

Mizzou Weekly

March 10, 2011 Volume 32, No. 23

Even in retirement, Bond's support of UM is a gift that keeps on giving



AMONG FRIENDS Christopher S. "Kit" Bond, center, shares a moment with Tom Atkins, left, and John Danforth before the March 7 announcement of an endowed lecture series in Bond's name. The series will provide a forum for national and international experts to discuss economics, politics, science and national security. Danforth, a former U.S. Senator, and Atkins, a former UM curator, raised \$1.3 million to fund the series. Bond retired from the Senate in 2010. Rob Hill photo

DISTINGUISHING MIZZOU

\$1.3 million endowment will fund new lecture series

When John Danforth heard that, after more than 40 years in politics, Christopher "Kit" Bond was planning to retire in 2010, he couldn't imagine not doing something special for his friend and former colleague.

Bond, who served four terms in the U.S. Senate and two terms as Missouri governor, had a more modest celebration in mind.

"He said, 'Maybe a nice dinner, some friends and we'll tell some stories,'" recalled Danforth, himself a former U.S. Senator. "But no way, after all this time in public service, would Kit Bond steal silently into the night."

So Danforth, with help from Warren Erdman, chair of the University of Missouri Board of Curators, and former Curator Tom Atkins, set out to establish a lasting tribute to Bond. Their efforts culminated this week, when MU Chancellor Brady J. Deaton announced the creation of the Christopher S. "Kit" Bond Distinguished Lecture Series. The series, which will provide a forum for national and international experts to discuss economics, politics, science and national security at venues across the state, will be funded with a \$1.3 million endowment to MU.

"It turned out to be the easiest thing to raise money for Kit Bond," Danforth said Monday at a ceremony in the Reynolds Alumni Center, "because people all over the state recognized what a gift he has been to our state for so many years and they wanted to recognize it."

Speakers for the series will be chosen by a selection committee comprised of Cathy Scroggs, vice chancellor of student affairs; Thomas Payne, dean of the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources; James Thompson, dean of the College of Engineering; and Michael O'Brien, dean of the College of Arts and Science.

Deaton said the lecture series is one way to thank Bond for his support of the university over the years. He credited Bond with securing more than \$500 million in funding for research and capital projects and for promoting the life sciences. Deaton also noted that Mizzou Advantage, an initiative that capitalizes on MU's competitive assets, has roots in Food for the 21st Century, a program Bond created in the 1980s when he was governor to help Missouri food producers.

"The senator's efforts to promote and recognize the state's flagship university are really far from over and in many ways are just beginning," Deaton said.

When Danforth approached him about honoring his retirement, Bond said, "it took me a nanosecond" to suggest something that would benefit the University of Missouri.

"It has been clear to me from the beginning," he said, "that having a fully resourced state university that can be recognized as a class university is absolutely essential to the well-being of our citizens, to the growth of our economy and to our progress."

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Program teaches science students how to teach science

CLASSROOM EDUCATION

Interns fill a need while gaining experience

Holding the attention of 300 undergraduate students is a daunting challenge for any educator, let alone a new professor. That's why two University of Missouri faculty members are helping doctoral students gain experience in the lecture hall.

Patricia Friedrichsen, an associate professor of science education, and Bethany Stone, an assistant teaching professor of biological sciences, developed an internship program that will give students hands-on experience in teaching college-level science courses.

"There was a void for a lot of graduate students leaving with a PhD and going into a career in the academic field," Stone said. "There seemed to be a lack of training and teaching, and this internship program ... fills the gaps and gives grad students the chance to get experience with all the things they need to be a good teacher."

The program began a few years ago when one of Friedrichsen's doctoral students expressed an interest in teaching college science. The two interns chosen each year are in charge of grading, but also come up with homework assignments, group activities and exam questions. In addition to the behind-the-scenes work, the students are given the opportunity to actually give lectures to the classes.

"I let them do a little lecturing with my material, and then Bethany and I work really closely with the individual," Friedrichsen said. "Our goal is to have them select a topic that is of interest to them and they produce a short unit of their own where they teach that in the auditorium."

Having the interns lecture in class sparks excitement and interest from students in the class, Friedrichsen said. Interns are encouraged to pick topics they're passionate and knowledgeable about and apply it to the course. For instance, one intern used her unique knowledge of whales to teach an evolution unit.

"They're not just empty vessels," Stone said. "They certainly come in with their own experiences and ideas, and they might see a problem that I don't see and have a good idea for fixing it. It has made my teaching better and it's fun to work with graduate students because usually I work with undergraduate non-majors. It's a nice change of pace."

Throughout the semester, Friedrichsen and Stone meet frequently with the interns to talk about the course, as well as teaching and evaluation methods. Following the lectures, the mentors provide feedback to their interns to help them improve.

"We talk and we ask, 'What are the big ideas?' 'What makes sense for this population of students to learn?' 'What are effective ways to teach?'" Friedrichsen said. "Then we give a lot of feedback on the scope, sequence, content of their lectures and the strategies they're using."

Two of Friedrichsen's former interns are now teaching college-level biology: Kristen Hutchins at Howard Payne University and Kristy Halverson at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Friedrichsen said she feels that she and Stone get just as much out of the experience as the teaching interns do.

"I find it really invigorating," she said. "It gives me an opportunity to be reflective, and they're giving me another perspective on my teaching and I really value that."

— *Kelly Nelson*

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Spring could be stormier than usual, MU expert predicts

WEATHER FORECAST

Tornado Alley could see fewer super-cell storms

Midwesterners hoping for a calm stretch of weather after a cold, snowy winter might be disappointed.

Tony Lupo, department chair and professor of atmospheric sciences in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources at the University of Missouri, says the approaching spring could be stormier than normal.

However, Lupo forecasts a relatively calm year for Tornado Alley, which cuts through Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas. Atmospheric models predict a dryer than normal spring and summer, taking away the fuel for super-cell storms, which often spawn tornadoes.

La Niña, the atmospheric phenomenon that spawned winter blizzards through much of the country, generally shifts spring and summer thunderstorm activity northward. Lupo thinks La Niña will lead to increased spring and summer thunderstorm activity in states north of Tornado Alley, including Nebraska, Iowa, northern Illinois and Indiana.

La Niña occurs when cooler than normal water temperatures develop in the Equatorial Pacific Ocean. The impact is most clearly seen in wintertime, when it can bring cold weather extremes to parts of the nation.

In a La Niña season, the jet streams pick up warm Pacific moisture and direct their cargoes of warm and unstable air to Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois and Indiana. Storm systems tend to follow these streams.

“There has to be heat and moisture to build severe thunderstorms,” Lupo says. “An atmosphere that is too cold or dry will not produce dynamic cloud systems like super-cell storms. When the jet stream is farther north, as it is in a La Niña event, you have a better chance of achieving these kinds of temperatures and dew points in these parts of the country.”

La Niña’s opposite, El Niño, is associated with warmer water temperatures. In the continental U.S. during El Niño years, temperatures in the winter are generally warmer over the north, Midwest and east.

In a typical El Niño or neutral year, the jet stream travels farther south through Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas – Tornado Alley.

“There is no statistical data that storm intensity or duration differs between La Niña and El Niño years nationwide,” Lupo said. “However, our data from the 1950s and 1960s relied on human observation which can be spotty and inaccurate. We only have a few years of reliable national Doppler radar and satellite imagery.”

Lupo is a member of the Global Climate Change Group, which researches planetary-scale atmospheric processes, specifically a phenomenon called atmospheric blocking. One of the rarest weather events, blocking can trigger dangerous conditions such as a 2003 European heat wave that caused 40,000 deaths. Blocking usually results when a powerful, high-pressure area gets stuck in one place and, because they cover a large area, fronts behind them are blocked.

“In this research, we’re trying to see if increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and the resulting atmospheric warming will affect the onset and duration of future blocking events,” Lupo said. “We’re hoping that the research will add cues that could help fellow forecasters better predict blocking and warn people in cases of long-lasting, severe weather.”

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Lunch with Mizzou Advantage

Mizzou Advantage has announced a series of brown bag lunches featuring leaders of projects that were awarded funding in the initiative's recent second round of grants.

The lunches, which began March 9, will take place from noon-1 p.m. each Wednesday in 2212A-B of the MU Student Center.

The March 16 brown bag will explore the health benefits and economic opportunities of the Eastern Red Cedar, a so-called "trash tree" that is widespread in Missouri. Researchers Brad Andresen, of the School of Medicine, and Chung-Ho Lin, of the Center for Agroforestry, will speak about how the trees may hold clues to fighting bacterial infection — and how gaining FDA approval might allow diabetic patients to ingest drugs orally, rather than receiving shots.

Complimentary pizza will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis. For more information, email MizzouAdvantage@Missouri.edu or call 884-6197.

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Engineering a celebration

Students, faculty and alumni of the MU College of Engineering will celebrate the 108th annual Engineers Week March 11-18.

E-week begins with the lighting of Jesse Hall's dome green, in honor of St. Patrick, whom MU students named the patron saint of engineers in 1903. Other events include an egg catapult contest, where students compete to see who can launch eggs furthest and most accurately using homemade contraptions. In another event, students make small vehicles to race through the halls of the college.

The celebration will also a concert, barbecue, hot dog banquet and road rally. At the end of the week, the college will ceremoniously knight seniors and distinguished alumni, as well as crown a king and queen at the St. Pat's Ball. For more information, including a schedule of all events, visit engineering.missouri.edu/eweek/events/ (<http://engineering.missouri.edu/eweek/events/>).

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Protecting sensitive e-mail

E-mail is a popular way to correspond and transfer information, but it's not the most secure form of communication.

MU's Division of Information Technology reminds departments that send confidential or protected information and data to off-campus recipients via e-mail to encrypt messages with a subscription service available through DoIT's MyServices customer portal.

The cost is 45 cents a month or \$5.40 a year for each subscription. For more information, visit doit.missouri.edu/e-mail/encryption.html (<http://doit.missouri.edu/e-mail/encryption.html>) or call 573-882-5000.

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