years in clinical laboratory science, thanks to the great education I received at KCU.

Edison L. Smith (B.A. '51)
Ventura, Calif.

Unforgettable

I attended the University of Kansas City from 1946 to 1950. I enrolled after my time in the service in World War II. I graduated in 1950 with a B.A. and a major in economics. My favorite professor during my time there was Professor Eugene Altsdue, from whom I took several courses in economics. He was a very accomplished individual who was forced to leave Germany when Hitler came into power. He taught for some time at the London School of Economics before moving to the United States and teaching at the University of Minnesota for a short time. He started his teaching at UKC in the mid-1940s. He was very intelligent, and his classes were different than any of the others I had – he didn't believe in giving the traditional tests. He would assign a subject for a paper to be written outside of class, allowing his students the chance to thoroughly research the subject. He not only had a doctorate in economics but also in mathematics. On one occasion, I had to stop by his Oak Street home; while I was there, he played a classical piece of music on his cello. He was, as I found, also an accomplished musician. He was undoubtedly one of the most unforgettable individuals that I've ever met.

William R. Giese (B.A. '50)
Kansas City, Mo.



A whole new world

My transfer to UMKC after graduating from Kansas City Junior College opened a new world to me: large classes and a multi-building campus. Two specific things, though, happened to impact my life.

Entering the School of Education, housed at Epperson House, I was enrolled in the Social Studies for Elementary Education class. The instructor was Eric Gwynne-Thomas, Ph.D. For me, Gwynne-Thomas' classes were a delight to attend. It was obvious that he loved his job of imparting social studies knowledge to future teachers. He was full of knowledge, both trivial and important.

His favorite saying was, "Never let a dot on a map remain a dot in the mind of a child." As we formulated lesson plans of cities around the world it was this one saying that he kept repeating. Although I am retired now, through my career I never forgot that saying and always tried to make that "dot on a map" come alive for my students, as he did for us.

The other significant happening at UMKC was forming a friendship with a Japanese student named Yasuko (Hosoda) Tomita. We met in a geography/geology class, studied together and became friends through the process.

Through the years Yasuko has visited me, and I have visited her in Japan. We made a pact to try to see each other every five years. Thanks to e-mail we are in contact with each other frequently. We have had the joy of getting to know each other and our family members. In 2005, I returned to Japan so we could celebrate our 40 years of friendship, which began in a classroom at UMKC in 1965.

Carole (Meakin) Owsley (B.A. '67)
Lee's Summit, Mo.

Train tales

When I was attending the University of Kansas City during the 1960s, I had an instructor teaching interstate commerce law named John Shumway. He had been a local freight agent for the old Wabash Railroad in Kansas City at one time. His class was always interesting, as he told us tales of happenings on the railroads. One of the stories I particularly remember was about "Two Rookie John." During the Depression, the Union Pacific hired three men one day and told them to go out and work on the track. Since one of them had a watch, they designated him as foreman. When the men returned at the end of the day, the supervisor asked the foreman how he got along. He said "Well, OK, but I would have made it much better if I hadn't had these two rookies." He was henceforth known as "Two Rookie John," and railroad men from as far as Green River, Wyo., came to Kansas City to meet him.

Charles Staubus (B.B.A. '67)
Shawnee, Kan.



Opposite: Professor Harold Burdick, Ph.D., and a student. Above: Carole (Meakin) Owsley and Yasuko (Hosoda) Tomita maintain the friendship they started 40 years ago at UMKC.

Singing praise

At the Conservatory of Music, Leroy Pogemiller, Ph.D., gave me the skills to become a recording studio professional (studio jingle singer, voiceover announcer, music sightreader par excellence). A career in recording studios requires instant sightreading, singing on pitch, being able to sing with others with rhythmic accuracy. I also enjoyed a long career as a jazz singer and RCA recording artist, too. Pogemiller gave me my foundation as a totally skilled musician capable of making the money I've made all these years. I returned for the Conservatory's 100th anniversary celebration honored as "The Alumnae with the Most Unusual Career" and presented a convocation that was very exciting for me and well attended. Thank you all.

Bettye Volkart Zoller Seitz (B.A., B.M. '64)
Dallas, Texas



A portrait of the artist

My favorite teacher while attending the University was Joseph Amadeus Fleck, dean of fine arts. I will always remember the special attention he gave me as a budding artist, instilling in me the basic principles of creating good art. It was his manner of teaching, more than what he taught, that made him unique. Joseph Fleck was a man of strong convictions, and a great artist whom I respected as a person, as well as a teacher.

Occasionally, Mr. Fleck conducted his painting classes out of doors, on campus. I was not aware that he was making sketches of me, which he incorporated into his mural, "Spring on Campus," until 45 years later. In 1989, I returned to the University, and while visiting the Liberal Arts Building, was pleasantly surprised to see myself depicted in the mural, in front of an easel, holding a palette.

One day, Mr. Fleck brought his lithograph portfolio to share with me after class. Enclosed were his beautiful lithographs depicting natives of Taos, N.M., and vicinity. He must have thought my work held promise, because at that moment he advised me, emphatically, "Andy, don't give your work away. Give anything away, except your work; your work has value and is to be sold." After that exhortation, I was surprised when he said, "Pick out the lithograph you like best; it's for you." I selected "Pueblo Flowers," which I cherish to this day.

By his actions, Joseph Fleck demonstrated that he was a kind, perceptive man. Knowing that I was writing my thesis on the renowned regional artist, Thomas Hart Benton, he realized that I would benefit greatly by meeting the acclaimed artist personally. As a personal friend of Mr. Benton, Mr. Fleck arranged for me to meet him, see his work and interview him.

Mr. Fleck drove me to the old plantation home of Mr. Benton, not far from the University. Mrs. Benton, a pleasant Italian woman, greeted us at the door.

Mr. Fleck, in a proud, paternal manner, introduced me, saying, "This is Andy Saffas; he's a Greek boy." She replied, "I hope he likes Italian food; that's what we're having for dinner." Mr. Fleck then led me through the house to Mr. Benton's studio, a converted carriage house and servants quarters. Mr. Benton showed us his latest

large oil on canvas, depicting a man playing the piano in a saloon. Mr. Fleck graciously stepped back, placing me next to Mr. Benton, allowing me the opportunity to converse with the artist I greatly admired.

Viewing the painting, I immediately noticed the coldness of the shadowed area in the lower right-hand corner; the color was predominantly raw umber, and to me it seemed unrelated to the rich, warm colors, ochers and siennas, which dominated the painting. In my estimation, the area needed warmer tones. Mr. Benton turned to me and asked, "What do you think?" I was not prepared to answer that question. Not wishing to offend the great master by critiquing his work, I avoided expressing my thoughts about the imbalance of color, but rather, elaborated on the excellent composition of the work. Then, to my great surprise, Mr. Benton stated, "The lower right-hand corner is a little too cold; I'm going to wipe it off with benzene, and re-paint it."

At that moment, I felt as though I had done a disservice to myself by not addressing the issue of color with him. I wish I had had the courage and the maturity to say, "Correct me if I'm wrong, but this is what I think."

Mr. Benton was the kind of man who would have appreciated the truth, and me, for having stated it. On the drive back to the University, I confided to Mr. Fleck that I'd made a mistake in failing to express my thoughts about the colors to Mr. Benton. Mr. Fleck quietly assured me, "Andy, you rightfully showed proper respect."

Andrew G. Saffas (B.A. '45)
Concord, Calif.



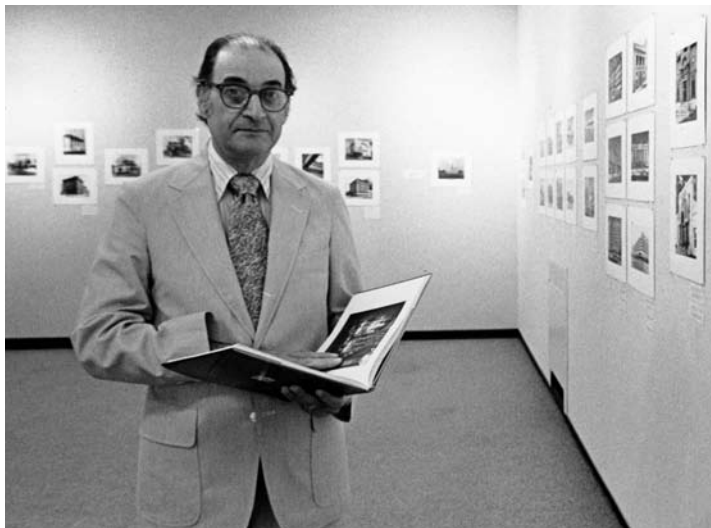
Top: Thomas Hart Benton's studio, which Andrew Saffas visited with his professor, Joseph Fleck. Above: *Molinete De Rodillas*, Saffas' painting of a famous bull fighter from Portugal.

Geology rocks

I was at UMKC between 1995 and 1999. I was one of those older students who worked full time and went to school part time to three quarters' time (seven-12 hours) a semester. That didn't leave much time for much of anything else. I spent most of my time in the Geosciences Department. I enjoyed all of the professors that I had either in Geography or Geology classes. My most memorable memory would have been the day during historical geology that I finally figured out that Dr. [Richard] Gentile had a sense of humor (you have to realize that I didn't think that he had much of a sense of humor, because he was always so serious in class). He took us down the Colorado River via a slide show. Well, this trip we took down the Colorado River was to study the different layers of geologic history along the river. But what I thought was funny was that he put some people in a raft going down the river in the middle of all these slides and when they came to some white water rapids, Dr. Gentile from the back of the semi-dark room said, "Wheee! Wheee! Do you think they will make it?" I was laughing the rest of the day to finally realize that I didn't have to be afraid of this crusty professor, and I started to enjoy college a lot more after that semester.

I have been out of school for almost nine years now. I work for NGA in St. Louis and get paid to make maps and graphics for the military serving our country overseas. If my sister hadn't talked me into taking a geology class in 1995, I wouldn't have a career that I truly enjoy and have fun doing it. Dr. Gentile, and some of the other professors in the Geosciences Department, were a great influence on my life during my time there, but he was the best.

Carol (Stoecker) Lyston (B.S. '99)
Godfrey, Ill.



Above and beyond

Although I was a studio major in the Art Department, Art History Professor Dr. George Ehrlich had the most long-term influence on me. His exacting requirements for writing and research were personal challenges every semester I took his classes. In graduate school at a different university, I discovered his standards far exceeded what was expected of me there. As a result, I did very well. When I began teaching art history courses, the image of Dr. Ehrlich was at the back of my mind, helping me help students reach higher standards than they thought they could.

Victoria (Hoffman) Chick, M.F.A. (B.A. '67)
Silver City, N.M.

There's a nice ring to it

I proposed to my future wife under the pine trees across Cherry Street from the residence hall, without a ring. On our 25th wedding anniversary, a beautiful, warm July evening, we sat on the grass under the pine trees and discussed our life together and our anniversary. With just a note of disappointment in her voice she said she wished she could have had a diamond anniversary ring like she had mentioned (several times) to me some time before, and I said "Like this one?" and immediately slipped it on her finger. I had been hiding it in my hand.

Bert McClary (B.S.P. '66)
Boonville, Mo.



Above, from left to right: Dr George Ehrlich; Beth and Bert McClary.





Off their rockers

Today's retirees aren't taking post 9-to-5 life sitting down

by DONNA MENNONA DILKS

Parker Van Hecke shifts in his cramped airline seat, sips a paper cup of lukewarm coffee and studies his Mandarin phrasebook. His passport, laptop computer and photos of his family are crammed in a backpack underneath his feet.

In 18 hours he'll touch down in Guam. There, on that humid, beautiful and underdeveloped island, he will direct PR and marketing plans for a construction and excavation business run by an old buddy and some business partners from Taiwan.

Welcome to Parker's retirement.



“I’ve kind of done the opposite of the normal retirement experience.”

-Parker Van Hecke

Second wind

Not too long ago, workers could be expected to sign off from their jobs around age 65. They’d anticipate living out their golden years quietly, perhaps volunteering a few hours with a church or community organization, knitting booties for the grandchildren and generally becoming accustomed to the comforts of a life spent primarily in the home.

“At the turn of the 20th century – 1900, that is – life expectancy was around 47 years. At the turn of the 21st century, life expectancy is around 77,” says UMKC sociology professor Deborah Smith, Ph.D. “And for many people, it can easily reach far beyond that number into the upper 80s.”

“In 100 years, we basically created a new stage of life – and it’s a long one.”

Smith’s research focuses on gerontology, and specifically on retirement.

“Among college graduates, seven out of 10 retirees still plan on working and getting paid for it,” she says. “The current group of retirees are also interested in perhaps starting another career or exploring educational programs for personal enrichment; they want to make their time meaningful.”

Share DeCroix Bane, Ph.D., state gerontology specialist at University of Missouri Extension explains: “Due to improved health, longevity, wealth and a larger population, we have a greater number of people having more options.”

Van Hecke, who has three grown children, has worked for nearly 40 years in television, radio and documentary filmmaking, which allowed him to live in exotic locales, including Alaska, New Mexico and the aforementioned Guam.

As development director for Kansas City’s National Public Radio affiliate, KCUR-FM (a service of UMKC and located on campus), he enjoyed 12 years of promoting the station and amassing financial support for it.

As he started thinking toward retirement though, “an old friend that I hadn’t heard from in 10 years suddenly got in touch and presented me with an incredible offer,” Van Hecke says. “I sort of believe in these intersections of the fabric of the universe, and I have to say this was one of them.”

His adventuresome spirit was truly tempted. He was excited to think about applying his fundraising skills to a corporate business venture in Guam, not to mention being able to indulge in his lifelong hobby of scuba diving.

“Kansas City is really not the best place to scuba dive,” he laughs.

Van Hecke’s “official” retirement from KCUR commenced in May. He will collect a pension from UMKC while, as he puts it, “working 24 hours a day to master the learning curve” of the opportunity awaiting him on the island.

“Baby boomers, though they do donate money, are not so inclined to ‘give away’ their skills for free. After years in the employment force, they like the idea of having control over their time. They expect to get paid for their expertise,” says sociologist Smith.

“I’ve kind of done the opposite of the normal retirement experience,” Van Hecke says. “My whole life I was in the nonprofit sector, and I loved it, even though I never made a whole lot of money. But now, I’ve still got a lot of energy, and I need to take advantage of it. This new thing will allow me to earn some good money and also to have fun.”

For the time being, his wife, Cathy, will stay in Kansas City and keep their “home base.” Although he regrets having to be so far from his wife and adult children, he says “they’re excited for me; they know it’s in my blood.”





Opposite: For Parker Van Hecke, retirement means a new career in Guam. Above: Bill Pickett uses his new free time to explore interests, from pastoral planning to photography.

“Retiring has given me tremendous freedom. I can move in so many different ways.” -Bill Pickett

Back to school

After retiring from a high-powered administrative career that included 10 years as a college president, Bill Pickett, Ph.D., is back on campus. But this time around you won't find him overseeing a board of trustees in the executive conference room.

Instead, Pickett (M.P.A. '74), age 67, sits in a classroom, among a diverse group of 20-somethings, dissecting the finer points of essays on theology and social justice.

“I'm getting a master's in theology,” he says. “Some of my friends ask, ‘What are you going to do with it?’ and I say ‘Oh, I don't know.’”

But Pickett finds student life to be very rewarding. “I love the discussions. I like the other students; they're a great group of people.”

And keeping busy should also keep retirees like Pickett happy, says Linda Breyspraak, Ph.D., chair of the UMKC Department of Sociology and director of the Center on Aging. “People who have a variety of interests that they are actively engaged in have no trouble keeping themselves thoroughly happy,” she explains.

As an alumnus of the Bloch School with a degree in public administration, Pickett led a busy and productive career in higher education. He earned a Ph.D. and eventually became the president of Saint John Fisher College in Rochester, N.Y.

“I loved that job, but after 10 years I kind of came around and asked myself, ‘Do I still want to be a college president for the next 10 years?’

“So I went to a career counselor, and I took some tests to determine what my strengths were, and what suited me best,” he says. “I thought, ‘If I want to do something, I need to do it now.’”

“I even spent a month in a monastery. It was great, but I decided I do not want to be a monk,” Pickett says. “I had an involved life, which included seven kids and lots of grandkids, and I just couldn't give that up.”

Instead he took a job working in pastoral planning for a Catholic archdiocese and was suddenly working with an economically and ethnically diverse population.

“I came alive to that,” he says. “It made an impact on my spirituality.” Thoroughly immersed in that new arena, Pickett in his free time found himself advocating for traditionally disenfranchised groups, such as migrant workers and gay families.

“I've become more involved with social justice causes,” he says.

The day after he retired from the job with the archdiocese, he went to lunch with someone who asked him on the spot to author a book on pastoral planning. Pickett was game, and his book was published last fall by Ave Maria Press.

“Retiring has given me tremendous freedom,” Pickett says. “I can move in many different ways. For the sheer fun of it I started classes in photography. I manage my own Web site and post my writings and photographs there. My wife and I can travel. I'm also trying to learn to play golf,” he says. “But I'm afraid I'm just not very athletic.”

“Reaching out to the less fortunate helps me express my thanksgivings for the good life and opportunities I’ve had.”

-Gerry Barker



Outside the comfort zone

In Haiti, there is a proverb: “Beyond the mountains, there are mountains.” As we solve one problem, another looms.

Gerry and Bruce Barker, however, are not discouraged from embracing the same country that gave voice to that proverb. The Barkers assist in medical mission work in the impoverished port town Les Cayes, taking those mountains one at a time.

Both are retired School of Dentistry faculty. They’ve made two trips to Haiti, working as part of a team at Maison de Naissance, a maternity center designed as a birthing home, which was co-founded by Stan Shaffer (M.D. ’79), recipient of the 2005 Alumni Achievement Award for the School of Medicine.

“Haiti had the highest infant mortality rate in the western hemisphere,” says Bruce, who worked at UMKC as a pathologist for 32 years. “But now, thanks to the work going on at the birthing house in Les Cayes, their infant mortality rate is equal to that of Kansas City’s.”

Gerry, a School of Education alumna (M.A. ’89) and a former professor of dental public health at UMKC, says she “always hoped we’d have the health and physical stamina to go abroad for mission work in Haiti. Once retired, we jumped on the opportunity to spend a week there to assess how we could make a meaningful contribution to the existing programs.”

Their work involves going door-to-door, providing “preventive care and assessing the dental needs of children and mothers for future trips. Poor dental status compounds existing nutritional and health problems and increases the risk for pre-term delivery and low birth weight,” says Bruce.

Travel and lodging in Haiti can be challenging, but problems are minimized through the assistance of the staff of the birthing home. All medical and dental supplies have to be sent from the United States.

“I didn’t grow up thinking I was ‘adventuresome,’ but I never hesitated to go outside of my comfort zone,” says Gerry. “I did grow up in an environment where my family and friends were concerned about the less fortunate and underserved populations.”

Due to the nation’s lack of infrastructure, there are no recorded addresses in Les Cayes. Getting medical care to those who need it and keeping track of disease and mortality is difficult. The birthing home teams have mapped out each family’s house on a GPS system, as a start.

“The individual people are wonderful—when you walk to their houses, they absolutely welcome you,” Bruce says.

Adds Gerry: “Reaching out to the less fortunate helps me express my thanksgivings for the good life and opportunities that I have had. It is deeply enriching.”





Opposite: Gerry and Bruce Barker are spending their retirement doing health care mission work in Haiti.
Above: Neil Bull with his investment group, the Brookside Institute.

The five-step plan

Professor Emeritus Neil Bull, Ph.D., has some insights into what makes a satisfying retirement: not only is he an academic expert on gerontology, but also he is retired.

"I developed a fairly straightforward five-step plan for myself," he says. "It's a terribly individualistic thing, and you need to know what you want out of it."

Bull said the first rule of his plan was to "work out a way to say no. You need a gentle way to take away the assumption that you have all the time in the world to do things for others."

Second, Bull says to schedule something outside your home two or three days week, such as a class or volunteer work. "This will anchor your week, so you get out of the perpetual weekend syndrome," he says.

"Third, try to get a buddy or friend to grow into retirement with. I've got a friend I go to lunch with, vote with and do some political party work with.

"Fourth, join a group – or start one. We started a group that meets once a week for coffee, and we invest a little money together; we take trips together, and our investments pay for that.

"And last, find a way to get away from your spouse—legitimately, of course! It's important that your spouse, especially if he or she is still in the workforce, gets some time alone in your home."

Bull enjoys traveling and has been to the United Kingdom, Canada, Chicago and Boston. He also capitalized on his free schedule by sitting in on classes at UMKC in physics, philosophy, Islam, art and geology.

"I don't take exams, but I do the homework," he says. "These subjects have always been of interest, but I never had time when I was working."

Psychologist Bane says that for retired people, "a key element is having a continuity in their sense of self and meaning in their life. If a person is only identified with their work, then 'retirement,' which is from 'work' and not 'life,' results in a loss of self."

Contrary to the messages we get from Hollywood and popular culture, Breyspraak reminds us that a fertile and creative mind doesn't diminish with age. In fact, she says, "We have so much potential to keep developing throughout our adult life ... and there is so much research to support this."

Giuseppe Verdi composed operas into his eighties; Frank Lloyd Wright created his last building at age 89 and George Bernard Shaw continued writing plays into his nineties.

Missouri's own native son, Samuel Clemens, published prolifically as Mark Twain until he died. He urged: "Twenty years from now, you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover." ■

"Retirement is a terribly individualistic thing, and you need to know what you want out of it." -Neil Bull

Food for thought

Little-known facts about UMKC's dining service

\$5 will buy you:

- a turkey sub and a 20 oz. soda from Café à la Cart
- a package of Bumblefish Sushi's spicy tuna rolls from the UMKC Café
- a bagel with cream cheese, piece of fruit and a large espresso Americano at Einstein Bros. Bagels
- a large cup of ice cream and a gourmet pretzel from Frëshens
- a steakhouse salad at UMKC Café



The amount of French fries served each week in the cafeteria.

Feb. 28, 2008

The cafeteria's busiest day of the year (date of the annual Gates Bar-B-Q luncheon).

45 gallons

The amount of milk students drink daily during the school year.



2

customers are served per minute at UMKC's most popular franchise, Einstein Bros. Bagels.

Top 5

foods at Union Cafeteria:

- Fried chicken
- Sizzling chicken caesar salad
- Twilight breakfast (served at dinner time)
- Made-to-order omelettes
- Hand-dipped ice cream bars

Time the cafeteria's first staff member arrives:

4:45 a.m.



The date (in 2008) when UMKC Dining Services announced its switch to cage-free eggs.

6.5%

The percentage by which the cafeteria's food costs have risen over the past six months.

The number of students who eat in the cafeteria every day:

1,300

The number of staff members who serve them:

35

10

The minimum number of theme meals the cafeteria hosts per year. Past favorites have included:

- the midnight breakfast (served every year during finals week)
- KC Royals luncheon
- a Hispanic heritage theme dinner
- the Gates Bar-B-Q luncheon

4,532
miles

The farthest distance an ingredient (French truffles) was shipped from in the last school year. The cafeteria has imported spices from Peru and high-end desserts from the West Coast.



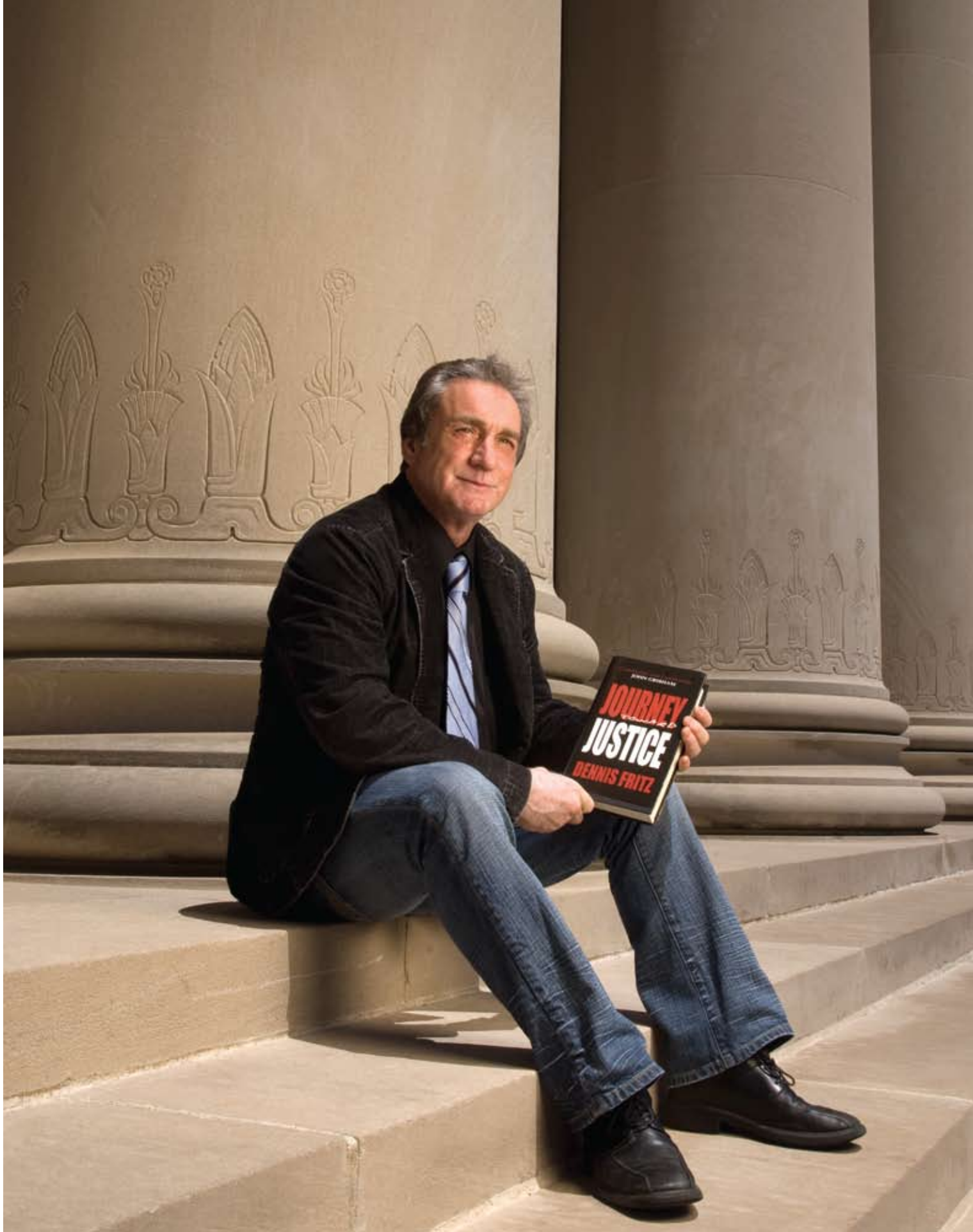
twelve

varieties of cereal are served in the cafeteria.

The number of pizzas served daily during the school year:

80





Above: Now a free man, Dennis Fritz is dedicating his life to helping others wrongfully imprisoned for crimes they did not commit. He has also written a book about his experience. Opposite: Dennis Fritz and Ron Williamson react on April 15, 1999, in an Ada, Okla., courtroom, as District Judge Tom Landrith orders their release from prison.

Guilty until proven innocent

The work of the Midwestern
Innocence Project can be a
matter of life or death

by MARJIE KNUST

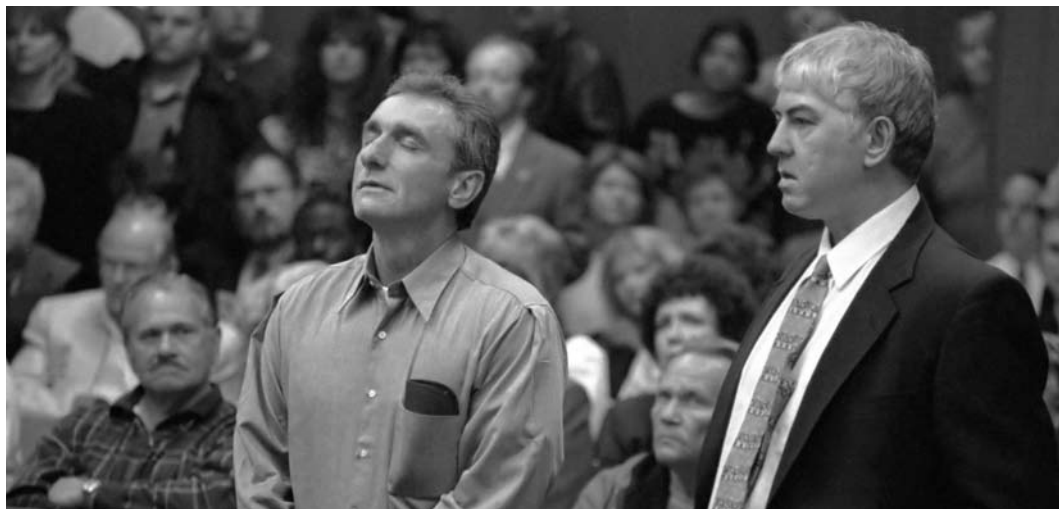
Dennis Fritz held the plastic hotel key card in his hand and looked at it. He didn't understand how it was going to unlock the door to his hotel room, but he didn't want to embarrass himself in front of the front desk clerk.

He handed the card to his daughter.

"They didn't give me any keys," he said. His daughter, Elizabeth, laughed.

"Dad, that is the key."

Her laughter trailed off as she suddenly realized everything her father had missed during his 12 years in prison.



He didn't wait up for her after her first date. He wasn't in the passenger seat when she drove her first car. He wasn't holding the video camera as she walked across the stage at her high school graduation.

"When I was convicted, Elizabeth was 13," Fritz says. "She was a little girl, then the next time I saw her, she was a beautiful, full-grown woman."

Fritz missed half his daughter's life serving time in prison for a murder he didn't commit.

When he was first questioned about the murder of Debbie Carter in 1983 in Ada, Okla., Fritz cooperated and didn't think much of the investigation. After all, although he was a regular customer at the bar where Carter worked, he'd never actually met her. He was teaching junior high science in Oklahoma and raising Elizabeth as a single dad after her mother was murdered when Elizabeth was just 2 years old.

"It was just Elizabeth and me," Fritz says. "We were slowly healing after the death of her mom, but it was hard raising a little girl by myself."

Four years after Carter's death, Fritz, along with his friend Ronnie Williamson, were arrested for her murder. Fritz was visiting his mother in Kansas City the night of his arrest. The case against them was based on testimony from jailhouse informants and microscopic hair evidence, done with a scientific method that has since been widely discredited.

Fritz was convicted and sentenced to life in prison in 1988.

"When the jury came in to read the verdict, there was one juror who had her head down and she was crying," Fritz says. "She was the lone juror that saved me from death row."

Williamson wasn't so lucky. He was handed the death penalty.

Fritz started working on his case from prison, spending hours in the law library writing briefs and drafting motions. He also wrote to the Innocence Project, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping innocent inmates seek exoneration.

The Innocence Project has chapters across the country, including Kansas City. The Midwestern Innocence Project began in 2000 and uses UMKC law students and faculty to assist inmates who have written to the project for help. The project takes cases from Missouri, Arkansas, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Iowa. Once a letter is received, claims are vetted through a network of volunteer attorneys to determine if they are legitimate. After that, law students enrolled in the Wrongful Convictions class at UMKC begin researching the case further.

"The first step is fitting it all together," says Lindsay Runnels, a third-year law student. "You have to ask, 'does everything add up?' It's reading police reports, reading court transcripts, a lot of investigation."

Students speak with inmates and determine if a case has enough evidence to prove innocence. Many times, that evidence is DNA. But the Midwestern Innocence Project differs from others in that it also takes cases that don't involve DNA.

"Without DNA, it takes a really long time," Runnels says. "There are really high standards. It's actual innocence; you have to show it."

Last fall, UMKC law students began working with law and journalism students from the University of Missouri-Columbia on innocence cases. Students from both schools are broken into teams and assigned cases together.

"We've been able to put all the files online," says Tiffany Murphy, legal director for the Midwestern Innocence Project and clinical professor of law at UMKC. "They're accessible from anywhere in the country, so students can do casework together without being in the same room and without compromising document integrity."

Journalism students at MU work on cases through investigative journalism classes. The experience teaches them how to read legal documents, and they use their writing expertise to help draft motions, Murphy says.

A typical exoneration takes six to seven years from the time the project receives a letter to seeing an inmate released, according to Murphy. The Midwestern Innocence Project hasn't had an exoneration yet, but has 283 cases open. The majority of those are in the initial review process, but 35 are being actively pursued.

Because of the lengthy review and litigation process, most students who work on cases likely won't be around to see them go to court.

"It's hard because you never get to see the outcome of your work," says Sarah Buckley (J.D. '08). "I'm possessive about my cases. I have every intention of going back and working there (when I graduate)."

Students are only required to work on cases during the semester class is in session. But many volunteer to work on cases once class is over.

The project also sometimes changes how students view the justice system.

"It's definitely opened my eyes," Buckley says. "I scream at *Law & Order* all the time now. It used to be my favorite show, but they never follow the law on that show. It's totally wrong."

It's important for students to see what can go wrong in the system and learn from it, Murphy says.

"I want them to see that what they do is important," Murphy says. "It's not just about making money. As an attorney, you have a chance to make a difference in someone's life."

Before coming to UMKC, Murphy worked as a criminal defense attorney doing mostly post-conviction work. The process of appeals can be daunting, she says.

"Working with students and seeing them get so involved in these cases is rejuvenating," Murphy says. "I see a lot of students who want to do something to change the system, and that's good to see."

Not all graduating students want to be criminal defense attorneys, of course. But students who go on to become prosecutors learn from their time on the Midwestern Innocence Project as well.

"There are students who believe the system is right, and researching these cases, they also see what can happen when things aren't done correctly," Murphy says. "I had a student who told me 'I'm not your biggest fan, but this guy needs a new trial. His rights were violated.' I took that as a triumph."

For other students, the project provides encouragement among the tests and papers and anxiety about student loans.

"I've been turned on to the world of nonprofits," Buckley says. "I went to law school to help people, but you get bogged down in studying and debt, and you forget why you came. Working with the Midwestern Innocence Project, you see people do still care."

The Midwestern Innocence Project is operated by volunteers and relies on donors for much of its funding. The program received a boost last year when author John Grisham visited UMKC's campus for a fundraiser. Grisham wrote a book based on Fritz's and Williamson's case called *The Innocent Man*.

Without an exoneration yet, the project's biggest challenge right now is creating awareness, Murphy says.

"A lot of people don't understand what we do," she says. "There can be a misperception that we're working for criminals, but we're trying to help innocent people. It's been a challenge."

Wrongful convictions can happen any time. Undertrained attorneys, overworked public defenders, sloppy police work or overzealous prosecutors under pressure to get convictions can all result in a wrongful conviction. The reality that people can go

to prison for a crime they didn't commit is sometimes difficult for students to grasp.

"Working on the project makes you more careful," Runnels says. "You become more aware of how things can go wrong. These are such important issues we're working with and it's hard to grasp how important until you see it play out in real life."

Fritz and Williamson were released in 1999, thanks to DNA evidence that not only were they not the killers, but that the prosecution's main witness – who had claimed he'd seen Williamson arguing with the victim on the night in question – was, in fact, her rapist and murderer. That witness, Glen Gore, was eventually convicted of the crime. The state of Oklahoma never offered an official apology to Fritz and Williamson.

Fritz now dedicates his life to speaking out on behalf of the Innocence Project. He works closely with the Midwest chapter, speaking with students and appearing at fundraising events. He now lives in Kansas City and is working on a follow-up to his book, *Journey Toward Justice*.

"When you talk to Dennis, it's hard to imagine something like that happening to him," Runnels says. "He could have been your neighbor. He was an eighth-grade science teacher. People don't think something like that could happen, but you can see yourself in him." ■

"It's not just about making money. As an attorney, you have a chance to make a difference in someone's life." -Tiffany Murphy



Tiffany Murphy, legal director for the Midwestern Innocence Project and clinical professor of law at UMKC, and Sarah Buckley (J.D. '08).

ANALYSIS

color: white
 diet: plus 50 percent
 build: 50 percent leaner
 stamina: 30% greater
 lifespan: increased

LOCATION

UMKC school of nursing
 Health sciences building
 Latitude: 39°455'n
 Longitude: -94°34'31'W

MISSION

terminate obesity, diabetes,
 muscular dystrophies and
 cardiovascular diseases

TARGET

species: *Mus musculus*
 code name: mighty mouse

Mighty mouse

A UMKC research group's new super mouse won't fight crime or injustice, but it will help combat diseases

by RICK MANN

Believe it or not, a super mouse is coming to campus. Dubbed "Mighty Mouse" by scientists, the new research mouse is no relation to the superhero, but it may become as welcomed by humans as the animated hero was in the 1940s.

Rather than foiling the plans of evil cats, though, this mouse is expected to one day help find solutions to pressing medical issues, including obesity, aging-decline in muscle function, diabetes, muscular dystrophies and cardiovascular diseases.

Mighty mouse is a new animal model for muscle and metabolism research, and was recently developed by Richard Hanson and his colleagues at Case Western Reserve University. A collaborative team of researchers from the schools of Nursing and Medicine will be breeding and studying these mice at UMKC.

These transgenic mice are not clones, in which a genetic copy is created. Rather, the transgenic mice were bred with an overexpression of the gene for the enzyme phosphoenolpyruvate carboxykinase (PEPCK-C). This was accomplished by a process called knock-in, in which researchers are able to increase the expression of a single gene. Several lines of these mice were generated, and the male and female pairs with the highest activity for the PEPCK enzyme were selected. These animals were then bred creating the new colony of transgenic mice.

Tina Hines, Ph.D.



Michael Wacker, Ph.D.

These super mice are white and the same length of ordinary mice, but many similarities end there. While their “regular” cousins weigh 30 grams by three to six months, the mighty mouse can weigh a little more than half as much. Astonishingly fit, these mice can run 30-fold farther than control mice, eat 60 percent more, are 50 percent thinner and survive longer than control mice.

“They’re metabolically similar to Lance Armstrong biking up the Pyrenees; they utilize mainly fatty acids for energy and produce very little lactic acid,” says Hanson, the Leonard and Jean Skeggs Professor of Biochemistry at Case Western Reserve.

“Some of the changes observed in these models include astonishing fitness and elite athleticism,” says Tina Hines, Ph.D., the UMKC Thompson Endowed Professor of Research.

“They are fatigue resistant and can run six kilometers in a single test,” says Marco Brotto, Ph.D., an expert in muscle fatigue. “These remarkable mice eat more and weigh less than their controls despite having high blood sugar and fat levels. In addition, they continue to reproduce well past their controls.”

The UMKC research team who will use the super mice for research is called the Muscle Biology Research Group (MUBIG), and includes Tina Hines, Ph.D., Marco Brotto, Ph.D., a new associate professor of Nursing with joint appointments in the schools of Medicine and Biological Sciences; and School of Medicine physiologists Jon Andresen, Ph.D., an expert in smooth muscle and potassium channels, and Michael Wacker, Ph.D., a cardiac muscle and arrhythmias expert.

Through collaborations with Case Western Reserve, scientists at the schools of Nursing and Medicine said they hope to understand the molecules responsible for changes in muscle function that lead to the amazing physical abilities in these mice.

Developer Hanson cautions that the mice may help lead to important insights into human diseases, but “the technique used to create the animal model reported in our study is not appropriate for application to humans ... any attempt to tamper with the metabolic processes in human muscle will surely do more harm than good.”

In addition to the mighty mice, MUBIG will pursue other collaborative studies, high-profile research grants, seminars, journal articles and collaborations with other UMKC groups and individuals, such as researchers in the School of Pharmacy, leading bone researcher Lynda Bonewald, Ph.D., at the School of Dentistry, and the School of Medicine’s Hong-Wen Deng, Ph.D., with his extensive human tissue database that relates to obesity and osteoporosis.

“The days of the lone researcher working away in solitude in the lab are really gone,” said John Baumann, Ph.D., vice provost for Research and director, Office of Research Services. “The health questions facing science today are complex, and they really require interdisciplinary teams of experts tackling these challenges. The proximity of our health and life sciences schools at UMKC creates some natural partnerships, and I expect that will only continue to grow as these groups make discoveries and inroads that improve patient health.”

In the Mighty Mouse cartoons, the small but powerful superhero identified a problem and solved it within a matter of minutes. UMKC researchers know that the complex issues surrounding devastating human diseases will take much more time and energy, but the new super mice have provided a potential giant leap forward. ■

“They’re metabolically similar to Lance Armstrong biking up the Pyrenees.”

-Richard Hanson

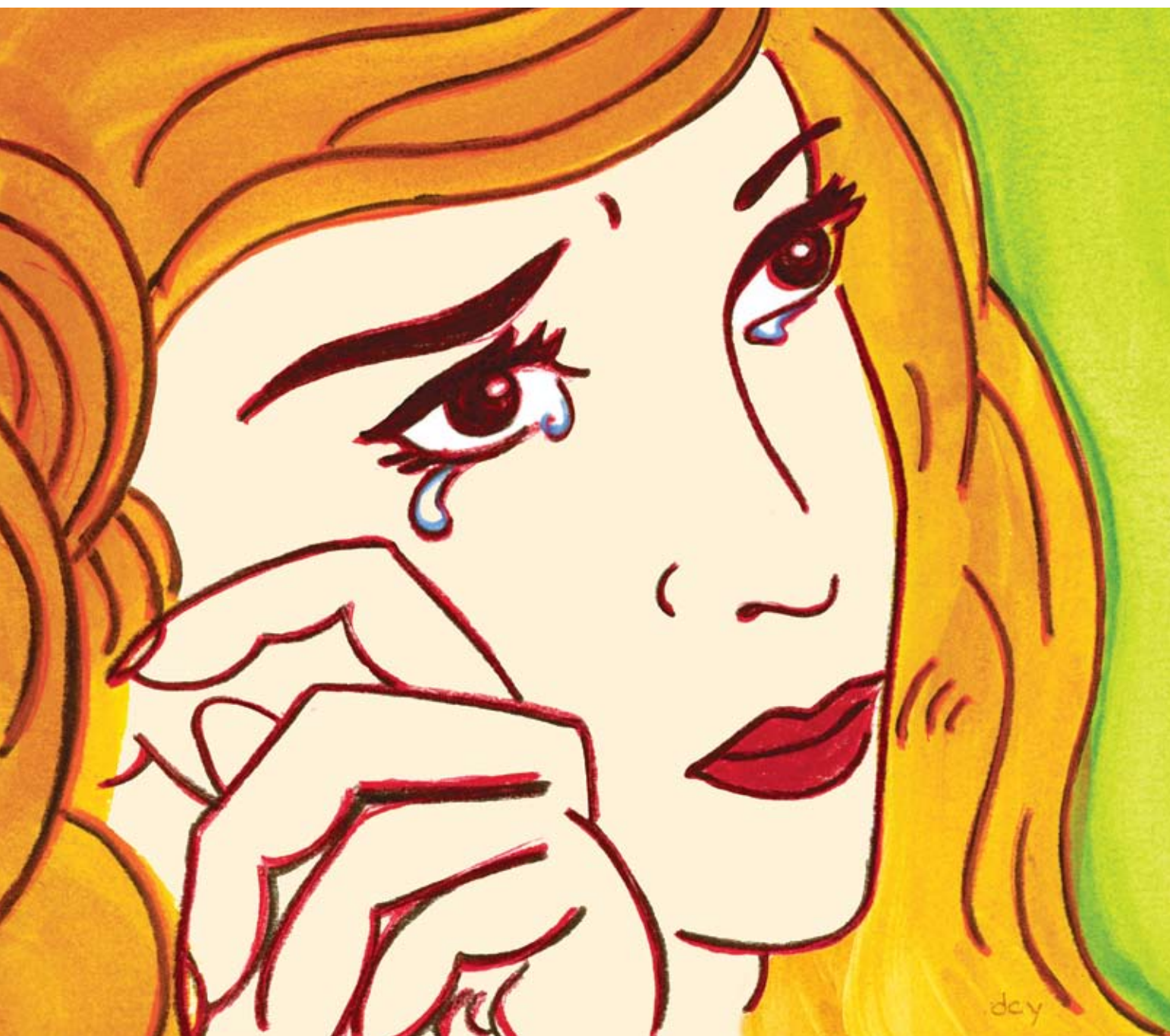


Jon Andresen, Ph.D.

No more tears

The School of Pharmacy's Ashim Mitra has his eye on patenting a new ophthalmic treatment

by NICHOLAS BARRON



For anyone whose eye drops repeatedly miss their target – and instead stream down the face – help may be on the way. Ashim Mitra, Ph.D., University of Missouri Curators' Professor of Pharmacy and chairman of the Division of Pharmaceutical Sciences, is in the process of patenting a delivery system for eye drops that limits the mess and increases the efficiency.

Eye drops are the first line of attack in treating ocular conditions found in the front of the eye. They're easier and less painful than injections and are used to treat ailments such as acute contagious conjunctivitis, or pinkeye.

But while they're effective, eye drops aren't very efficient; most of the drop immediately runs out of the eye, and subsequently, onto the patient's face.

Mitra is changing that.

By harnessing the eye's protective functions, Mitra expects to eliminate the mess and improve how eye drops work. This area of his research is funded in part with grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

In his research, Mitra, who serves as vice provost for interdisciplinary research at UMKC, solved a previously unanswered question. He discovered how the cornea, the part of the eye covering the iris and pupil, receives its nutrients. Mitra realized the eye has transporters and receptors carrying nutrients like vitamin C, glucose and amino acid from the back of the eyes to the cornea in the front. Mitra's solution is to use these transporters and receptors to deliver the medicine to the cornea.

The only problem is the eye's defense mechanism, which uses transporters called efflux pumps to keep out foreign substances like pollution and bacteria – as well as medicine – that could affect the eyes.

Mitra has found a way to fool the efflux pumps. By combining a medicine with a nutrient, it could sneak past the efflux pumps and into the cornea, rather like a Trojan horse.

"So it [the new discovery] has two purposes," Mitra says. "One is that it bypasses the efflux pump, and secondly, it gives the mechanism to get the drugs into the eye."

Mitra's revolutionizing eye treatment can also make it easier to take care of serious eye conditions that require more intense treatment than eye drops, such as age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

Problems like AMD occur in the back of the eye, away from the area where drops typically have been used or are most effective. This leaves injections into the conjunctiva, the part of the eyelid just above the eye itself, as the only option for treatment.

The problem with injections, beside the pain, is they can cause hemorrhaging and retinal damage.

Mitra wanted to know if a drop could be used to treat the back of the eye, and it turns out, it could. By placing the drug under the eyelid, the medicine is carried by blood vessels to the retina in the back of the eye. In this procedure, to get the medication past the watchful efflux pumps, Mitra bypasses the efflux pumps by combining the drug with nutrients and a steroid, like prednisone, which already is often used to reduce inflammation in the eye when treating AMD.

"Right now, you have a separate steroid and a separate antibody [medicine], but you are not getting the benefit out of it," Mitra says. "However, put them together into one formulation, and you get the benefit."



With two problems solved, Mitra then decided to take his research into needle-free eye treatments a step further.

Currently, in treating more advanced eye conditions – ones in which drops or injections into the skin above the eye wouldn't be appropriate or effective – the treatment is to inject the eye itself as often as every four to six weeks.

Mitra developed a polymer, a substance of bonded ingredients. This polymer is the medication and is comprised of several units. These units allow for flexibility in the type of drug delivered through the polymer, and for how long.

To make this possible, Mitra has combined several polymers into nano-sized particles. These particles are then suspended in a liquid solution that contains another polymer that, at a certain temperature, instantly changes the solution from liquid to a gel, increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the medication, as well as allowing for time-release capability.

In other words, a health professional can use this polymer to treat many different ailments and set a time-delivery system in place. So this polymer can be used to treat one illness over a two-month period, or it can be used to treat another illness over a six-month period.

"If you're putting [the substance] into the eye, you don't want the particles to float around everywhere or be distributed everywhere," Mitra says. "Not only does [the gel] keep the particles in one place, it gives constant release over time."

An injection could be used to get the substance into the eye; however, Mitra has proposed the substance be placed underneath the upper eyelid as a drop. Such a procedure is less intrusive and painful. Also, the gel and polymers are all biodegradable; as the drug is released over time, it dissipates and dissolves.

This innovation will be great news for patients, but it's also exciting for pharmaceutical companies that can use the technology to develop more flexible and less intrusive eye treatments.

"We are in discussions with several companies who are interested in licensing Dr. Mitra's ideas for commercial use," says John Baumann, Ph.D., vice provost for research at UMKC. "He has extended the boundaries of basic research. In selecting areas to investigate and in thinking about his research, he is always considering how his work can be translated into patient care."

Mitra, who already holds three patents and has two more pending, and the UMKC Office of Research Services, expect to patent the new technology this year. ■



Pellom McDaniels' personal experiences help add context to the history classes he teaches.

McDaniels reaches goal

The ex-Chiefs player returns to Kansas City to teach history

Many young men dream about playing in the National Football League. Probably fewer have aspirations to become history professors. But when Pellom McDaniels III was a student-athlete at Oregon State University, he wanted to do both.

"It was when I was an undergraduate that I set becoming a college professor as one of my goals," says McDaniels, who originally enrolled in college as a fine arts major before deciding to pursue a communications degree.

"I was taking an African-American history course in which the professor's approach seemed so impersonal and sterile. It just seemed so matter-of-fact, with no contextualization, and I thought that maybe one day I could become a professor and do a better job," he says.

As NFL fans – and Kansas City Chiefs fans in particular – know, McDaniels achieved his dream of playing pro football, starting his career with the Philadelphia Eagles before joining the Chiefs in 1992. During his six years in Kansas City, McDaniels not only was a key part of the Chiefs' defensive line, he also made strong connections to the local community, establishing Arts for Smarts, a foundation that helps youths realize their full potential through creative processes.

Before leaving Kansas City to play for the Atlanta Falcons, the multi-faceted McDaniels also published *My Own Harlem*, a book of poems that reflect McDaniels' passion for jazz and blues and the city's 18th and Vine Historic District.

After two years with the Falcons, McDaniels retired from the NFL and soon started working toward his other goal of becoming

a professor by undertaking first a master's and then a doctorate in American Studies at Atlanta's Emory University.

In fall 2007, McDaniels returned to Kansas City to join UMKC's history department. And no one could accuse him of taking an impersonal approach, or not giving context to the subjects he teaches. Along with core department classes, McDaniels is teaching special studies courses that consider several themes that touch on his own experiences, including historical perspectives of sports, the role of sports in African-American culture and views of masculinity through history.

When he's not helping to shape minds in a UMKC classroom, he's sharing his skills with younger students through Arts for Smarts. The foundation has also recently established the Carter G. Woodson Junior Historians Program, named for the writer, journalist and founder of Black History Month.

"It's a program for middle-school kids that encourages them to not only explore the writing process but also look at local history and imagine how important it is to their own futures and to convey that to their peers through their writing," McDaniels says.

For McDaniels, writing – and the arts in general – is a key part of creating a well-rounded individual.

"I think the arts allow for creative problem-solving," he says. "Through activities like writing and painting, you can let your mind wander, try to figure out how to make things work and learn how to create your own path."

LARA HALE

Building up

UMKC campus gets a new look

New construction and future additions are advancing UMKC's student life and increasing undergraduate enrollment on campus.

In August, more than 500 students moved into the newly constructed Oak Place Apartments. According to then-Chancellor Guy Bailey, not only was housing space an issue, but UMKC housing wasn't attractive to today's students.

"The most important projects for us are student housing and things that would engage students on campus," he says. Since more institutions around the country are moving student housing toward suite- and apartment-style living, UMKC leaders understood that to increase the student population, better housing accommodations were needed. Leaders also hope that with more students living on campus this fall, a surge in student activities on campus will follow.

North of the apartments, UMKC broke ground in July for the replacement of the Cherry Street Residence Hall, which is projected to be completed by fall 2009. Phase II of the Oak Street housing development will provide housing for 328 residents. The new housing complex will be similar to the Oak Street residence hall, with a few modifications. The dorm will include music practice rooms, a classroom, computer labs, a recreation room and much more. Room rentals provide the revenue for financing the construction.

The original Cherry Street Residence Hall, built in 1955 and located at 5030 Cherry St., will remain open until summer 2009. Campus facilities continues to debate whether the structure will be knocked down or gutted for other uses.

Eric Grospitch, director of Residential Life, says today's students want more out of their collegiate accommodations than simply a room.

"The new apartments and residence halls will provide students accommodations that match their interests," he says. "Updating the living accommodations on campus and new and exciting programming emphases in residential life will create a more vibrant and exciting atmosphere on campus."

Other types of construction and renovations are taking place on Volker campus and Hospital Hill. The University replaced chillers on the Volker campus for increased energy savings and updated locker rooms at Swinney Recreation Center this summer.

Construction begins this fall on the addition of the automated storage and retrieval system for the Miller Nichols Library expansion, scheduled to become operational in fall 2009.

By spring 2009, construction on the new student union will begin. Currently, the University anticipates a completion date of August 2011. The union will be financed through student fees.

The School of Medicine renovated lecture theaters over the summer, and the Health Sciences Building (Pharmacy and Nursing) completion continues this fall, providing classroom and laboratory space in the existing shelled space. The overall construction of the new Health Sciences Building, which opened last fall, won first place in the Public Projects category of the 2008 Cornerstone Award presented by Economic Development Corporation of Kansas City in April.

"The design and the location of the new UMKC Health Sciences Building provide the perfect cornerstone for UMKC's Hospital Hill Campus," Bailey remarked. "To receive the EDC's Cornerstone



The new Oak Place Apartments welcomed its first residents in August. Students can choose from one-, two- or four-bedroom units.

Award is especially fitting. It is an honor and a tribute to all of the people who contributed to the success of this project."

UMKC is also planning a dental school building expansion, a new Conservatory of Music and Dance building, as well as other Hospital Hill and Volker campus expansions and additions over the next few years.

For more information on updates on current and new construction projects, visit www.umkc.edu.

KARA PETROVIC

PAC re-dedicated



The James C. Olson Performing Arts Center was re-dedicated on June 12, 2008, thanks to encouragement from the former Chancellor's friends and Conservatory supporters. Among the ceremony's attendees were Olson's widow, Vera, daughters Sarah Olson (far left) and Elizabeth Goldring Piene (far right) and granddaughter Elizabeth Hua Ying.



The University's "Get a Life" recruitment campaign, conceptualized by Bernstein-Rein, was seen on television and on posters throughout the summer.

Appointments

Chris Brown, Ph.D., was promoted to professor at the School of Education, Division of Counseling and Educational Psychology. Brown earned her doctoral degree at UMKC, her master's degree from California State University at Long Beach and her undergraduate degree from the University of California – Los Angeles. She began teaching at UMKC in 1993, and her teaching and research emphases include career development and counseling ethics. She is a past chair of UMKC's Social Sciences Institutional Research Board, and she currently serves on the NCAA accreditation steering committee for UMKC Athletics Department.

Kevin Z. Truman, Ph.D., was named the new Dean of UMKC's School of Computing and Engineering (SCE). He has more than 28 years experience gained from teaching and research at Washington University in St. Louis, Mo., as well as from his work as a consultant with such organizations as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and GEI Consulting, Inc. Upon completion of his Ph.D. in civil engineering at the University of Missouri-Rolla in 1985, Truman became an assistant professor of civil engineering at Washington University in St. Louis, where he also served as chair of the department of mechanical, aerospace and structural engineering and chair of civil engineering. Since 2006, he has served as dean of the University of Missouri-St. Louis/Washington University joint undergraduate engineering program and has been the Albert P. and Blanche Y. Greensfelder Professor of Engineering at Washington University. The author of numerous journal articles, reports and conference papers, Truman has an extensive record of service both to academic institutions and to professional organizations,

and led the effort to gain full ABET accreditation for Washington University's Civil Engineering Department.

Susan B. Wilson, Ph.D., was appointed associate dean for Cultural Enhancement and Diversity at the School of Medicine. She comes to UMKC from Spofford, a family treatment center in Kansas City, where she served as vice president of clinical services. Wilson attended the University of Pittsburgh, where she earned a B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. in clinical psychology. She completed her pre-doctoral internship at the VA Medical Center in Pittsburgh, Penn., and her post-doctoral fellowship at the Menninger Foundation in Topeka, Kan. She also possesses an M.B.A. from UMKC. Prior to Spofford, Wilson worked with several health care organizations in the Kansas City area, including Swope Health Services and St. Luke's Health System.

Peter Witte was named dean of the Conservatory of Music and Dance. Since 1999, Witte has served as chair of the Department of Music and director of Instrumental Studies at Kennesaw State University in Georgia. He has conducted musical groups across the country and has served as conductor, clinician and coach for bands, orchestras and honors ensembles throughout the South. As a performer, Witte has held numerous horn positions, performing with orchestras in Europe and North America. He has led performances in Carnegie Hall with the National Wind Ensemble and the Atlanta Wind Symphony, where he served as music director for seven years. He has been involved in several professional organizations throughout his career and currently serves as president of the Georgia Music Educators Association.

Game on!

Durwood Foundation pledges \$5 million for new soccer stadium

The UMKC Athletics Department is the beneficiary of a \$5 million commitment from the Stanley H. Durwood Foundation and its trustees, Raymond F. Beagle Jr. and Charles J. Egan, for the construction of a new soccer stadium. The gift is the largest ever awarded to UMKC Athletics.

In addition to the soccer competition venue, Stanley H. Durwood Stadium will also comprise locker rooms and administrative offices for the UMKC men's and women's soccer, softball and track and field programs, a four-lane track and a concession stand.

The department expects the entire stadium complex to be completed in spring 2010, but the soccer field will be ready in time to host the UMKC women's soccer program's first game in 2009. The new program is expected to help boost partnership with the community, as the sport is sponsored by a large number of high schools in the Kansas City area, and to have a positive impact on diversity and Title IX.

"This is an institution-transforming gift, which will give us the ability to serve our student-athletes through one of the best playing venues in the Summit League and in the Midwest," UMKC Director of Athletics Tim Hall says.



The Stanley H. Durwood Stadium will be built on the site of the current athletics field.

But while the Kangaroos will certainly reap rewards from the new stadium complex, Hall says they won't be the only ones.

"When [the stadium] isn't being used by our student-athletes, our students can use the track and field for intramurals and other student activities," he says. "And it will be a first-class venue for our community members who use the facility. It really transforms and enhances UMKC's ability to serve all of its constituencies and shows that athletics is, can be and should be completely integrated within the more broad university."

The stadium and foundation are named for the late Stan Durwood, founder of the Kansas City-based AMC theater chain. Though he was educated at Harvard, Durwood was a strong supporter of UMKC, and especially of its athletic program. His dedication earned him the Chancellor's Medal in 1994. The medal is the highest non-academic honor the University can bestow upon a community member.

LARA HALE

New praise for *New Letters*

UMKC's resident literary journal *New Letters* took home the prize for best essay at the 2008 National Magazine Awards, beating out offerings from *Harper's*, *Elle*, *The Atlantic* and *The New Yorker*. The winning essay, published in the summer '07 issue, was "I Am Joe's Prostate," written by Thomas E. Kennedy about his cancer scare.

"The National Magazine Award tells us that we at *New Letters* and at UMKC are doing work that can stand shoulder to shoulder with just about anyone," said Editor-in-Chief Robert Stewart. "Much of the credit for that goes to the true collegiality of the creative people at this University and the support of the College of Arts and Sciences."

New Letters received other praise recently, when one of the stories published in the winter '07 issue was awarded a Pushcart Prize, which honors the best essays, poetry and short fiction published the previous year by small presses.

The winning story, John Barth's "Progressive Dinner," is one of a series about a fictional gated community on Maryland's Eastern Shore. The story will appear in the 2009 edition of the Pushcart Prize: Best of the Small Presses anthology.

New Letters is no stranger to the Pushcart; the magazine has been awarded a prize during each of the previous two years and received 15 nominations for its 2007 issues. This year's other nominated pieces include a poem by UMKC English Professor Michelle Boisseau and an interview by assistant professor for Communication Studies, Angela Elam, who produces *New Letters on the Air*, the magazine's weekly radio companion.

Announcing eAlumni – a new online directory for UMKC alumni

UMKC alumni are connecting and reconnecting online. In July 2008, UMKC launched the eAlumni directory on the Alumni Association Web site at www.umkcalumni.com/ealumni. The Web site allows alumni to view and update their biographical information as well as search for, connect and network with fellow alumni.

Alumni need their Alumni ID number to register on the Web site. To find your ID number, simply look on the mailing label of this issue of *Perspectives* (see example, below).

For more information or assistance, call the Alumni Office at 816-235-1561 or e-mail alumni@umkc.edu.

SAMPLE your Alumni ID number
#BYNZDZL *****AUTO**3-DIGIT 799
#0000191897# Postal office code
MR. JOHN Q. ALUMNI
123 MAIN STREET
ANYTOWN, MO 64110-1002



Rosen takes center stage

The Rep's new artistic director plans for greatness

From actor to producer to award-winning playwright and director, Eric Rosen has experienced almost every outlet theater offers.

Now at age 37, Rosen has become the fourth and youngest artistic director for the 44-year-old Kansas City Repertory Theatre, the professional theater in residence at UMKC.

"It's really exciting to be here, to bring all of my interest into one community and make an impact," he says. "It's going to be very exciting."

Rosen's initial love for the arts surfaced as a child. He first took to the community theater stage at age seven as a forest creature in *Ondine*, an expressionist, dark folk tale.

"I was a hell of a forest creature," he laughs. "I immediately felt at home on that stage and it took off from there. At first I thought I wanted to be an actor, but then I started directing in college and writing plays after that. Theater has just always been in my life, and I knew it was always what I wanted to do."

Perhaps best known for co-founding the About Face Theatre in Chicago in 1995, Rosen brought new theater life to the city. During his time as artistic director there, he also directed plays across the country from New York and California and as far away as Australia.

So, why would a successful playwright and director jump at the opportunity to move to Kansas City and leave a theater he'd help build from the ground up?

"Because from the first time I visited Kansas City, it felt like home," Rosen says. "And because I want the Rep to be one of the most popular regional theaters in the country doing plays I love by artists I love," he says. "I truly believe that Kansas City is home to some of the greatest artists and up-and-coming theater artists."

During the past four years, Rosen says his interest in the Rep continued to grow through annual meetings and visits to campus every few months. He even directed the Tony Award-winning play *Metamorphoses* in 2004 and returned in 2006 to direct *The Trip to Bountiful*.

Rosen learned of the Rep's national search during his stay in 2006, after former producing artistic director Peter Altman announced his retirement. During the Rep's eight-month national search, Rosen says he was shocked anytime he received a phone call about the possibility of an interview.

"People started talking to me about the job back in 2006," he says. "I thought 'these people are crazy. I'd never get that job.' But it did start me thinking about taking that next step, and made me think that maybe, although I was younger than others in the field with this type of position, that it was time."

Rosen says he believes his visions for the Rep and his passion for urban public education set him apart from the long list of notable candidates and eventually persuaded the search committee and then-Chancellor Guy Bailey to take a chance on him.

"Eric's young, aggressive, smart," Bailey says. "He's really going somewhere, and I know he's going to take the Rep to new places."

And leading the Rep in a new direction is exactly what Rosen



The new season at the Rep starts in September, with *Clay*, a one-man, hip-hop musical directed by the theater's new artistic director, Eric Rosen. Learn more at www.kcrep.org.

has in mind. Overall, Rosen says the Rep's level of community engagement and support is high and says it sits among the middle in budget size, although he'd like to see the numbers grow. Nevertheless, improvements are needed. Rosen sees an opportunity to redirect the Rep's focus on writing and playwrighting. He also wants to take time to pass on what he knows to the next generation of actors, directors and dramatists.

"It's my time to pay it forward so that more young artists stay in the theater," Rosen says. "It's my turn to help inspire M.F.A. students with the artists we work with and find ways to help them imagine lives for themselves."

Having earned a master's degree and a Ph.D. in performance study from Northwestern University, Rosen can safely say that he's no stranger to academia. He taught theater at Northwestern, the University of Chicago, the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and Brooklyn College.

Rosen knows his dreams for the Rep won't happen overnight, but says he hopes one day to look back at this journey knowing he infused the Rep with spirit of innovation and creativity for new ideas, while still preserving the classics.

"I want the Rep to move from being an importer of talent to an exporter of creativity, not only to the region but also the county," he says. "I want to take what I did in Chicago and apply it on a big scale. Another big part will entail building an artistic home here for local artistic and national artists."

"In the next few years if I can help lead the Rep to become a major theater in America and start hearing people say: 'I really hope I can get my work at the Kansas City Rep. That place is so adventurous and so cool,' I'll know we've done it. There's no reason we can't be that. We can become a theater of greatness."

KARA PETROVIC

UMKC partners with college-prep school

Kansas City's Southwest Early College Campus (SWECC), a grade six-12 college-prep middle and high school campus, located on the site of the former Southwest High School at 65th Street and Wornall Road, opened its doors in August to 120 students in grades sixth through ninth.

The Kansas City, Mo., School District (KCMSD) partnered with UMKC's School of Education, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Kansas City Area Life Sciences Institute, the Kansas City School District, PREP-KC and the Woodrow Wilson Foundation to make the SWECC a reality. The partnership allows students the opportunity to earn one to two years of college credit, at no tuition cost to the family or student.

"It was a natural connection to partner with the district and the other partners, since the school is so close to UMKC," says Ginny Miller, assistant dean to the School of Education. "The School of Education partners with the district on a number of things, and this was another avenue for us to strengthen that community connection."

The school, designed with a math and science focus, provides an on-site planetarium and science laboratories and offers a project-based curriculum with extended-day and extended-year opportunities to benefit both students and working parents.

UMKC professors teach college-level courses at SWECC. By the time students graduate, they will have had the opportunity to earn 20 to 60 UMKC college credit hours.

"This school gives students a jump start on a college education by obtaining general education course credit," says Charles Wurrey, associate dean for the College of Arts and Sciences. "We'll be working with students who might not normally be thinking about college and give them a head start on a college curriculum, so they know what the expectations are and can benefit from them."

In order to enroll at SWECC, families must complete an application and attend a conference. Students are required to provide a short writing sample and must reside within the KCMSD boundaries to apply.



Fine fellows

Professors awarded prestigious Guggenheims

Of the 190 Guggenheim fellowships awarded this year, two went to UMKC faculty.

Elijah Gowin, M.F.A., assistant professor of art at the College of Arts and Sciences, and Paul Rudy, Ph.D., coordinator of composition at the Conservatory of Music and Dance, were chosen out of 2,600 applicants for the prestigious award.

"It was very exciting to win, but a bit baffling because of the history of the fellowships," says Gowin, who won his first year of applying. "Typically, you don't get it the first time. It takes five or six times to apply before people get it, so I'd kind of forgotten about it by the time I got the letter saying I'd won."

Gowin plans to use his fellowship to go to Mexico and photograph cliff divers to add to his *Of Floating and Falling* series. So far in the series, Gowin has used existing amateur photos of people jumping on trampolines and juxtaposed the images against landscapes.

Rudy was already the recipient of numerous awards for his compositions, including a Fulbright fellowship and the Kauffman Award for Artistic Excellence. Now all four full-time composition faculty at UMKC are Guggenheim fellows, something only three other universities in the nation can claim. Rudy won the Guggenheim for his electroacoustic symphony, *In Lake'ch* (Mayan for "I am another yourself"). He wrote the symphony while in Taos, N.M., and plans to use his fellowship to write the second and third movement.

"Writing *In Lake'ch* was my big work," he says. "It was something that when I was done and I stepped back and looked at it, I could say that if I died right now, I'd feel like I'd done something. I'd made a difference."

MARJIE KNUST



Above, from left: Elijah Gowin and Paul Rudy. Top: *Falling 2*, from Gowin's *Of Floating and Falling* series.

Class notes

50s

Edward Zigler (M.A. '59, College of Arts and Sciences) of North Haven, Conn., was one of three scholars to win the 2008 University of Louisville Grawemeyer Award in Education. Zigler, Walter Gilliam and Stephanie Jones were honored for their book, *A Vision for Universal Preschool Education*. A Yale University professor emeritus of psychology who helped found the nation's Head Start program, Zigler directs a child development and social policy center at Yale that carries his name.

Don Forsythe (B.A. '58, Conservatory), of Raytown, Mo., is a composer, mostly of German Lieder. To date, he has composed 151 settings of Heine poems (the most, according to the University of Massachusetts, by any single composer), all of which are in the UMass music library. His most recent large work is a mega-cycle of the poems in Heine's *Verschiedene*, for which he composed music for 65 of the 67 poems in that collection.

60s

Carmela Palazzo Hakan (M.A. '68, College of Arts and Sciences), of Kansas City, Mo., won second place for fiction in the annual Perillo Prize for Italian American Writing for her entry, *Shadow Husbands*.

70s

Diane Novak Gardner, Ph.D., (B.A., '71, College of Arts and Sciences), of Pensacola, Fla., has been appointed chair of the University of West Florida Department of Nursing in Pensacola.

Russell Lovell (L.L.M. '71, School of Law) of Des Moines, Iowa, recently was honored by Iowa Legal Aid with the Excellence in Service Award for his work "to promote justice and ensure that society becomes more hospitable to low-income people." Lovell, associate dean and professor of law at Drake University in Des Moines was recognized for his contributions as a former legal aid lawyer and for his nearly 15 years of volunteer service as co-director of the Poverty Law Internship Program funded by the Iowa Supreme Court.

Pamela White (J.D. '78, School of Law), of Iowa City, Iowa, has been named interim director of the University of Iowa Museum

of Art. In addition to serving as director of the University of Iowa Pentacrest Museums, White is also the director of the Museum Studies Program at UI. In July 2007, White was chosen to attend the Getty Museum Leadership Institute as one of 32 museum leaders from the United States, Canada and Europe.

80s

John (Johnny) Miller (L.L.M. '80, School of Law), of Boerne, Texas, is a contracts management consultant who was recently awarded the National Contract Management Association 2007- 2008 Delaney Award for writing the best article in the *NCMA Contract Management* magazine for the last year.

Raymond Cummiskey, Ph.D., (Ph.D. '81, College of Arts and Sciences), of Harrisburg, Ill., was recently chosen to receive the Shirley B. Gordon Award of Distinction at the International Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Convention in Philadelphia. Cummiskey, who is president of Southeastern Illinois College, and other award winners were honored at a dinner in April in Philadelphia and received the award the next evening before a joint session of 6,000 PTK members, college faculty and college presidents.

Thomas Quammen (J.D. '81, School of Law), of Greeley, Colo., was appointed by Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter as a district court judge for Weld County. Quammen was chief trial deputy for the 17th Judicial District. He spent 24 years with the Weld District Attorney's office, 16 of those years as the assistant district attorney.

Richard Berry (D.M.A. '85, Conservatory), of Nacogdoches, Texas, was recently appointed provost and vice president for Academic Affairs at Stephen F. Austin State University. He previously served as a professor of music.

Carmaletha Williams, Ph.D. (M.A. '87, College of Arts and Sciences), of Grandview, Mo., was appointed executive assistant to the president, diversity initiatives, at Johnson County Community College (JCCC). Williams has served as a professor of English at JCCC. In her new position, she will work with human resources and the president on diversity initiatives involving programming, policies and recruitment.

90s

Melissa Taylor Standridge (J.D. '93, School of Law) of Overland Park, Kan., was named to the Kansas Court of Appeals by Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius. Standridge has served the last eight years as chambers counsel to U.S. Magistrate Judge David Waxse in Kansas City, Kan. She will fill a new position on the court created by the legislature in 2007.

Cathryn (Cathy) A. Carroll (M.B.A. '92, Bloch School of Business and Public Administration), of Smithville, Mo., became The Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy's 20th president. Carroll is currently a director of Pharmacy for Comprehensive Pharmacy Services, one of the nation's leading pharmacy management companies, headquartered in Memphis, Tenn.

John Mark Eberhart (M.A. '98, College of Arts and Sciences), of Raytown, Mo., published a new book, *Broken Time*, which was recently cited on the National Book Critics Circle's "Good Reads" list for spring.

Kirt Mosier (M.M. '98, Conservatory), of Lee's Summit, Mo., director of orchestras at Lee's Summit West High School and director of the Digital Media Technology Center of Excellence at Summit Technology Academy, was named Lee's Summit R-7 Teacher of the Year. Mosier was recognized during the Excellence In Teaching Awards reception, hosted by the Lee's Summit Chamber of Commerce and the Lee's Summit R-7 School District.

Cara Satterfield (B.A. '98, School of Education), of Independence, Mo., a history teacher at Truman High School for 10 years, was named Independence School District Teacher of the Year.

00s

Marchel Alverson (M.A. '00, College of Arts and Sciences), of Kansas City, Mo., published a new novel, *Savor the Sweetness* (Outskirts Press). She has worked as a journalist for more than 12 years, as both a writer and editor in Kansas City, Reno, Nev., and Tampa, Fla.

2009 Alumni Awards

Campus-wide award winners

Alumnus of the Year

Alvin Brooks (B.A. '59, M.A. '73)

Defying the Odds

Margaret Evans (B.A. '71, M.P.A. '73)

Spotlight

Tracy Stevens (M.D. '90)

Bill French Alumni Service Award

Reaner Shannon (M.A. '78, Ph.D. '83)

Alumni achievement awards

College of Arts and Sciences

Rebekah Presson Mosby (M.A. '87)

Biological Sciences

Dee Denver (Ph.D. '02)

Bloch School

Michael B. Wood (M.P.A. '79)

Conservatory

Paul Hartfield (Grad '82)

School of Computing and Engineering

Srikanth Hosakote (M.A. '93)

Dental Hygiene

Phyllis Martina (B.S.D.H. '78)

School of Dentistry

R. Wayne Thompson (D.D.S. '67, M.S. '72)

School of Education

Joe Seabrooks (B.A. '93, M.A. '95, Ed.Sp. '96, Ph.D. '01)

School of Law

Richard Halliburton (B.B.A. '63, J.D. '69)

School of Medicine

James Stanford (B.A. '79, M.D. '80)

School of Nursing

Capt. Winifred Copeland (B.S.N. '58, M.A. '62)

School of Pharmacy

Steve Erickson (B.S.P. '75)



Homecoming 2008

UMKC alumni and friends are invited to a homecoming weekend filled with fun, food and family. The festivities begin with a campus birthday celebration on Oct. 1, marking the original founding day of the University of Kansas City. Homecoming activities kick off Oct. 3, with a lunch and a historic photo of UMKC alumni, faculty, staff and students on the quad to commemorate the 75th anniversary. The

day continues with a family carnival, plus alumni reunions and campus tours both Friday night and Saturday morning.

On Oct. 4, alumni can show their Roo spirit by cheering on the men's soccer team or attending a program presented by UMKC's new Truman Center for Governmental Affairs.

Visit www.umkc.edu/homecoming for more event details.

Passings

Edith S. Mardiat on Dec. 7, 2007. Mardiat taught "the language of medicine" at the UMKC School of Medicine and was the founder of two schools for medical record technologists. Before joining the UMKC School of Medicine in 1983 as a clinical instructor, she was director of Medical Communications at Truman Medical Center. Among her many honors was a fellowship with the World Health Organization, and at age 80, she received the Elmer F. Pierson award for excellence in teaching from the UMKC Alumni Association.

Eugene Walker James Pearce, M.D., on Feb. 19, 2008. Pearce was a physician in Johnson County, Kan., for more than three decades and was one of three obstetricians practicing at Shawnee Mission Hospital

when it opened in 1962. After retiring from private practice, he returned to teaching at the UMKC School of Medicine, where he remained until his retirement in 2004. He helped establish Alexandra's House, a perinatal hospice in Kansas City that now serves families from Kansas City and other communities.

Joseph P. Caliguri, professor emeritus of education, on April 26, 2008. He began teaching at UMKC in 1969. His published works were in the areas of alcohol and drug education and treatment services, gender equity issues and women in management, and multicultural education. He had been a professional trainer and an elected officer for the National Council on Alcoholism, Kansas City chapter.



A design for success

What started as a way to make extra money during college has turned into a booming business for one grad

by KARA PETROVIC

As a kid, Jase Wilson never imagined himself an up-and-coming entrepreneur and business owner at 22.

And he certainly never thought he might be part of a team that helped secure the bid for the 2014 Winter Olympics in Russia.

Growing up in Maryville, Mo., Wilson (B.A. '05) thought he already had his entire life mapped out after graduating from high school. Since the eighth-grade, he wanted to be – or at least thought he wanted to be – an engineer. But upon entering college in his hometown in 2000, he discovered he didn't understand what engineers really did.

"I soon realized I didn't like the path I was headed toward," he says. "When math started to fly over my head, I knew it wasn't something I could continue with."

Although Wilson knew engineering wasn't for him, he decided to look into other engineering programs across the state, including UMKC's program before making a final decision.

While sitting in UMKC's welcome center, waiting for a student ambassador to walk him over to his engineering appointment, Wilson was in turmoil.

Should he continue down this path or choose another major?

"At that same moment, I looked up and this pamphlet caught my eye," he says. "It's like it had a halo around it."

The pamphlet gave a rundown of UMKC's Urban Planning and Design program, which was launching that fall. In a matter of 30 minutes, Wilson knew exactly which direction his future was heading.

"I knew engineering was out," he says. "I didn't even go to my scheduled appointment. From there on out, I was an urban planning and design major."

Wilson officially transferred to UMKC in August 2002, becoming one of the first students enrolled in the new program, and he never looked back. He felt the major would take him to new heights. And it did.

In 2004, midway into his second year at UMKC, Wilson opened Luminopolis, a marketing company focusing on architectural renderings. Its clients include developers, designers and realtors of high-end and mixed-use urban projects. The company, located in the center of Kansas City's booming Crossroads Arts District, resides on the second floor of the Art Incubator Warehouse on 18th Street.

"I opened Luminopolis to earn some extra money," he says. Wilson admits he had "no idea" what it took to start a business when he first started. The company was launched with proceeds from the first few transactions and still remains 100 percent funded by revenue.

Luminopolis took off quickly. Wilson was soon attending UMKC full-time and devoting any free time he had in between classes or late at night to his expanding business.

"I was earning great money for a college kid, but I needed help," Wilson says.

Enter close friend Briston Davidge, Luminopolis' interactive manager, who brought Web components into the mix. A year later, Wilson hired Matt Musselman (B.A. '05), friend and UMKC classmate. Today, Musselman serves as creative director. Choosing Musselman wasn't difficult, Wilson admits, because he'd always admired his classmate's drawings and attention to detail.

Last summer, the team brought 3-D director Eric Solberg on board. Today, Wilson, Davidge and Musselman each own one-third of Luminopolis. And although Wilson was the brain behind the company's creation, he says he wouldn't have it any other way.

"Luminopolis wouldn't be where it is today without Matt and Briston," he says. "This company didn't happen overnight. We were kind of on a rollercoaster there for a while. And we know that we can't always guarantee success. The company still isn't to the degree we'd like it to be at, but we're trying to move it that way."

After graduating from UMKC, Wilson entered the City Design and Development graduate program at MIT. He returned to Kansas City this summer after finishing his master's degree, but he stresses

that Musselman, Davidge and Solberg were the sole contributors for the company's success while he was away at school.

Wilson and Musselman credit much of their success to UMKC. They quickly took the tools they acquired at the University and put them to work for local clients including the Aladdin Hotel, D.E. Lofts, the Nicholson Group and the City of North Kansas City.

"It's an amazing feeling to take the skills I learned and apply them to impact what's going on here in Kansas City," Musselman says. "I know we all can't wait to see where KC goes next."

One of Luminopolis' largest accomplishments to date was helping sports architecture firm HOK Sport win the 2014 Olympic winter games for Sochi, Russia. The team spent nearly eight months contributing design ideas and centerpieces toward the bid process.

"I'll never forget the moment I'd learned we'd got it," Davidge says. "It was last July 4, and I saw a ticker scroll across the bottom of ESPN with the news. I called the guys and shortly after that, we got a call from the client. We definitely like to say we helped HOK win the bid."

Currently, most of Luminopolis' jobs come from word of mouth. The four-man team doesn't advertise its services but is optimistic about expanding Luminopolis' services to larger markets with help in that arena.

"I'd love to see us in Boston, New York and California one day," Wilson says. "But Kansas City will always remain our headquarters. KC's our home, and the prices and the people here are just right."

This past spring, in appreciation of their success and their alma

mater, Wilson and Musselman created the Luminopolis Prize, a \$1,000 annual scholarship, for a UMKC Urban Planning and Design II student. Students interested in the scholarship compete in a competition judged by a panel of Kansas City's finest urban planning and design movers and shakers.

The 2008 scholarship winner, senior Jonathan Woerner, said the competition has been his favorite part of the urban planning and design program.

"There was finally an incentive for students to show their passion and best work in urban design," he says.

This year's competition required students to develop a city center that included retail and services, residential condominiums and single-family dwellings.

"My project in particular has a cultural arts and entertainment concept with the amphitheater as the center of attraction, a museum to house the Hopewell Indian artifacts found at the Renner and Young archeological sites, and rapid transit for connectivity and a pedestrian friendly environment," Woerner says. "I believe this concept is what persuaded the judges to award me the scholarship."

Wilson and Musselman were excited about the competition's success and look forward to a continued partnership with the UMKC Department of Architecture, Urban Planning and Design.

"Our main goal with this scholarship is to put the department on the map," Wilson says. "We definitely hope that our relationship with them and this scholarship will help the department to continue to grow."



Opposite: Luminopolis founder Jase Wilson. Above: Wilson's business partners, Matt Musselman and Briston Davidge.



A chorus of praise

Grammy Award-winning conductor credits Conservatory professor

Had everything gone according to plan, Charles Bruffy (M.M. '88) would now be teaching piano rather than basking in multiple Grammy Award nominations.

And if not for one particular Conservatory professor, he might never have embarked on the Chorale's current direction, which led the group to record the album that garnered it five Grammy nominations and one win.

"My parents thought it a good idea for me to get a degree that would guarantee a job, should the rest of my dreams not come true," he says referring to his undergraduate degree in music education with a double piano-voice emphasis from Missouri Western State University.

Back then, his dream was to have a career as a pianist. But not long after he completed his recital required for his graduation, he cut his hand with an electric knife.

Though today he says the cut eventually healed just fine, "at the time, it seemed like my life was over," he says.

Bruffy decided to go to Finland for six months on a 4H exchange, arriving back in the United States too late to apply for any teaching jobs.

"That was a very happy thing for everyone – perhaps mostly the students," he jokes.

With those two avenues closed to him, Bruffy moved to Kansas City and started work on a master's degree in voice performance at UMKC. It was during this time that he became involved with the Chorale.

"Their regular tenor soloist had taken ill, so they called to ask if I could come to a rehearsal and performance later that week," he says.

He joined as a roster singer and was asked to conduct the rehearsals and the following year was promoted to associate conductor.

The conductor at that time, John Goldsmith, allowed Bruffy to pick two songs from each performance to conduct.

"It was an incredible experience – and a very rare thing to have a 'laboratory' of live singers. I got to experiment with listening and my conducting gesture. So many conducting students have to learn by conducting to recordings, but a recording does the same thing no matter what you do," he explains.

"In 1988, when I became artistic director of the Chorale, I was working on my master's in vocal performance at the UMKC Conservatory and enrolled in Olga Ackerly's course on the history of Russian music. She took me to New York to a Russian choral music festival, where I got to sing in a chorus. It was something completely new to my ears – the style of singing, the shape of the phrases, the tambour of the voices – and for my first concert [as artistic director], we replicated that same program from New York. That really was the springboard for the Kansas City Chorale of today."

Years after this initial introduction to the Russian repertoire, when one of his singers played him a recording of composer Grechaninov's "Passion Week," Bruffy immediately knew that the two choral groups he conducts, the Kansas City Chorale and the Arizona Bach Choir, had to record their own version.

That recording was nominated for five Grammy Awards, including two production awards and the best classical album award. It won the Grammy for best-engineered album.

Bruffy believes he has his former professor to thank for his part in the group's success.

"It was Olga who showed me how the song goes, basically. She kind of provoked my own muse," he says. "She coached us in Slavonic and talked to us about the history of the Russian church. Without her generosity and trust, and her exposing me to this incredible music, none of this would be happening."

LARA HALE

An American abroad

The U.S. Foreign Service provided a '43 grad with quiet adventure

How does a young woman who studied typing and shorthand at the University of Kansas City end up in the middle of an international incident during the Cold War?

Ask Mona Meier (B.A. '43). Meier, who graduated from the University before it joined the Missouri system, signed up for the Foreign Service just after World War II ended. The Foreign Service, a branch of the U.S. Civil Service, employs the staff for America's 265 consulates and diplomatic missions around the world. Its members are assigned to posts abroad according to the government's needs, but factors including rank and language skills also play a part in determining where they serve.

Over the course of her 26-year career as a diplomatic secretary, Meier worked in Germany, Poland, Austria, Finland, Belgium, Korea and Ethiopia. But it all started with a trip a little closer to home.

"I was visiting an aunt in Texas," the Orlando, Fla., resident recalls, "and a friend of my aunt's talked about the diplomatic service." Meier had never heard of it, but the woman's descriptions piqued her interest. When she returned to Kansas City, where her parents and sister lived, she checked it out. Soon, she was headed out on the famous British ocean liner the RMS Queen Mary for the

British zone of post-war Germany. Though not many women served in the Foreign Service as officers, Meier remembers several other female secretaries. "On the Queen Mary, there were two or three other girls going at the same time, and we had a wonderful time on that trip," she says.

But things weren't always so carefree. For example, the days she wound up in Soviet hands. Blame the incident on a sailboat. During her first posting to Hamburg, Germany, she had some vacation time. "We went up to the Baltic Sea, to a place called Travemünde," she says. "Three girls and this fellow decided to go out in a sailboat."

Meier had never sailed before and didn't know much about operating the boat. "The wind came up and blew us over to the Russian zone," she says, laughing. Luckily, no one thought they were spies. The Soviets, British and Americans worked together to return the errant travelers — but although Meier finds it amusing now, she says, "I never did any more sailing!"

The woman who describes herself as "on the quiet side" still managed to live a more exciting life than many of her peers. Perhaps that's because of her sanguine attitude. When she worked in Poland, which was a Warsaw Pact-member country, she was free to travel around the country. "I couldn't see any damage from the war, and Poland was very pleasant to be in," she says. But Vienna, with its bakeries and well-deserved reputation as a center of classical music, turned out to be her favorite place.

"I was green as grass when I went in, but I learned so much ... it was a wonderful experience." -Mona Meier

Her posting in Korea made for a large change from the many years in Europe. But she also adjusted quickly to life there, including, as usual, the chance to travel. "It was shortly after the Korean War, and we got free military flights to Japan for the weekend," she remembers. Such was her enthusiasm for travel abroad that her niece started out in the Foreign Service before marrying a man from Holland and living in the Netherlands for years. Her nephew, also influenced by her career, lives in London. "We've all had good times," she says.

Meier says she thinks a career in the Foreign Service might be more dangerous now than when she entered, but she adds that it would still be a great idea for young people, even if they might be as naïve as she claims to have been. "I was green as grass when I went in, but I learned so much, and I worked with such wonderful people that it was a wonderful experience."

SUZI STEFFEN



On the ball

Alumnus brings his A-game to top sports destination city

Every morning when he wakes up, Ed Beasley (M.P.A., '84) asks himself some questions. "Can I do better? Where did I go wrong? How can I improve?" the city manager of Glendale, Ariz., wonders.

These aren't idle questions. Beasley fervently believes in the power of self-assessment to create changes and to provide the kind of information that helped him become the youngest city manager in Arizona history.

The Kansas City, Kan., native was only 28 when the town of Eloy, Ariz. (pop. 10,375), which had promoted him from assistant city manager while they looked for a permanent manager, knocked the "interim" off his title after a mere six months. That was in the late 1980s, before he returned to Kansas for an administrative stint in Wyandotte County. Arizona just wouldn't leave his blood, however, and he held various county and city administrative positions before landing as assistant city manager in Glendale. In the six years since his promotion to city manager, he has led the way to turning the city of a quarter of a million people into the country's premier sports destination.

Football fans will know Glendale, which abuts Phoenix ("We share some sidewalks," Beasley says), as the home of the University of Phoenix Stadium, where the Arizona Cardinals play and where Super Bowl XLII went off swimmingly in February 2008. One of the stadium's best features, from an event-presentation point of view, is a rollout grass field so that when there's not a Fiesta Bowl or NFL game, it can easily turn into a multipurpose space for conferences, concerts and other events.

But football isn't the lone player in the Glendale sports sweepstakes. There's also hockey. Yes, ice hockey; as in the NHL Phoenix Coyotes, who've played in the Southwest since 1996 but moved to the new Jobing.com Arena in Glendale in 2003. And baseball has found a home here, too: In 2009, the Chicago White Sox and the Los Angeles Dodgers will move from their former spring training facilities to new ones in Glendale.

Ask Beasley what else is going on, sports-wise, in Glendale, and he has a list that he clearly updates and tracks closely. There's the 2009 NCAA men's regional basketball finals; the 2011 Bowl Championship Series college football game and a bid to host the men's NCAA Final Four in 2012-16. "We're working to try to move U.S. Olympic basketball here," Beasley adds. The NFL recently had to hold four rounds of voting before choosing Indianapolis over Glendale for the 2012 Super Bowl – and Arizona Cardinals president, Michael Bidwell, said: "It's clear the league wants to come [back]. It's just a matter of when."

All of this sports concentration is absolutely "by design," Beasley admits. A sports fan and player himself, he coaches grade school and high school youth when his schedule allows. Coaching is "the purest form of exchange," he says – he enjoys helping kids use those same self-assessment tools that he finds so beneficial.

Asked to assess his future, Beasley says that he would like to move toward working in service. "But I let the game come to me; I don't try to push the game," he says. "The right opportunity will be made available."



One of those opportunities was going to school at UMKC. Though he enjoyed classes such as The Politics of Administration with Karl Johnson, Ph.D., professor emeritus of public administration, he also knows he was lucky to see the complexities of the city. "Having a university with practitioners and administrators as teachers in that kind of urban, applied-learning environment was just exceptional," he says.

Speaking of assessment, what's his favorite barbecue joint when he pops into town? He lists a few options, but as is Ed Beasley's skill, that's only an opening gambit before his laser focus brings him an answer, one he can't improve on, one where he can't go wrong: "Gates Bar-B-Q. When I go back, that's the first thing I look for."

SUZI STEFFEN



Alumnus Paolo Andino (pictured third from right, with the cast of *The Big Gay Sketch Show*) hopes his television roles will help gay teens struggling with their identity.

Entertaining acceptance

M.F.A. grad has a starring role as actor and advocate

Actor Paolo Andino (M.F.A. '97) cares deeply about his fans. "I found out that I had fans writing to me through Facebook, which I didn't know you could do," he says. "It turns out I had all this mail in my inbox and thought: 'Oh, they're my fans, I have to write them all back. That's what the good celebrities do.' And I did. I wrote them back. All 10 of them."

As one of the stars on Logo network's often-edgy *The Big Gay Sketch Show*, Andino is a self-described "minor basic cable celebrity."

"Sometimes I feel like I'm playing a celebrity," he says. "But I'm not really a celebrity."

Logo, a network devoted to gay and lesbian interests, is small and only three years old. But it reaches 30 million subscribers across the country. Andino has also appeared on *One Life to Live*, *Guiding Light*, *Law & Order*, a range of theater roles, independent films and in commercials. But he looks at his national exposure on Logo as an opportunity for advocacy.

"I think about that little gay 12-year-old in the Midwest who's struggling with his identity," Andino says. "He can turn on our show and see 12 different gay men. There's someone there he can relate to. I just think that if I'd had a network like this when I was growing up, things would have been a lot less painful."

Andino visited UMKC's campus in April for the first time since graduating to give a keynote speech at the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) office's Lavender Graduation.

Although the LGBT office didn't exist while Andino attended UMKC, he says the environment on campus was welcoming.

"I never felt any animosity there," he says. "It wasn't an issue, but there weren't any outlets for the gay community, just the gay clubs."

Today, the LGBT office brings speakers to campus, plans activities and has 250 student and community members. Its Lavender

Graduation gives graduates and allies of the LGBT community the opportunity to be recognized for their accomplishments.

It's often an uphill battle for members of the LGBT community, Andino says.

"Thirty-three percent of teens who kill themselves are gay," he says. "Fifty percent of kids who are gay are rejected by their parents when they tell them. I feel lucky that because of the show, I'm being invited to talk to these kids and maybe I can help."

Andino's passion for helping people is inherited. His mother is active in the YES Institute, which works to prevent gay teen suicide.

Her advocacy began with a play.

When Andino first moved to New York, he and his mother went to see *The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde*, a play about the gay author and playwright.

"I was watching this, and I suddenly realized that this play is about every fear I ever had as an adolescent," Andino says. "My mom had known I was gay for about eight years at that time, and she'd accepted it and was fine with it. But she never really knew what it was like those nine years from age 11, when I realized I was gay, to 20, when I came out. Those were really painful years for me."

The play opened his mother's eyes to what Andino's adolescence was like.

"My mom said, 'The worst part is, I was right there, and I couldn't do anything to help you because I didn't know what you were going through and you were too afraid to tell me,'" Andino says.

She became involved with the YES Institute soon after that, and for a while was more well-known than her son.

"I'm just glad that now, when you Google my name, it's not my mom's that comes up first," Andino says.

MARJIE KNUST

Commencement 2008



College of Arts and Sciences graduates congratulate each other on completing their degrees.

2008-09

ERIC ROSEN'S INAUGURAL SEASON



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COPAKEN STAGE
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Kansas City Rep. the professional theatre in residence at UMKC, full member of American League of Resident Theatres.

Photo Credit: Kyle Hall & Erica Lohme in the Rep's 2004 production of *Metamorphosis*. Photo by Dan Jacob.

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THE GLASS MENAGERIE

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THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

Jan 30 - Feb 22 2009 Spencer Theatre

WINESBURG, OHIO

Mar 13 - Apr 5 2009 Spencer Theatre

THE BORDERLAND

Apr 3 - Apr 26 2009 Copaken Stage

A FLEA IN HER EAR

May 15 - June 7 2009 Spencer Theatre



UMKC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION presents these exciting trips for 2009



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*March 14 - 22 *\$1,499*

Step back in time as you experience a wealth of Renaissance art and architecture in Florence, while the Eternal City of Rome offers magnificent sights from almost every era of history.

PARIS & THE FRENCH RIVIERA

*March 28 - April 5 *\$1,599*

Experience the beauty and glamour of France when you visit the stunning cities of Paris and Cannes. Find yourself amid historical treasures in the "City of Lights," and savor the rich atmosphere of the French Riviera in sun-kissed Cannes.

TREASURES OF CHINA & THE YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE

*May 11 - 23 From *\$2,599*

Experience the timeless beauty of the Yangtze River, and discover the "Magical East" as you visit Beijing, China's capital, historic Xi'an and dynamic Shanghai, one of China's largest cities.

ITALY'S LAKE GARDA & THE FRENCH ALPS

*Sept. 16 - 24 *\$1,349*

The legendary beauty of Italy's Lake Garda, blessed with a Mediterranean climate, is combined with the magnificent snow-capped peaks of the French Alps that surround the stylish resort of Chamonix.

ENCHANTING IRELAND

*Sept. 25 - Oct. 3 *\$1,499*

Magnificent landscapes greet you at every turn as you explore the Emerald Isle. Stay in Killarney, a delightful town surrounded by idyllic lakes and mountains, and Kilkenny, one of Ireland's loveliest medieval cities.

BEST OF THE ITALIAN RIVIERA & TUSCANY

*Oct. 3 - 11 *\$1,349*

Montecatini, ideally situated in the heart of Italy, is surrounded by the exquisite beauty of the Tuscan landscape, and the seaside resort of San Remo basks in the wonderful climate of the sun-drenched Italian Riviera.

Special airfare program is available!

*Prices are for the LAND PROGRAM and DO NOT include round-trip airfare. Prices are per person, double occupancy (plus taxes). The land program includes first-class hotel accommodations, daily breakfast, Go Next welcome gathering and much more!

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