

BRADY DEATON BECOMES MU'S CHANCELLOR. READY, WILLING AND ABLE, HE IS

Stepping Up

STORY BY KAREN WORLEY

THE EXPERIENCES THAT HAVE shaped Brady James Deaton, age 62, are classic images of Americana: 4-H, farming, family and sports. He grew up five miles outside London, Ky., the oldest of seven brothers bookended by a pair of sisters. In 4-H, he enjoyed bug collecting, woodworking, public speaking and cattle judging. In fact, as a junior in college in 1965, he tied for first place in a national dairy judging contest.

Deaton, a first-generation college student, attended his state's public

university, the University of Kentucky, with financial help from small scholarships and loans from his hometown bank. He worked his way through college by milking cows, a familiar farm chore. While in college, he traveled overseas as a Peace Corps volunteer and taught vocational agriculture to high school students in Thailand.

After completing his bachelor's and master's degrees in Kentucky, Deaton married Anne Simonetti in 1967, and they moved to the University of Wisconsin, where Deaton earned master's and doctoral degrees in agricultural economics. He launched his teaching and research career in Tennessee, then moved to Virginia and finally to Missouri in 1989 as an agricultural economics leader. Meanwhile, along came four children and their diverse interests — poetry, opera singing, soccer and basketball.

Right Time, Right Place

On Oct. 1, 2004, University of Missouri System President Elson Floyd, bypassing a national search, said Deaton was his pick for the job of chancellor. The UM System Board of Curators seconded the notion Oct. 4. Former Chancellor Richard L. Wallace had retired Aug. 31.

With 15 years of experience at Mizzou — filling positions from professor to department chair and most recently

as provost and interim chancellor — Deaton is ready to serve in the top spot. Some of Deaton's priorities are already under way, and he will continue the strategic planning process and campus-wide study of diversity issues that Wallace initiated. Other areas, such as need-based financial aid and the budget, need work, too, he says.

By the Numbers

Deaton wants to move MU forward by increasing enrollment and making education more affordable. His goal is to increase enrollment 2 percent per year through 2009 to 30,000 students, compared with 27,003 in fall 2004. He also plans to increase need-based financial aid to students.

"We are not serving the poor, bright kids of Missouri," says Deaton, who is academic affairs chair of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges. From 2002 to 2004, the Missouri General Assembly reduced MU's appropriations by \$63 million in withholdings and state cuts. To balance the budget, tuition rates increased, shifting costs to students and their parents. This year's legislative plan is to ask the General Assembly to reinvest in higher education. The capacity for increased state effort is there, says Deaton, noting that Missouri ranks 43rd out of 50 states in support of higher education per \$1,000 of personal income and 46th in appropriations per capita. This information comes from a 2004 College of Education study at Illinois



PHOTO BY SUE ANGL

As an undergraduate, Brady Deaton worked for two months in the shantytowns above Bogotá, Colombia. On a similar stint in Quito, Ecuador, he met his wife, Anne, who was participating in a YMCA work camp project.

Brady Deaton was named chancellor Oct. 1. Early in the fall semester, he felt at home in the classroom where he led a discussion session about Barbara Ehrenreich's book *Nickel and Dimed*.

State University. If state support were to increase over several years, tuition increases could be moderate, and there would be more money for need-based aid.

"We've cut costs for years. We continue to squeeze the orange and make sure the money's in the right place," Deaton says of MU, Missouri's only public member of the prestigious Association of American Universities (AAU). "We are one of the lowest in the nation of AAU publics in terms of state support. And in the competitive world we live in today, that makes it difficult to get and keep faculty with national or international reputations. When the top students of Missouri come here, they deserve to be educated by the type of faculty who will enable them to work in a global society."

Mizzou also plans to increase its graduation and retention rates by 0.5 percent per year. The current fall 2004 retention rate is 84.8 percent, and the six-year graduation rate is 67.8 percent. Both rates are the highest ever recorded at MU.

"The rates speak to good advising," Deaton says. "Faculty who are concerned about students, our freshman interest groups and learning communities are all bound up in a very important package."

Excellence in Academics

Deaton also plans to recruit and retain top teachers and researchers. Funding for endowed chairs is getting a bump up from the state in fiscal year 2005. That, combined with private efforts to endow chairs and professorships through the For All We Call Mizzou campaign, helps to draw and keep promising faculty at MU. Jeffrey Phillips in medicine, Sergei Kopeikin in physics, Jerry Atwood in chemistry, Randall Prather in animal sci-



Brady Deaton at a Glance

Wife: Anne, a former College of Human Environmental Sciences faculty member who resigned her position as director of the state of Missouri's Department of Mental Health, effective Jan. 1, 2005, to spend more time with family and as first lady of the campus

Children: Tony, Brady James, Christina, David

Grandchildren: Liam, Anna Sophia

Hobbies: Reading, listening to music, fishing, hunting, driving through the countryside

Favorite vacation: Family reunions in Virginia and Kentucky, where four of nine siblings still live

Fiction read last: *Sophie's World: A Novel About the History of Philosophy* by Jostein Gaarder

Favorite movies: *Gandhi*, *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Doctor Zhivago*

Favorite music: Opera, folk, country, rock 'n' roll

Favorite food: Italian

Message to alumni: "Recognize the inherent strengths of this University and be proud of it. Recognize what an absolute jewel it is among higher education in America."

ences, Sherod Santos in creative writing, John Foley in oral tradition, Janet Farmer in health professions, Shubhra Gangopadhyay in engineering and Margie Sable in social work, to name a few, are faculty members making discoveries in science and the arts. "These are the faculty of the University of the future," Deaton says.

Deaton takes the reins with research funding growth at historic highs. MU earned \$166 million in externally sponsored research awards from the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation and others in 2003. The human impact of the research awards

reaches across the state of Missouri and the nation, Deaton says. For instance, the acid reflux drug Zegerid™, based on University research and patents, entered the market in October 2004. Also, MU had 134 patent applications in fiscal years 2001 through 2004. In terms of economic impact, every research dollar multiplies nearly twofold, creating jobs and buying goods and services.

Whether it's educating a work force or creating jobs for workers, MU serves the state, nation and world. "This University has played a powerful role in American higher education," Deaton says. "It has a great history and a great future." ●