

Mizzou Weekly

Sept. 12, 2013 Volume 35, No. 4

International admissions director expands recruitment efforts



John Wilkerson, MU director of international admissions, answers questions about the University of Missouri at the Tarsus American Academy in Turkey. Photo courtesy of John Wilkerson.

Efforts are focused in Middle East, Latin America and Southeast Asia

In 2012, John Wilkerson made more trips to Kuala Lumpur than to Kansas City. As part of MU's [international recruitment](http://international.missouri.edu/come-to-mu/faculty-staff/before-hiring-hosting/recruiting.php) (<http://international.missouri.edu/come-to-mu/faculty-staff/before-hiring-hosting/recruiting.php>) initiative, the director of international admissions is spreading the message about Mizzou worldwide.

On opening day fall 2013, there were 172 international first-time college students enrolled at MU, up more than 30 percent from the previous year. Total international enrollment is 2,109, up more than 3 percent from the previous year. That's still only 2 percent of the undergraduate population. Wilkerson said the goal is to increase that to 3 percent during the next five years.

To better position the university among the some 4,200 higher education institutions in the United States, Mizzou organized two groups that travel to high schools internationally, speaking to counselors, students and parents. The first, Midwest Educational Tour, is a group of about 15 top universities from Missouri, Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin and the Dakotas, including large public research institutions, all-women's schools and liberal arts colleges. The second tour group is Black and Gold, a collection of schools in the Association of American Universities (AAU) that also wear black and gold, such as University of Colorado Boulder, University of Iowa and Purdue.

The recruitment groups help educate international students about the Midwest, hoping to cement it as a cultural, educational and business destination.

"[International students] are really identifying the quintessential American university experience as happening more in the Midwest," Wilkerson said. "It was exciting to hear a student say to me, 'If I go to New York, I think that'll be a New York experience. I want an American experience.' Well, here we are."

The U.S. Department of State is taking notice. In June, the state department asked Wilkerson to speak at the EducationUSA Forum on a panel of three institutions that best target countries to watch. In May, he presented at the National Association of Foreign Student Advisers: Association for International Educators conference in St. Louis, and in February 2014, he'll present to senior-level international officers of the Association of International Educators in Washington, D.C. Wilkerson and his colleagues have been asked to provide advisory services for 10 universities, including three AAU schools.

Using statistical analysis and external and internal data to determine where to target next, Mizzou recruits heavily from the Middle East, Latin America and Southeast Asia. Wilkerson said they are starting to see a larger applicant pool from Europe, too.

He frequently gets calls from high school counselors wondering when the two tours are coming to their part of the globe.

"When you're going into a recruitment region, you want to be the recruiter who gets out of the car and the high school counselor gives you a hug," Wilkerson said. "We're there now in Latin America and Southeast Asia."

Mizzou is viewed as a leader among institutions in international programming, Wilkerson said.

"The descriptors we keep hearing applied to ourselves, which is phenomenal, is that Mizzou is in a pattern of smart, sustainable growth," he said.

To address the growth of international admissions — and the office's increasingly distinct mandate from domestic admissions — the unit spun off from the Office of Admissions and now directly reports to the [Division of Enrollment Management](http://enrollment.missouri.edu) (<http://enrollment.missouri.edu>).

Wilkerson plans to hire an assistant director for international recruitment, which will allow Wilkerson to be in the office more. But he won't be putting away his passport any time soon.

He's visiting 23 countries this fall, traveling with the Black and Gold tour through Latin America, the Pacific Rim and Turkey. He'll hit his 80th country when he visits Cambodia on the Midwest Educational Tour of Southeast Asia.

"There is no replacement for the education you learn at 2 a.m. on a bus in Guadalajara, just talking to colleagues and to students, keeping your finger on the pulse of what's going on," Wilkerson said. "If you truly are going to be a global university, especially in the Midwest, you have to bring the globe to you. We're seen as a leader in that field."

— *Kelsey Allen*

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Chancellor updates community on campus plan

MU SCHOLARSHIPS FOR FALL 2014 FIRST-TIME STUDENTS

Chancellor's Award (new scholarship)

- Awarded to students in the top 10 percent of their high school graduating classes
- Composite score of 31 or higher on ACT or combined critical reading and math SAT score of 1360 or higher
- Must graduate from an accredited high school
- Missouri resident
- Scholarship is worth \$6,500

Curators Award

- Awarded to students in the top 5 percent of their high school graduating classes
- Composite score of 28 or higher on ACT or combined critical reading and math SAT score of 1250 or higher
- Missouri resident
- Must graduate from an accredited high school
- Scholarship is worth \$4,500 (previous value was \$3,500)

Mark Twain Non-resident Scholarship

- Awarded to students in the top 50 percent of their high school graduating classes
- Composite score of 27 or higher on ACT or combined critical reading and math SAT score of 1220 or higher
- Out-of-state student
- Must graduate from an accredited high school
- Scholarship ranges from \$5,000 to \$10,000 (previous range was \$2,000 to \$5,500)

Source: MU News Bureau

Testing.

Expanding student scholarships is part of strategic plan

Columbia leaders and campus administrators were updated Monday on the accomplishments and future plans of MU during a breakfast hosted by Chancellor Brady J. Deaton in the Reynolds Alumni Center.

Deaton spoke of university accomplishments in enrollment, research and building maintenance since he became chancellor Oct. 4, 2004.

He said enrollment has increased 28.7 percent, with minority enrollment rising 113 percent. "Our diversity profile continues to expand," said Deaton, who will retire Nov. 15.

Research expenditures have increased 47.5 percent, he said, with 77 patents and \$43.6 million in licensing income. Research has led to the creation of businesses such as [Beyond Meat](http://www.missouri.edu/2012/34-4/soy-chicken/index.php.html) (<http://www.missouri.edu/2012/34-4/soy-chicken/index.php.html>), a meat-alternative company, EternoGen, a medical biotech company, and Organova, a 3-D bioprinting firm.

Also, 21 buildings have been built during Deaton's time as chancellor.

The university is the fastest growing among members of the Association of American Universities, he said.

The chancellor also spoke of new scholarship initiatives, first announced Sept. 6, for high-ability students enrolling in fall 2014 for the first time. “We are interested in attracting the highest ability students as well as any students who qualify for admission and truly want to succeed,” Deaton said.

The plan includes the addition of the the Chancellor’s Award scholarship and expansion of the Curators Award and the Mark Twain NonResident Scholarship.

Among the goals of the university are hiring more top faculty, increasing high-impact research and ensuring that MU’s revenue model allows for “sustainability,” Deaton said.

Next, Gary Ward, associate vice chancellor of Campus Facilities, talked about the Stewardship Model, created four years ago to address the backlog of more than 30 buildings on campus needing repairs. The [Renew Mizzou \(./. /34-31/renew-mizzou/index.php.html\)](#) project, which is closing Jesse, Pickard and Swallow halls and relocating 600 employees next year, is part of the model.

Ward said maintenance on the 30-some buildings was delayed because funds were lacking due to state budget cuts.

The stewardship model is about cost-effectiveness. It scraps the old model of doing ad hoc maintenance repairs. It shuts a building for a top-to-bottom renovation. This saves money because of the prohibitive maintenance costs old buildings require and the upgrades installed that make the buildings energy efficient. Moreover, the buildings make better use of space and create a safer and more effective academic learning environment, Ward said. Another cost-saver is that only standard construction materials are used in the projects.

“It’s about being strategic in everything we do,” Ward said.

The final speaker was Frank Haith, coach of the Tigers basketball team. He talked of the new players on the team and the tough playing schedule ahead. But he said that for him the most important thing is that the majority of student-athletes he’s coached during his career have succeeded academically.

Of the 33 seniors on his teams over the years, 31 graduated, he said.

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Safety week Sept. 16–20

Informative and fun safety events scheduled all next week at the University of Missouri

Safety must be a partnership between first responders and the public, MUPD officials say.

In an effort to make MU employees and students more aware of various safety tools available and to help them take responsibility for their personal safety, MU is hosting Safe Mizzou 2013 next week, Sept. 16–20.

“The MUPD works to ensure a peaceful quality of life and a safe learning environment for all students, staff and faculty,” said MUPD Capt. Brian Weimer. “However, even the most extensive initiatives cannot succeed without the awareness and cooperation of the community members who work, study and live on campus.” Learn about MU Alert and MUPD programs in another *Mizzou Weekly* story by clicking [here \(././35-3/mu-alert/index.php.html\)](http://www.mizzouweekly.com/35-3/mu-alert/index.php.html).

Events that will take place during Safe Mizzou 2013:

Monday, Sept. 16

Personal Safety Fair

10 a.m.–2 p.m.

Kuhlman Court

Learn about ways to make the campus safer by visiting the fair. Free pizza and first aid kits will be distributed.

Tuesday, Sept. 17

Pedestrian and Vehicle Education (PAVE)

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Lowry Mall

With a focus on transportation safety issues, this festival includes the “Convincer,” a crash simulator that allows the participant to experience the effect of a crash while wearing a seat belt, and bike registration and repair.

Also included will be information on bike safety, crosswalk etiquette, distracted driving and Tiger Line, a bus route available to students and employees.

Citizen’s Response to Active Threat Training

5:30 p.m.

Stotler Lounge III,
Memorial Union

Participants will learn integrated strategies on what to do in the event of an active shooter/violent intruder incident. The training is free, but RSVP is required at TLBCPF@mail.missouri.edu.

Wednesday, Sept. 18

13th Annual Fire Factor and Room Burn

11:50 a.m.–2:30 p.m.

Lowry Mall
and Speaker's Circle

Enjoy fire safety events such as rides in a bucket on a 100-foot fire truck ladder, fire extinguisher use training, and a fire fighter challenge obstacle course in full gear. At 11:50 a.m., a simulated room burn will demonstrate the speed and ferocity of fire. Free pizza, drinks and T-shirts will be distributed.

Thursday, Sept. 19

Safety Walk

7:45 p.m.

Leadership Auditorium,
MU Student Center

The 40th-annual Safety Walk is an opportunity for students, faculty and staff from different campus departments to identify any structural and environmental safety concerns on campus. Participants will be assigned to specific parts of campus to record any safety concerns.

Friday, Sept. 20

Mizzou After Dark: Late Night Scavenger Hunt

7–11 p.m.

Bengal Lair, Memorial Union

This year's hunt is presented in cooperation with Safe Mizzou 2013. Admission is free for MU student with an ID. \$5 for the general public. Children under 17 are not allowed. For more information visit stufftodo.missouri.edu.

The MUPD is a fully commissioned police department that works closely with federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to provide proactive law enforcement services to the MU campus.

MUPD is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, an international body that aims to improve the delivery of public safety services primarily by: maintaining a body of standards developed by public safety practitioners; covering a wide range of up-to-date public safety initiatives; establishing and administering an accreditation process; and recognizing professional excellence.

Safe Mizzou 2013 is sponsored by Residential Life, the MSA/GPC Department of Student Activities, the Columbia Fire Department, the Environmental Leadership Office, MUPD, Make IT Safe — Division of IT, Environmental Health & Safety, the Wellness Resource Center, the Office of Student Conduct, Department of Student Life, the Counseling Center, RSVP Center, Student Legal Services, Tiger Life, the MU Sustainability Office, and STRIPES.

For information on campus safety and emergency, please visit [MU Alert \(http://mualert.missouri.edu/\)](http://mualert.missouri.edu/). For more safety tips go to [ehs.missouri.edu/work/pdf/emergencyinfo-students.pdf \(http://ehs.missouri.edu/work/pdf/emergencyinfo-students.pdf\)](http://ehs.missouri.edu/work/pdf/emergencyinfo-students.pdf).

— *Jerett Rion*

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Anthropology faculty explore links between evolution and human behavior



For the past 24 years, department chair Mark Flinn has studied how stress influences children as they age into adulthood. He and colleagues take saliva and urine samples from their Caribbean participants to monitor changes in the islanders' hormones and immune function. Photo by Rob Hill.

The department has become a leader in evolutionary science

What accounts for human behavior? Is it nature or nurture? Biology or culture? Or is it both?

Old-school anthropologists believed human behavior was largely informed by culture. These days, a new school of anthropologists use not only cultural field studies but also research in biology, genetics, neuroscience and other areas. For these scientists, studying human behavior is not an either-or proposition.

In recent years, MU's [Department of Anthropology \(http://anthropology.missouri.edu\)](http://anthropology.missouri.edu) has become a leader in this growing field, known as cultural evolutionary anthropology. The department has a lofty goal: the synthesis of evolution and human behavior. This requires crossing into many disciplines, a familiar practice for MU researchers because of the university's emphasis on interdisciplinary work. The department is integrated across campus with psychological, biological and anatomical sciences, as well as units including the School of Law and the Trulaske College of Business.

“The beauty of anthropology is that we have the opportunity to pull all this stuff together,” said Mark Flinn, department chair, a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and president of the Human Behavior and Evolution Society. “We have the opportunity for big picture stuff that crosses into both the sciences and the humanities.”

Transforming the department’s focus from the cultural to the evolutionary biological took years. It was driven by Mike O’Brien, a professor of archaeology and dean of the College of Arts and Science; former department chair R. Lee Lyman; and Flinn. Strategic hiring added the talents and energy of junior faculty like [Robert S. Walker \(.J./2012/34-14/anthropology/index.php.html\)](#), Mary Shenk and Karthik Panchanathan. Rounding out the department are lauded research professors [Martin Daly \(.J./34-25/martin-daly/index.php.html\)](#), an evolutionary psychologist and fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, and [Napoleon A. Chagnon \(.J./34-20/chagnon/index.php.html\)](#), a pioneer of evolutionary anthropology and member of the National Academy of Sciences. Chagnon, who joined MU Jan. 1, 2013, predicts the department “will soon be in the top five in the country, maybe the world” in cultural evolutionary anthropology.

Edward Liebow, executive director of the [American Anthropological Association \(http://www.aaanet.org\)](http://www.aaanet.org), said the MU anthropology faculty are moving the field forward by “tackling the root causes of complicated issues confronting us today.”

But it didn’t happen overnight. The department — and anthropology in general — first had to endure some growing pains.

The Great Schism

Though scientists since the Enlightenment have proposed theories to explain humankind’s existence, Charles Darwin’s work, particularly in *The Origin of Species* in 1859, was the big bang of origin explanation. Today, Darwinian evolution, with its premise that *Homo sapiens* are an evolved species who share a common ancestor with other higher primates, is accepted by nearly all scientists. Fieldwork and technological advances have produced data that supports and builds upon Darwin’s idea.

Even so, anthropologists have had a mixed response to evolutionary thought. At first, it was largely embraced. By the late 19th century, anthropologists were applying evolutionary concepts to paleontology (studying fossils) and primatology (studying nonhuman higher primates).

But the romance soured when evolutionary biology was co-opted by the eugenics movement, in which America and other countries experimented to improve a society’s gene pool. The movement reached its height in the 1920s and culminated in the Holocaust perpetrated by Nazi Germany during World War II.

Evolutionary ideas were fine when applied to neck-down science such as paleoanthropology. But the neck-up approach — applying evolution to culture and human behavior — was not only wrong scientifically, many anthropologists said. It was dangerous. “Evolution was a four-letter word in anthropology,” Lyman said.

Then, in the 1970s, maverick anthropologists such as Chagnon published papers that explained human behavior as a product of both culture and evolution. Chagnon based his conclusions on years of field studies of the Yanomamö people in the jungles of southern Venezuela. He chronicled a violent society where 30 percent of male deaths were due to fights over women, and 10 percent of village women had been abducted from other villages during raids. His most controversial discovery was that men who killed the most Indians in raids also had the most wives and offspring. The young anthropologist couched his discussion in tenets of evolutionary thought. Aggressive behavior offered a survival advantage and more reproductive opportunities to pass on genes, he wrote. And stealing women widened a village’s gene pool.

The pushback from colleagues was immediate. At the American Anthropological Association convention in 1976, Chagnon was scheduled to lead a session on biology and human behavior based on his Yanomamö field studies. Several scholars objected. “Impassioned accusations of racism, fascism and Nazism punctuated the frenzied business meeting that night,” Chagnon wrote in his memoir, [Noble Savages: My Life Among Two Dangerous Tribes — The Yanomamö and the Anthropologists \(http://www.amazon.com/Noble-Savages-Dangerous-Anthropologists-ebook/dp/B006VJN2FE\)](http://www.amazon.com/Noble-Savages-Dangerous-Anthropologists-ebook/dp/B006VJN2FE) (Simon & Schuster, 2013).



Napoleon A. Chagnon is a pioneer in cultural evolutionary anthropology, applying it in his 1970s papers on the Yanomamö. Chagnon's 1960s field studies of the Amazon people are required reading in many undergraduate anthropology programs. *Photo by Rachel Coward.*

"Most anthropologists were reluctant until recently to assume the academic and philosophical position that human beings have an evolved nature as well as cultural nature," Chagnon said.

In the early 1980s, when the schism was still raw, O'Brien and H. Clyde Wilson, the late professor emeritus of anthropology, laid plans to base MU's anthropology department in evolutionary biology. O'Brien said its time had come; Darwinian concepts were relevant to understanding human behavior. A devout Roman Catholic, O'Brien is also "a hard-core evolutionist. I'll fight to the death for evolution because it's a fact," he said.

Over decades, through attrition, retirement and strategic hiring of faculty, the MU department transformed itself. Today's 13 faculty members and two research professors perform studies and write papers on cultural, biological, archaeological and evolutionary issues, many times enriched through collaborations with other experts.

Applying Evolutionary Science

Anthropology is no longer just bones and stones. The ingredients in the recipe of anthropological research can include neuroscience, genetics, biology, health science, functional anatomy, mathematics, history, psychology and economics.

Flinn is a biomedical anthropologist. For the fall 2013 semester, he's teaching two nontraditional anthropology courses: Evolutionary Medicine and Evolution of Human Sexuality. His research focuses on people's hormonal responses to social situations.

For the past 24 years, Flinn has studied how stress influences children as they age into adulthood. He and colleagues — among them Barry England, a professor of pathology at the University of Michigan — regularly take saliva and urine samples from 314 participants living in a rural village in the Caribbean. They monitor changes in the participants' hormones and immune function.

Understanding the physiological components of childhood stress has practical applications to developing medicines and psychological strategies to treat the conditions. But stress also presents an evolutionary puzzle, Flinn said, because it causes significant health problems. Why would natural selection favor it? Flinn is trying to answer this.

In another study, Flinn and two colleagues — Michael Muehlenbein, associate professor of anthropology at Indiana University, and Davide Ponzi, a former MU biology researcher who currently is a postdoc at the University of Chicago — selected a group of Caribbean men to play dominoes and cricket, first with friends and then with strangers. Tests showed that testosterone levels rose sharply when the islanders competed against strangers, yet remained flat when their opponents were friends.

Flinn connected the findings to humankind's prehistoric heritage of living in tribal groups constantly under threat of invasion from other groups. Natural selection favored an adrenaline rush in face-offs with strangers but not when interacting with fellow tribes people, who relied on cooperation for survival. "Our hormonal reactions while competing are part of how we evolved as a cooperative species," said Flinn, whose co-authored study appeared in the journal *Human Nature* this year.

But when it comes to kin, friends take a back seat. At MU's [2013 Life Sciences & Society Symposium \(http://lssp.missouri.edu/claimingkin\)](http://lssp.missouri.edu/claimingkin), Martin Daly lectured about his decades of research on family relations and social issues. His studies indicate that humans are hard-wired to favor blood relatives over friends and strangers.

One form of bias he calls the Cinderella Effect, when parents favor their biological children over stepchildren. "In a stepfather household, kids are far less able to get economic support for college," Daly told the Jesse Auditorium audience on March 16, 2013. "In a stepmother household, less money is spent on them, such as for dental care." But it gets worse. Over a 16-year period, stepfathers in Canada killed children who were weeks old to age 5 at a per capita rate that's 120 times higher than those killed in that age range by their biological fathers, according to records in Canada's national homicides archive. "Blood really is thicker than water," Daly said.

Daly currently is working on a book that takes an evolutionary perspective on the relationship between people's socioeconomic status and homicide rates.

Sitting in his office in Swallow Hall, feet propped on a chair, Daly explained the utility of his research. "I lean toward the view that getting better information about anything that is a social problem improves the likelihood something can be done with it to help people," he said.

For 14 years, Assistant Professor Robert Walker has studied tribal societies in Brazil, where he discovered an in-group/out-group mentality among hunter-gatherer tribes similar to the social structures of other higher primates like chimpanzees. For Amazon tribes and for chimpanzee groups, violence was ongoing and offered benefits of sexual access to captured females and possible expansion of territory, Walker and Drew Bailey, a psychology postdoc at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, wrote in a paper published in 2012 in *Evolution and Human Behavior*. But beyond those reasons, the fighting appeared to be generated by the in-group/out-group sensibility.

"It's really going to war against 'the other,'" Walker said.

People in developed societies are also prone to in-group/out-group behavior, though its expression is typically more refined. Nationalism, racism and class are examples, Walker said.

But humans aren't mere puppets, tugged forever by the strings of their inherited culture and biology. Understanding why humans behave as they do offers an opportunity to correct bad behavior, scientists say. "It is a way of understanding ourselves that is extremely powerful," Flinn said of anthropological studies. "Without it, we will continue to do things that make no sense."

The New Vista

The questions anthropologists ask have remained largely the same since the turn of the 20th century, including those involving human behavior. But the responses to these questions from the best researchers today are more evidence-based than speculative, more nuanced than general, involve more experts in a variety of disciplines, and tend to fit neatly into the widening field of evolutionary science. The MU department has scaled the precipice and stepped to the edge of this scientific vista, and other universities are noticing.

"We have this reputation as the fun and exciting place to be where the new ideas are happening," Flinn said.

— Mark Barna

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Education researchers receive \$2.6 million grant

MU science program for K–6 to be analyzed for effectiveness

Deborah Hanuscin realized she was onto something when teachers started putting off knee surgeries and skipping ocean cruise vacations in order to attend the [QuEST \(http://education.missouri.edu/news/articles/2008/summer/2008_07_01_quest\)](http://education.missouri.edu/news/articles/2008/summer/2008_07_01_quest) program, an innovative summer workshop at the College of Education aimed at improving elementary science teaching. Now the associate professor and other researchers in the [Department of Learning, Teaching and Curriculum \(http://education.missouri.edu/LTC/\)](http://education.missouri.edu/LTC/) have a \$2.6 million National Science Foundation (NSF) grant to research the program's effectiveness in K–6 schools around Missouri.

QuEST, which stands for Quality Elementary Science Teaching, goes beyond typical workshops by providing a week-long camp at which teachers practice educational techniques immediately after learning them.

“We wouldn't dream of giving someone a driver's license without ever putting them behind a wheel, but we often hold workshops on new teaching approaches without providing opportunities for teachers to practice them,” Hanuscin said. “The QuEST program embeds a teaching practicum in the workshop. The first week, the teachers are learners. The second week they get to apply what they've learned by teaching students.”

Hanuscin and Delinda van Garderen, associate professor of special education, started QuEST in 2008 with grant support from the Missouri Department of Higher Education. The program focuses on physics because it is typically elementary teachers' weakest area, Hanuscin said. If shown effective, the QuEST model for professional development could be implemented for teacher training in other subjects in the future.

The NSF grant will allow Hanuscin and colleagues to collect data about the impact of the program.

“Research will explore how controlled teaching experiences support the learning of teachers and, in turn, their students,” Hanuscin said. “If our research finds this program to be successful, the QuEST model could be replicated elsewhere to the benefit of greater numbers of teachers and students.”

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Lava flows miles from volcanic eruption explained by MU geologists



Rocks in Grey's Landing, Idaho, show swirls representing hardened lava from a volcanic eruption that occurred miles away in Yellowstone National Park 8 million years ago. Photo courtesy of California State University at Bakersfield.

Super hot volcanic detritus and viscous heating create phenomenon, researchers say

A mass of black ash acres-wide crosses the sky toward the horizon, where it hits ground, sprays across the landscape and is transformed into tumbling sheets of glowing lava.

During almost all volcanic eruptions, lava is resigned to spilling down a volcano's sides, then cooling and hardening. But that's not the case with super eruptions. Eight million years ago, in what is now Yellowstone National Park, a volcano belched ash for miles and became molten upon striking ground. The evidence is in the lava swirls that hardened into rock. In Grey's Landing, Idaho, scientists have discovered several swirls as a result of the Yellowstone eruption.

Now, researchers at the University of Missouri have discovered how lava could flow miles from a volcanic eruption. Alan Whittington, an associate professor in MU's [geological sciences department \(http://geology.missouri.edu\)](http://geology.missouri.edu) in the College of Arts and Science, along with doctoral students Genevieve Robert and Jiyang Ye, published their thesis this month in the journal *Geology*.

"During a super volcano eruption, pyroclastic flows, which are giant clouds of very hot ash and rock, travel away from the volcano at typically 100 miles an hour," Robert said. "We determined that the ash must have been exceptionally hot so that it could actually turn into lava and flow before it eventually cooled."

Volcanic ash and rock needs to be at least 1,500 degrees Fahrenheit to transform into lava. But as detritus sails through the sky, it loses hundreds of degrees. The researchers postulate that the combination of the already super hot materials from the mega explosion and "viscous heating" when it strikes the ground accounts for the phenomenon.

Viscosity is the degree to which a liquid resists flow. The higher the viscosity, the less the substance can flow. For example, water has a low viscosity, so it flows easily, while molasses has a higher viscosity and flows much slower. Whittington likens the process of viscous heating to stirring a pot of molasses.

Stirring molasses is difficult, but it gets easier during the process. "Once you get the pot stirring, the energy you are using to move the spoon is transferred into the molasses, which actually heats up a little bit," Whittington said. "This is viscous heating."

When the volcanic detritus lands, its energy "is turned into heat, much like the energy from the spoon heating up the molasses," Robert said. This could add 400 degrees Fahrenheit to the materials. "This extra heat created by viscous heating is enough to cause the ash to weld together and actually begin flowing as lava."

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Mizzou Weekly

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Midweek reboot



MU Health Care surgeon Scott Litofsky spends most Wednesday evenings playing soccer at the Missouri Athletic Center in Columbia. Photo by Nicholas Benner.

Busy neurosurgeon makes time for exercise

As with most people, physicians are often challenged to find time to exercise, despite their seeing firsthand the chronic health problems caused by a sedentary life.

Scott Litofsky, a medical school professor and chief of the division of neurological surgery at MU Health Care, works 70 hours a week. But even with his grueling schedule, he makes time for formal exercise.

Litofsky, 54, rises at 4:30 every morning to walk two miles. He also swims a half-mile in his backyard pool when weather permits. On Wednesday nights he plays on a soccer team at the Missouri Athletics Center in Columbia.

He says that, because residency takes up so much time, inactivity can become a lifelong habit for physicians.

During his residency at the University of Southern California Medical Center in Los Angeles, Litofsky took up basketball. In 2002 he switched to soccer while coaching for a middle school soccer team.

He believes that exercise should be a requisite, like brushing teeth, not an addendum. Exercise needs to be part of one's lifestyle.

Soccer night is Litofsky's midweek reboot, clearing his mind and reinvigorating him. "You have to want to participate, and then you have to make the time," Litofsky said.

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Email etiquette: minding your electronic manners

At some time, you have probably accidentally sent an email to the wrong person. Chances are you have also inadvertently hit reply all when you really just intended to respond to one or two of the recipients. Maybe you have even sent an email that you later apologized for because the recipient was not able to discern your tone within the written content. In 2012, 144 billion emails were sent and received per day worldwide, according to the Radicati Group, a technology market research firm. An email mistake is bound to happen at some point given our heavy reliance on electronic communication; however, effective and proper written communication is attainable when you learn from the most common email missteps.

[The Division of Information Technology \(http://doit.missouri.edu/about/\)](http://doit.missouri.edu/about/) presents these best practices for electronic communication:

Know when email is not your best option. You have no control over an email once you hit send. An email has the potential to go viral quickly. Private matters should not be communicated electronically just to avoid uncomfortable face-to-face conversations. Also, remember the university has an obligation to access your email communications when legal requests for these records arise.

Represent your best self. Email may suggest a casual vibe, but you should know your target audience and present yourself accordingly. Keep professional emails precise, straightforward and formal. You may customize your fonts and stationary, but be aware of how it may reflect on you. Also, do not rely on spell check alone to catch errors.

The recipient will not be able to use verbal cues or body language to decipher your tone. Email has a tendency to feel abrasive. In addition, sarcasm is often lost in written form; therefore, it is best just to be straightforward in emails.

Simmer down before you shoot off an email. If you sense yourself getting emotional while drafting an email, don't send it. Save the draft and read it again after you have had a chance to calm down.

Verify the name and email address of the recipient before hitting send. Most of the time auto-complete will provide you with email recipient options as you type a name in the "to" field. But this feature can be a detrimental. Always double check your recipients before clicking send.

Use distribution lists wisely. Distribution lists are a fast and easy way to send an email to many people. However, before sending it, be confident that the email correspondence is appropriate for mass distribution. When content only applies to a subset of members, you are in fact spamming the rest of the group. Another consideration is the maintenance of the distribution list group members. If a distribution list is not kept current, you could be sending sensitive information to members who are no longer privy to that information.

'Reply All' with care. Do not choose "reply all" if your response is sensitive or you have a question for just one of the email receivers. Before sending your communication you should review the "to" field to verify you are not responding to the entire group.

For more information, go to [doit.missouri.edu \(http://doit.missouri.edu/about\)](http://doit.missouri.edu), or call 882-2000.

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Cancer center extended hours

[Ellis Fischel Cancer Center](http://www.mizzouweekly.com/2013/09/12/ellis-fischel-cancer-center-extended-hours/) ([../34-24/hospital/index.php.html](http://www.mizzouweekly.com/2013/09/12/ellis-fischel-cancer-center-extended-hours/)) offers late-night digital mammograms for women over age 40 or for women who have a doctor's order. The exams are 6 p.m.–midnight Oct. 4, and 7 a.m.–noon Oct. 5. All exams are by appointment. To make an appointment, call the center at 882-8511.

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Statistical analysis assistance

The Social Science Statistics Center in the Middlebush Building helps researchers at MU with their statistical analysis. Faculty and student researchers can learn more at sssc.missouri.edu/form2013a (<http://mizzouweekly.missouri.edu/archive/2013/35-4/stats/sssc.missouri.edu/form2013a>), or by emailing Director Lori Thombs at thombsl@missouri.edu.

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Farmers Market

Buy fresh produce, baked goods and lunch items at the Mizzou Farmers Market 9 a.m.–1 p.m. today on Lowry Mall.

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Free karate lessons

Put some Tai Chi in your lunch break by taking classes 12–1 p.m. Sept. 15–Nov. 5 in Room 5 in Ellis Library's State Historical Society. Sessions are free but a donation is appreciated. Classes are limited to 12 participants.

To register or for more information, email elliss@umsystem.edu.

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