

## Spectrum

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### President Forsee delivers State of the University address



“Game on.”

Those were the words of University of Missouri System President Gary Forsee in his first State of the University address to the UM Board of Curators on Feb. 6. Hundreds of faculty, staff, students and friends of the university viewed the address via live video stream on the Web.

Forsee said the university faces a “perfect” economic storm created by pressure on all four of its major sources of funding, including tuition, philanthropy, external research and state funding. He urged bold strategic steps to meet the challenge.

“We can and should do more in this period of time to provide leadership in thought as well as action,” Forsee said. “We shouldn’t be afraid to allow inspection and new approaches to occur. We must consider reforms as a way to go about achieving and enhancing our mission in the future.”

Despite the decrease in state support over the past several years, the university has become more efficient in carrying out its mission while maintaining its commitment to quality. Productivity has increased by 14 to 23 percent since 2001, depending on the measures. However, Forsee said, the university is approaching a tipping point.

“We in higher education should be asking some tough questions,” he said, “such as: How does Missouri rate in higher education attainment compared to its neighbors?”

Forsee cited statistics that suggest the state is, in fact, not faring well. Only three of Missouri's more than 100 counties have a highly educated population of 25 to 34 year olds. Moreover, higher education attendance in the state increased by only 5 percent over the last five years while Kansas saw an increase of almost 30 percent. Nationally, this places Missouri in the bottom third for increased higher education attendance. Missouri lags, too, in the New Economy Index, five key indicators of economic transformation. Those indicators are: knowledge jobs, globalization, economic dynamism, digital transformation and technological innovation.

"Speaking as a lifelong Missourian, these troubling facts represent to me a call to action for our state," Forsee said.

Forsee introduced five action steps he will pursue in 2009 to foster shared engagement by the system's four campuses, as well as by other higher education institutions in the state:

### **1. Focus on "outside-in"**

Forsee said higher education has a responsibility to prepare students for the kind of jobs that make up the backbone of the state's future economy. His proposal to focus on the "outside-in" calls for identifying the needs of major public and private employers in the state to see how the university can adjust its educational programs to better meet the needs of the marketplace.

He will appoint a task force to develop questions, identify major employers, conduct interviews and develop competencies for graduates based on the feedback received. Forsee will ask the task force to report its findings by Dec. 1, 2009.

### **2. Ensure the P-20 pipeline is strong, seamless**

The P-20 initiative, created in 2006 under Gov. Blunt's administration, strives to ensure the academic success of Missouri's students by strengthening the connections between the pre-kindergarten through higher education years (the "P-20 pipeline").

The University of Missouri and other public universities in the state are ready and willing to do more to support the state in achieving the goals of this initiative, Forsee said

Forsee will appoint a UM System task force to make specific recommendations for strengthening the university's participation in making the P-20 initiative a success. This task force will be asked to deliver recommendations to him by Dec. 1.

### **3. Audit performance**

Forsee announced plans to audit the university's performance on a regular basis to ensure it is achieving and surpassing its goals, referring to a recent article in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* that called for the higher education system to subject itself to a "broad, independent performance audit without delay."

The audit will look at the accountability measures outlined in the [Strategic Directions](#) document last fall, including graduation rates, administrative efficiency and faculty productivity.

The findings of the audit will be due to the president by December.

#### **4. Increase licensing revenue**

Increasing revenue earned from technology transfer and licensing is key to the university's goal of driving economic activity in the state while fueling research and teaching efforts systemwide.

Forsee said the university's goal is to raise the annual licensing revenue from an estimated \$10 million in Fiscal Year 2009 to \$50 million by FY14. He acknowledged the goal is ambitious, but said the benefit of increased revenue to fund the university's teaching and research missions ought to be clear.

#### **5. Deploy shared service center concept**

Forsee said he will explore the advantages of adopting a shared service center concept over the next 5 years to achieve greater efficiencies and lower costs. By leveraging university resources across non-mission-critical or "back office" activities, such as purchasing, accounts receivable, information technology and network services, Forsee predicted the university could save as much as 20-30 percent over time.

He cited the success of the university's procurement office, which has saved the university \$31 million since the procurement function was reorganized in 2002.

Forsee stressed the importance of collaboration and cooperation, and invited the state's other public four-year institutions and community colleges to participate in the "outside-in," P-20 and shared services center initiatives.

To view the slides that accompanied Forsee's speech, click [here](#).

To listen to the audio of the address, click [here](#).

To view a video of the address, click [here](#).

## Benefits package update



Betsy Rodriguez, vice president of human resources

The University of Missouri Board of Curators approved a set of changes to employee benefits packages last week in the hopes that prudent action now will mitigate the effects of the national economic crisis.

In a [memo](#) to the university community, University of Missouri System President Gary Forsee wrote, “I know many of you are concerned about these changes, particularly the employee contribution to the pension plan. I appreciate your concern, but I believe you will understand the economic situation pressing upon us. We simply cannot afford for the university to take on the long-term liability required to keep the plan fully funded without your contribution.”

University of Missouri System Vice President of Human Resources Betsy Rodriguez told *Mizzou Weekly* that colleges and universities nationwide have not been spared from the financial crisis.

“We have had huge reductions in our investment earnings,” which help fund the retirement system, she said. “All our sources of revenue are under attack...We’re preparing for what we don’t know is around the corner.”

Last fiscal year, the university contributed 7.98 percent of employee salary to the retirement fund, and is currently contributing 5.87 percent. The average employer contribution among UM’s 15 peer institutions is slightly less than 10 percent. Thirteen of the 15 institutions require employee contributions, which average about 5 percent. The change for the University of Missouri will require employees to make contributions based on their salary equal to 1 percent of their salary up to \$50,000 in earnings per year, and for those who earn over \$50,000 per year, 2 percent on amounts earned in excess of \$50,000.

According to a recent article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, many university plans now hold less than three-quarters of the money needed to pay benefits to retirees. Luckily, UM's plan is in much better shape. These changes are to ensure that the plan remains so.

Additionally, many universities have already enacted furloughs. For example, Clemson University in South Carolina has mandated employees take 5 days of unpaid leave during the 2008-2009 fiscal year. The University of Maryland System is also requiring up to five days unpaid leave for employees, and in one of the most severe cases, Arizona State University announced plans to require employees to take up to 15 days of unpaid leave and the elimination of more than 500 positions by June 30.

Forsee has said that furloughs are unlikely at the UM, and that he would institute furloughs only in an extreme situation. He encouraged employees and students to continue to exercise cost-savings measures. More than 2,000 suggestions have been received and are under review systemwide.

Forsee is hosting town hall-style meetings at each of the four campuses and the system offices in February and March. These meetings will offer an opportunity for the university community to engage in an open dialog with the president and members of his senior staff.

For more information about the changes to employee compensation, listen to the podcast with Associate Vice President of Benefits Mike Paden [here](#).

For additional information, read the University Pension Plan Changes "Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)" [here](#).

If you have any questions or concerns not addressed in the FAQ, please e-mail the benefits office at [benefits@umsystem.edu](mailto:benefits@umsystem.edu).

## Missouri Energy Summit program schedule announced



The program schedule for The Missouri Energy Summit, April 22-23 in Columbia, is now available at the event's Web site [www.missourisummits.com](http://www.missourisummits.com).

The Energy Summit, the first of its kind for the University of Missouri, will bring together world-class faculty and researchers, businesses, entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, and federal and state agencies to showcase cutting-edge research and development efforts in energy, alternative fuel sources, storage, infrastructure and other enabling technologies across the state.

The purpose of the summit, said University of Missouri System President Gary Forsee and summit chair Missouri University of Science and Technology Chancellor John Carney, is to highlight the successes of energy research in the state, as well as to guide and invest in its future.

The two-day event will feature keynote speaker T. Boone Pickens, as well as sessions led by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Chairman the Honorable Dale Klein; AmerenUE Chairman, CEO and President Gary Rainwater, and other prominent members of the energy industry.

Also planned are exhibits, poster sessions, panel discussions and a reception. See the [schedule](#) for a complete list of events.

Registration for the event is open. Three options are available, including a complimentary registration for students. Please visit the [registration page](#) for more details.

## UM system Web site unveils new look for '09



If you've visited the UM system [Web site](#) in the past month, you may have noticed its updated, fresh look and new easy-to-navigate layout.

The redesign, which took about four months to complete, was led by the UM system Office of Strategic Communications.

"The University of Missouri System Web site is a key way we connect with our many constituencies—from faculty, staff and students to the general public, so we recognize the long-term value in this redesign," explained Jennifer Hollingshead, assistant director of strategic communications.

While the most obvious changes are the crisp, modern background, easy-to-read text and bright, rotating images, the real beauty of the new site is more than just cosmetic. New features allow the site to better highlight news, events and accomplishments of students, faculty and staff from all four campuses, health care and Extension. Employees also can more quickly find commonly accessed information such as staff manuals and benefits information.

"We put a big emphasis on making content easier to find," said Hollingshead, who also pointed to the site's improved A-to-Z index and "Quick Links" section to help users find information on a variety of subjects in just a few clicks of the mouse. In addition, a new resources section was added to serve as a hub of information for University of Missouri System employees, retirees, students, parents and the public, with links tailored to each unique audience.

The new site was designed in-house by Web Coordinator Michael P. Hill and Web Programmer Doug Kuschel, who looked at best practices from across the industry and solicited user feedback from a wide group of employees.

They designed the site using Adobe Creative Suite CS3 and CSS, XHTML and JavaScript technologies, including such open source frameworks as JQuery.

To take a self-guided tour of the new site, [click here](#). If you have any questions or concerns regarding the new site, please e-mail [updates@umsystem.edu](mailto:updates@umsystem.edu).

To listen to a podcast with Web Coordinator Michael P. Hill, click [here](#).

## Research News



### **MU researchers link Lou Gehrig's Disease in humans to dog disease**

Researchers at MU's College of Veterinary Medicine and the Broad Institute of Harvard and Massachusetts Institute of Technology discovered the genetic mutation responsible for degenerative myelopathy (DM) in dogs is the cause of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) or Lou Gehrig's Disease in humans. Researchers will now be able to use dogs with the mutation as animal models to find a cure for ALS in humans. To learn more about the link between DM and ALS, click [here](#).

### **Researchers at Missouri S&T look for ways to repair bones, tissue**

Professor Len Rahaman and a team of Missouri S&T researchers are working with UMKC faculty to develop bioactive glass implants to treat traumatic bone injuries, such as the kind that affect soldiers or automobile accident victims. To learn more about Missouri S&T's Center for Bone and Tissue Repair and Regeneration and Rahaman's findings, click [here](#).

### **New book chronicles St. Louis' past**

Susan Brownell, chairperson and professor in the Department of Anthropology and Languages at UMSL, edited *The 1904 Anthropology Days and Olympic Games: Sport, Race, and American Imperialism*, a collection of essays about the Anthropology Days held at the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis. To learn more about Brownell's new book, click [here](#).

### **UMKC doctoral student warns troops about tobacco use**

Kevin Hoffman, a clinical psychology doctoral student at UMKC, studied factors that contribute to the prevalent use of tobacco in the military. Hoffman and his team found one of the most significant contributing factors is the influence of older soldiers on younger soldiers. To learn more about Hoffman's findings, click [here](#).

To listen to a podcast with Hoffman, click [here](#).

## News briefs



### **UMKC recognized for its continued achievements in supplier diversity**

The University of Missouri-Kansas City received the “Corporation of the Year” award from The MidAmerica Minority Business Development Council in recognition of its achievements in minority business development.

“UMKC has consistently demonstrated commitment to minority business development through its minority purchases, technical and managerial assistance. This commitment to equal economic opportunities for minority firms is an endorsement of the principles of the MAMBDC,” said the council’s spokesperson.

### **Board opts to retain existing investment consultants**

After considering a switch to another investment advisory firm, the board voted to retain the services of Rocaton Investment Advisors of Norwich, Conn.

The board and UM system President Forsee agreed that a move would not be wise at this time, given the current economic situation. The board voted to extend the relationship with Rocaton for two years and to review performance and options again at that time.

For now, Rocaton will continue to advise the university on matters related to its various investment funds, including the \$2.1 billion retirement fund and the \$937 million endowment fund.

### **Room and board rate change**

The board of curators approved increases on room and board charges across all four campuses. The increases, based on the most popular plans for each campus, are:

- MU: 5.2 percent
- UMKC: 2 percent
- Missouri S&T: 7.9 percent
- UMSL: 2.4 percent

The increases reflect costs associated with new residence halls, food prices, utilities, salaries and wages.

### **Curators' professors named**

The board approved the appointments of three curators' professors at MU.

Professor of biological sciences James Birchler, professor of psychology Lynne Cooper and professor of physics and radiology Kattesh V. Katti were named curators' professors for their exemplary service, research and contributions to MU. As curators' professors, each will receive a \$5,000 annual stipend as long as they hold their respective positions.

All three appointments were effective Jan. 1, 2009.

### **Research Board awards**

The University of Missouri Research Board, a universitywide panel composed of 21 faculty members, has awarded nearly \$1 million to support 40 research projects across the university's four campuses.

Researchers from the university filed 127 requests for grants totaling more than \$4.7 million. Approximately 31 percent of the requests were approved and 21 percent of the total dollar amount requested was awarded.

The board granted nine engineering requests for a total of \$241,844; seven in humanities and fine arts for a total of \$154,276; 10 in life sciences for a total of \$357,869; six in physical sciences and mathematics for a total of \$93,076; and eight in social and behavioral sciences for a total of \$132,919.

An established network of UM experts in each discipline evaluates requests based on specific criteria and recommendations by peer reviewers. Jim Drallmeier, professor of mechanical engineering at Missouri University of Science and Technology, chairs the board.

### **MU**

- Stephen Alexander, biological sciences, \$36,000
- Frank Booth, biomedical sciences, \$28,000
- Praveen Edara, civil/environmental engineering, \$27,000
- Maria Jaramillo, biological sciences, \$32,520
- Keiichi Kuroki, veterinary pathobiology, \$35,502
- Jae Wan Kwon, electrical and computer engineering, \$26,744
- Dorina Mitrea, mathematics, \$6,500
- Moshe Naveh-Benjamin, psychological sciences, \$11,980
- Kenneth Shaw, accountancy, \$13,000
- Doh Shin, political science, \$11,980
- Alexandra Socarides, English, \$13,305
- Eva Szekely, music, \$22,356
- Michael Ugarte, romance languages, \$3,750
- Yongzhong Wei, internal medicine, \$38,000
- Adam Whaley-Connell, internal medicine, \$38,000
- Yuwen Zhang, mechanical and aerospace engineering, \$28,000

#### UMKC

- Anthony Caruso, physics, \$10,000
- Jie Chen, mathematics, \$11,400
- Baek-Young Choi, computer engineering, \$27,000
- William Everett, composition music theory and musicology, \$14,300
- Liang Hong, dental instruction, \$39,400
- Alexander Idnurm, biology, \$35,447
- Stephen King, biology, \$35,000
- Jennifer Lundgren, psychology, \$24,204
- Daniel McIntosh, physics, \$28,876
- Jeffrey Price, biology, \$40,000

#### Missouri S&T

- Kwame Awuah-Offei, mining engineering, \$23,000
- Michael Bruening, history and political science, \$12,120
- Elizabeth Cudney, engineering management and systems, \$20,900
- Shannon Fogg, history and political science, \$8,436
- Jeffrey King, nuclear engineering, \$30,000
- Dan Lin, computer science, \$29,200
- Alexey Yamilov, physics, \$21,000

#### UMSL

- Kristin Carbone-Lopez, criminology and criminal justice, \$27,500
- Barbara Harbach, music, \$80,000
- Lea-Rachel Kosnik, economics, \$17,835
- Guoqiang Li, optometry, \$30,000
- Allon Uhlmann, anthropology, \$14,000
- Bruce Wilking, physics and astronomy, \$15,300
- Richard Wright, criminology, \$12,420