KU is placing an increased focus on educating students about the dangers of problem drinking and dangerous behavior, including drinking games like beer pong.

Fighting a drinking problem

KU combats dangerous alcohol-related behaviors, 'functional drunks'

KU isn’t the only school at which students are binge drinking. No one has any illusions otherwise. That doesn’t mean it should be accepted.
That’s the message Marlea Roney and others at KU are using to try to change the culture of excess and educate students about the dangers of drinking.

“The bottom line for me is, let’s not ignore it. Let’s see if we can change that culture of acceptance,” as it relates to binge drinking, said Roney, vice provost for Student Success.

National and local trends showing an increase in dangerous behavior, coupled with two alcohol-related student deaths last year have spurred KU to take action to fight alcohol abuse among students. A host of programs, policies and educational steps have been instituted, and faculty and staff can help.

Faculty or staff who notice students coming to class or work smelling of alcohol, or missing class because of it, can refer them to Counseling and Psychological Services, the Wellness Center or Student Success, Roney said. Or if someone is comfortable doing so, they could talk with the students personally about the potential dangers of drinking.

KU’s administration is no longer waiting to see a problem before acting. One of the foremost efforts to curb binge drinking is the implementation of mandatory alcohol education classes for all new KU students under the age of 22. The classes, which can be completed online, educate students about the effects of alcohol on the body and how it can impair decision making.

Roney said the results have been good thus far. Statistics show a 98 percent completion rate among eligible students. Those who haven’t done it yet can complete it in the spring. If they don’t, they won’t be allowed to enroll the following semester.

“Every student I’ve talked to so far has said they’ve learned something from it,” Roney said of the classes.

The classes are available online at www.alcohol.ku.edu. The site includes instructions for students required to take the course and for those voluntarily taking the course. It also includes links with information about alcohol laws, education and prevention, treatment and intervention, and KU policies regarding alcohol.

"Functional drunks"

Education is one tool in the fight against alcohol abuse. Student Success staff meet regularly with health care professionals who have reported more instances of “functional drunks,” people with dangerously high blood alcohol content who aren’t showing the effects because of increased tolerance.

“They (emergency room staff) are seeing students who, a decade ago, wouldn’t have been able to walk or talk with that level of blood alcohol content,” Roney said. “The only way that can happen is through a process of built up tolerance.”

KU has implemented parental notifications for students with two violations of state or local alcohol laws or university policies. One drug violation triggers notification. Parents will also be notified if housing contracts are revoked.

On the policy front, the university has instituted an amnesty policy to encourage students to help friends seek medical help if needed. Under the policy, students who help a friend get medical treatment won’t be held liable if they have been drinking as well.

“It’s designed to help students make better decisions about taking care of friends,” Roney said.

Community response

Of course, excess drinking is not just a campus problem. To that end, KU has formed a Community Alcohol Coalition. Comprised of members from the Lawrence Bar Owners Association, Lawrence Public Schools, the Lawrence Police Department and others, the coalition meets regularly to discuss ways it can help fight the problem and change perceptions. One goal is to change the idea that Lawrence is a drinker’s haven and to promote the idea there is more to do for entertainment than drink.

A similar group has formed on campus as well. The KU Alcohol Task Force is made up of representatives from governance and Student Senate, student leaders and faculty whose research is
related to alcohol and safety. Roney said she is most excited about the initiative and leadership students on the task force have shown. The student rights subcommittee of Student Senate earlier this year initiated discussion of amending a KU housing policy that would allow authorized staff to key into student housing rooms where students are drinking. Many universities have similar policies, but as of now, KU does not.

KU administration is evaluating all of the measures as the semester progresses and discussing possible measures to take in the future. In a culture in which binge drinking is accepted, the challenge is to change perceptions. Roney said her staff is seeing an increase in behaviors such as “pregaming,” or getting drunk before attending games or going out for the night. They’ve also heard students state they plan to “get blackout drunk.”

“Someone who is blackout drunk is risking death,” Roney said. “That’s why we’re upping the ante with these measures. It’s about smart choices, and we want to help students make better decisions.”

Anthony Mattingly/University Relations

Val Smith, professor of ecology and evolutionary biology, in lab coat, points out tanks that separate algae from waste water to a fourth-grade class. Smith was explaining research sponsored by KU's Transportation Research Institute at the first Douglas County Water Festival at the KU Field Station.
KU faculty, staff share wonders of water at first-ever festival

Nearly 400 fourth-graders get hands-on lessons

The expert held the crowd’s attention as he detailed how his research aims to take algae from water and turn it into biofuels. He explained how wastewater could be key to solving some of the world’s most vexing energy problems. He did it all while wearing a Bill Nye-esque outfit of chemistry goggles, lab coat and fishing hat.

That’s because his audience was not a group of grad students, colleagues or research investors — they were fourth-graders.

Val Smith, professor of ecology and evolutionary biology, donned the unusual duds and broke down his research in easy to understand terms as part of the first Douglas County Water Festival. The event brought nearly 400 fourth-graders from around the county to the KU Field Station for a hands-on lesson on the importance of water conservation, pollution prevention and how water can play a role in solving energy problems.

The field station often hosts class field trips, but never before had a group that large visited in one day, said Scott Campbell, research associate and associate director for outreach and public service at the Kansas Biological Survey. The festival was sponsored by the Douglas County Conservation District in conjunction with the Kansas Biological Survey and KU Field Station, Kansas Geological Survey, Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Environmental Protection Agency Region 7 and the Douglas County Farm Bureau Association.

Smith’s research is associated with KU’s Transportation Research Institute. As kids gathered around his table, he held up a gas can, olive oil container and various oil-based products.

“What does your car run on?” Smith asked the kids. “Where does oil come from?” he asked after they replied. “Does oil only come from the ground?”

Margaret Townsend, research associate, right, and graduate student Sarah Kreitzer, both of the Kansas Geological Survey, demonstrate how ground water is accessed by wells and how it can be affected by pollution and pumping. The demonstration was part of the first Douglas County Water Festival.

He explained how oil and fuels could be made from plants such as corn. He then pointed out how biofuels derived from sources such as algae and recycled vegetable oil could lessen dependence on fossil fuels without diverting food sources. In the afternoon session, Matt Hiatt, an environmental studies major, took over the station.
“If we can grow enough of this (algae), then I can make this (holding motor oil) and this (holding gas container) without taking food away from people’s tables,” Smith said.

Across the field station, Kansas Geological Survey staff demonstrated some of the most urgent problems facing water supplies with a model. Focusing on what happens below ground and how it affects the water cycle, Margaret Townsend, research associate, and graduate student Sarah Kreitzer dropped dye into the water that began to seep into the nearby model lake. After illustrating how ground water can become polluted, they pumped water out of the model, which reduced the level of the ground water and caused the nearby pond to dry up.

“Ground water is a great source of water here in Kansas,” Townsend said. “When that water level is pumped too low it can cause problems, though. Rivers and lakes are also important to keep clean. In Lawrence we get drinking water from both the Kansas River and Clinton Lake.”

At other learning stations, the students played games such as water quality hopscotch and CO2 tag.

The games and unusual outfits made the event fun, but the lessons were valuable.

“Water is a vital resource that literally everyone and everything in Kansas depends on to some degree,” Campbell said. “Because of that, no student is too young to learn to appreciate water’s broad importance and understand that in different ways it impacts many things in addition to their personal daily lives. The Water Festival permits these fourth-graders to focus on pertinent information and facts about water, and hopefully leave here knowing a lot more about it and especially that there is great value in its conservation.”

For more on the KU Field Station, visit www.ksr.ku.edu/.

KU rises in research expenditure rankings

Total spending exceeds $197 million

KU again climbed in the latest ranking of federally funded science and engineering research. KU officials say the positive trend should continue — fueled by new federal stimulus grants and relatively stable research funding.

Overall, KU ranked 43rd among national public research universities for the 2008 fiscal year, according to an annual survey from the National Science Foundation. That’s one spot higher than in 2007 and two higher than in 2006. In 1996, KU ranked 55th.

“This is good news for Kansas, in terms of KU’s ability to bring federal research dollars into the state,” said Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little. “But it’s even better news for the people who benefit from our work in human health, energy, the environment and other fields.”

KU’s federally funded spending for science and engineering research alone was $122.4 million in 2008. Total KU research spending from all grants and contracts exceeded $197.8 million that year. KU’s top three sources of federal research funding were the National Institutes of Heath, the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation.

“The 2009 fiscal year was also positive for KU and our outstanding researchers,” said
Steve Warren, vice provost for research and graduate studies. He singled out a $20.2 million, six-year NIH grant for a Specialized Chemistry Center, the largest in KU history. The center is part of a high-level network of institutions searching for molecules that can fight disease and advance human health.

“For 2010, we know we are already ahead of where we were this time last year and that doesn’t include the nearly $18 million in one-time federal stimulus-funded research awards received so far at both campuses,” said Warren.

“Nationwide, federal funding for science and engineering research is a leading indicator of a university’s overall reputation,” said Paul Terranova, vice chancellor for research at the KU Medical Center. “These are the most competitive federal grants, and the outcomes of the research often have the greatest impact in translating laboratory discoveries into real-world cures for cancer and other diseases.”

KU’s annual reports of sponsored research activity are available at http://www.rgs.ku.edu/downloads/annual_reports/index.shtml.

Flu shot clinic dates announced

H1N1, seasonal vaccines to be offered on campus

KU plans to offer both the H1N1 flu vaccine and the seasonal flu vaccine to members of the KU community at several campus clinics starting later this month.

As part of the federal vaccination program, the H1N1 immunization will be free. Students, staff, faculty and retirees seeking an H1N1 vaccine at these clinics must meet the federal priority group criteria and should show their KU Card.

The seasonal flu shots will be available for people 18 and older and cost $15 for an inoculation. A seasonal nasal spray vaccine is available for $20.50 for ages 9 through 49 only. Employees covered under the State of Kansas health plans can be reimbursed for the cost of the vaccine.

The H1N1 clinics will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Friday from Oct. 31 through Dec. 4 except for Thanksgiving week at these locations:

Oct. 30, Ambler Student Recreation Fitness Center
Nov. 6, Mrs. E’s cafeteria in Lewis Hall
Nov. 13, Kansas Union ballroom
Nov. 20, Ambler Student Recreation Fitness Center
Dec. 4, Kansas Union ballroom

An additional evening clinic will be from 6 to 9 p.m. Nov. 17, at Anschutz Library. The schedule is tentative as delivery of the H1N1 vaccine is not certain. Clinics are subject to change and may be rescheduled. Visit studenthealth.ku.edu for updates on the H1N1 clinic schedule. People who fall into the H1N1 priority groups are eligible to receive the vaccine at this time. Those groups are:

* All people 6 months through 24 years of age
* People who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age
* All pregnant women
* Health care and emergency services personnel and
* People ages 25 through 64 years who have health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from the flu.

Seasonal flu clinics are scheduled and not subject to change. The seasonal clinics will be open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Oct. 20, 21, 27 and 28 in the First Floor Conference Room at Watkins Memorial Health Center. The vaccine fee is payable by check, cash or credit card at time of service. Current KU students are eligible to be billed for the service. Medicaid and Medicare are not accepted.

People going to either the H1N1 or seasonal clinic can visit http://www.ldchealth.org/h1n1.htm to download a vaccine consent form that may be filled out ahead of time and brought to a clinic. Eligible people are encouraged by health officials to get both the seasonal and H1N1 vaccines.

### Professor profile: From feedstock to tailpipe

**Susan Williams, associate professor of chemical and petroleum engineering**

KU may not be the only university researching alternative fuels, but it does have a plan that sets it apart. Whereas the majority of research looks at producing alternative fuels, Susan Williams, associate professor of chemical and petroleum engineering, and colleagues are looking to produce, test and incorporate new methods of biodiesel production.

“There are a lot of universities that are doing similar types of things,” Williams said. “The thing that I think is really unique about what we’re doing is we’re not only looking at the production of the fuel but also the testing of the fuel and then trying to incorporate this ‘feedstock to tailpipe’ approach into (KU’s) production facility. It’s a methodology of approaching the problem that we think is necessary of you’re going to come up with the next generation of fuels.”

In a new KU YouTube video, Williams discusses research at KU that is turning cooking oil into fuel for university buses and engines, being a leader in the cycle of crop growth and fuel refinement, collaboration and sharing their findings.

Williams is the director of the KU Biodiesel Initiative. The student-led project takes cooking oil on campus and converts it to fuel for use in campus buses, lawnmowers and other engines. This semester, the group began providing biodiesel to power generators for inflatable games and attractions at the Hy-Vee Family Hawk Zone at home football games. The initiative was a student idea, launched with $15,000 of funding from Student Senate to build a refinery.

The initiative has produced fuel as well as ideas. A “feedstock to tailpipe” approach has grown out of the work.

The program “is really looking at the impact of fuels, all the way from what you choose as the feedstock to how you make the fuel, to how it burns in an engine and what the emissions are and what the impact of all of that is on the ecosystem,” Williams said.

Williams and numerous other faculty members are collaborating with student leaders to provide their expertise in the program.

The initiative has been successful in producing enough biodiesel from used cooking oil to meet a percentage of the fuel needs of campus. Williams said she
envisions something much larger, eventually reaching beyond campus.

“What we would like to be able to do is, long term, satisfy the fuel needs of the university, based on using used cooking oil,” Williams said. “The vision is having a much larger facility that’s able to be a model for what this could be in a rural community, or a small community. If we can demonstrate that and show that it’s sustainable and economically feasible, then we can be a model and do outreach to other communities who might want to do the same thing.” To see the video, visit http://www.oread.ku.edu/~or ead/2009/october/19/stories/profile.shtml.

KU program lands $20 million grant for climate change, energy research

A $20 million award from the National Science Foundation will further establish Kansas as an internationally recognized leader in global climate change and renewable energy research.

The grant is a multi-institutional, multi-sector effort that will link four universities: KU, Kansas State University, Wichita State University and Haskell Indian Nations University; three Kansas-based companies: Abengoa Bioenergy, MGP Ingredients and Nanoscale; and two companies outside of the state: ADM (Illinois) and Netcrysalts (California) in a massive research effort. The initiative will also be supported by $4 million in matching funds from KU, K-State and Kansas Technology Enterprise Corporation.

“This is a tremendous opportunity for the state of Kansas,” said Kristin Bowman-James, principal investigator and project director of Kansas’ EPSCoR program and a University Distinguished Professor of Chemistry at KU. “With this funding we will be able to harness the talents of researchers across the state to address two major issues of society today — climate change and renewable energy — under the umbrella of a single integrated initiative. We envision that this interdisciplinary research effort, bridging across the natural and social sciences and engineering, will ultimately allow Kansas to be a key leader in research that addresses serious global challenges.”

The five-year award to Kansas NSF EPSCoR (Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research), a statewide program that includes major Kansas research universities, will provide a fresh integrative approach to address climate change and renewable energy challenges.

Kristin Bowman-James

The Climate Change and Renewable Energy initiative spans a variety of disciplines, with five team leaders. Chuck Rice, University Distinguished Professor of Agronomy at K-State, leads the group that will use climate modeling tactics to predict the effects of climate change. Dietrich Earnhart, associate professor of

Dietrich Earnhart
Joane Nagel

About 40 scientists are currently involved in the collaborative consortium, representing a vast array of disciplines, including agronomy, anthropology, computer science, economics, geography, mathematics, sociology, engineering, biology, chemistry and physics.

“This large award from the National Science Foundation for research in climate change and renewable energy showcases the talent of faculty researchers not only at KU but throughout Kansas,” said KU Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little. “The project is particularly impressive since it includes so many disciplines across institutional lines.”

Judy Wu

EPSCoR is a federal program that targets states that have traditionally been underfunded in the sciences and engineering. In part, funding comes to EPSCoR jurisdictions through the Research Infrastructure Improvement program, which makes awards on a competitive basis for proposals that are aligned with the state’s science and technology needs. For more information on NSF EPSCoR see www.nsfepscor.ku.edu.

University senate votes to add gender identity, gender expression to non-discrimination policy
Changes also recommended for equal opportunity

University Senate voted unanimously to add gender identity and gender expression to KU’s non-discrimination and equal opportunity policies at its Oct. 8 meeting. The amended policies now go to the provost and chancellor for approval.

The proposed additions came about after Student Senate introduced a resolution that the categories be added earlier this year.

If approved, the third paragraph of the non-discrimination policy would read “The University of Kansas, Lawrence, is committed to the full participation of previously excluded or neglected classes of people. Thus, it is also the policy of the university to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, gender identity, and gender expression. The university’s nondiscrimination policy extends to employment practices, conditions of employment, personnel actions and all other educational programs and activities of the university and its affiliates. Leaders in the university community continuously examine all areas of the institution, make policy decisions, and implement strategies to eliminate and prevent discrimination wherever necessary. Reports of discrimination shall be evaluated promptly and acted upon in the manner deemed necessary by the appropriate faculty and administrators and as prescribed by the appropriate grievance procedure.”

John Stratton, associate librarian and University Senate president, said the added language in the policies will help explicitly support the rights of transgendered individuals at KU. Then-Gov. Kathleen Sebelius issued an executive order in 2007 discouraging discrimination on the basis of gender identity and gender expression in the state.

“It is also my opinion that the proposed amendments will ensure KU is a widely inclusive institution,” Stratton said. “The addition of ‘gender identity’ and ‘gender expression’ to these policies will underscore that these are prohibited forms of discrimination.”

The equal opportunity portion of the policy currently states “The University of Kansas, Lawrence, is also proud of its goal to help all individuals realize their potential. To this end, the university is committed to providing an equal opportunity for all qualified individuals to be considered for employment, benefits and conditions of employment, educational programs and activities, regardless of race, religion, color, sex, disability, national origin, ancestry, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, marital status or parental status. University leaders and supervisory personnel shall recruit, hire, train and promote persons in all job titles utilizing only valid requirements related to the position functions. A university community that provides equal opportunity in hiring and all conditions of employment will make significant strides towards the elimination of discrimination. Thus, the University of Kansas applauds every effort to create a positive working and learning environment for all individuals.”

The policy is available at https://documents.ku.edu/policies/hreo/Nondiscrimination.htm

KU’s policy library is online at http://www.policy.ku.edu/

$2.5 million Lied Center expansion announced
Larger lobby, new education pavilion among upgrades

A $2.5 million gift from the Lied Foundation Trust will pave the way for the Lied Center of Kansas, one of the state’s premier performing arts venues, to expand.

The gift will fund expansion of Lied Center’s lobby, construction of an education pavilion, creation of additional office space and installation of displays about the history of Ernst F. Lied and the Lied Foundation Trust.

Since 1988, the trust established by Ernst F. Lied has provided more than $22.2 million in support for the University of Kansas. Lied attended KU from 1923 to 1925. During his career, he owned a car dealership in Omaha and invested in Las Vegas real estate. Before his death in 1980, he named Christina Hixson, his associate for more than 40 years, as the sole trustee of his trust.

“My goal for the Lied Center has been to touch more people and bring new audiences to the programs and performances,” Hixson said. “This expansion will enable the Lied Center to serve more audiences, especially schoolchildren.”

Dale Seuferling, president of KU Endowment, said the impact of Christina Hixson’s stewardship of the Lied Foundation will be felt at KU for many generations. “She truly cares about making sure Kansans have access to high-caliber artistic performers,” Seuferling said. “Her latest gift ensures the Lied Center can expand its community outreach efforts.”

KU Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little said that since her arrival at KU, she’s been impressed with what the Lied Center means to the KU community.

“This will strengthen the Lied’s ability to fulfill its mission,” said Gray-Little.

Tim Van Leer, director of the Lied Center, said the construction will create opportunities for new programs.

“The expansion isn’t really just about having the space to do what we do. It’s also about creating a space that we can grow in,” Van Leer said. “It will allow us to have a space where we can bring teachers together for workshops, where visiting artists can hold master classes with university students, and it will be a place where teachers from schools across Kansas can bring their students.”

More than 80,000 individuals — from Kansas schoolchildren to college students to senior citizens — participate in educational activities at Lied Center each year.

“This is a place where an exposure to music, theater and dance sparks a lifelong passion for the arts,” said Van Leer.

The expansion will make a positive difference throughout Lied Center, Van Leer said. The enlarged lobby will provide needed space during high-attendance events. The educational pavilion also will provide a venue for meetings, pre- and post-performance activities and receptions. The additional office space will allow consolidation of staff offices into one area of the building.

The Lied Center is the performing arts center for KU and is a premier venue for the arts in Kansas. Its mission is to engage audiences and artists through presentation, education, research and service. The Lied Center vision is to make the performing arts accessible to the people of Kansas. Since it opened in 1993, it’s estimated that 1 million people have attended events at the center.

The expansion plans were approved by the Kansas Board of Regents at its Oct. 14-15 meeting.

Other Lied Foundation gifts to KU have included $10 million for the construction of the Lied Center, $3.1 million for Lied Center outreach programming, $5 million for student scholarships and $1.5 million for medical research.

The gift will be managed by KU Endowment.
School of Education proposes four-year teacher preparation program

In response to the latest advances in teacher education as well as state demands for university efficiencies KU plans to move to a four-year teacher preparation program beginning sometime in 2011 pending university and state approval of the changes.

Since the 1980s, KU’s School of Education has offered a five-year model with students receiving a bachelor’s degree after four years, then spending a fifth year in clinical experiences and graduate education courses.

“The faculty and administration are proud of the five-year program that has served its graduates well for more than 20 years,” said Rick Ginsberg, dean of the School of Education. “As the school enters its second century, the new program will maintain the key strengths of the five-year model, add the latest advances in teacher preparation and provide a four-year program that will best meet the needs of the state in today’s educational and economic climate.”

KU’s School of Education, founded in 1909, is consistently rated among the best in the nation.

Ginsberg proposed the switch to a four-year program after a yearlong analysis by a faculty committee. He analyzed current research and data about the current program including feedback from students, alumni, principals, superintendents and educational leaders from around the country.

Ginsberg highlighted reasons for the switch.

— The teacher education landscape offers students a variety of new ways to get licensed to teach. Moving to a strong four-year model is consistent with this dynamic environment and will best serve today’s students and schools.

— The cost of tuition has increased and requiring an additional year places undue hardship on students. In addition, moving to a four-year program will allow students to enter the workforce a year earlier.

— Developing a strong four-year model will meet the state demands for greater efficiency in university operations.

— A well-crafted four-year model can maintain the high standards that KU demands of its teacher licensure programs while also offering teaching experiences with students of diverse backgrounds, possibilities for English Speakers of Other Languages and special education endorsement.

The new model will be developed this year and the changes will need approval by university and state officials.

The details of the program, including specific courses, timelines, requirements and expectations remain to be determined. Students will have the option of pursuing a master’s degree upon completion of the four-year degree.
Academic journal devotes issue to topic born at KU

Musical theater in 1957 issue originated at anniversary symposium

When an English refereed scholarly journal decided to publish an issue dedicated to American musical theatre in 1957, it was a nod to several classics as well as recognition of cutting edge work at KU and the validity of musical theater scholarship.

Studies in Musical Theatre devoted its most recent issue to the topic. The idea was born at a KU conference celebrating the history of Murphy Hall. In 2007, John Staniunas, associate professor and chair of the Department of Theatre; and Paul Laird, professor of musicology, arranged a symposium as part of the celebration of Murphy Hall’s 50th anniversary. They decided to focus on musical theater productions from 1957, the building’s first year.

The symposium attracted scholars from across the country. Their presentations caught the attention of the journal and two years later, the issue was published.

“It is a real coup for KU,” Staniunas said of the recognition. “It doesn’t happen often that an entire journal is dedicated to one symposium.”

Presenters at the symposium were invited to submit their papers for the journal. They were reviewed, rewritten and 11 were selected for publication. Among those printed were pieces by Staniunas, Roberta Freund Schwartz, associate professor of musicology, and several KU alumni and students. In all, more than half came from authors with KU connections. Others came from noted scholars in the field, such as Carol Oja, the William Powell Mason Professor of Music and Acting Chair of the History of American Civilization at Harvard University, who gave the keynote address at the KU symposium. Laird wrote the issue’s introduction.

Although musical theater has always been popular, it hasn’t always been accepted as a topic for scholarly examination. Although entertainment is the foremost goal, musicals often tackle important social topics and can tell a lot about the time and place in which they were created. The symposium and journal showed that by examining topics such as “whiteness, immigration and race in the U.S. during the late 1950s” as presented in “West Side Story” and “The Music Man,” composer Meredith Willson’s characterization of his fellow Iowans and what “Damn Yankees” says about masculinity in the 1950s.

The American Music Research Journal also took note of the symposium. Four music graduate students made presentations at the symposium, and the journal’s editor invited them to submit their articles. They also constituted an entire issue of the journal.

Staniunas and Laird said they never expected the topic of the symposium to resonate so profoundly but agree the journal is both recognition of the validity of musical theater scholarship and KU’s place as a leader in the field.

“It’s a real testament to the fact that musical theatre scholarship is becoming a more important part of the field,” Staniunas said.

“I think anybody who looks at it will see there is some very serious work with musical theater happening here at KU,” Laird added.
New environmentally sound building to offer space for KU Medical Center, KU Endowment

A new environmentally friendly building is on the horizon at the KU Medical Center.

Construction will begin this fall on a three-story, 40,000-square-foot building at the southeast corner of Rainbow and Olathe boulevards. The $6 million project will be funded by KU Endowment. The first and second floors will provide space for the medical center, and the third floor will house KU Endowment offices.

The building will be constructed at 4125 Rainbow Blvd., replacing a building that originally was a 1950s hotel. Most recently, the building has served as office space for the medical center.

Demolition of the existing building is scheduled to begin this month, and construction will be completed in 2011. The building is expected to qualify for LEED silver certification because of its environmentally friendly features. It will have a highly reflective roof to deflect heat, a ground-source heat pump system to save energy and strategic use of windows on the east and west sides to minimize the impact of radiant heat.

Dale Seuferling, president of KU Endowment, said coordination with the city and the adjacent neighborhood has been a critical element in the success of planning the project.

“This will be an attractive, useful and energy-efficient building that will serve KU Endowment and the KU Medical Center for generations,” said Seuferling.

In addition to new parking and site amenities, improvements will be made to the existing medical center parking area to the north of the building and to the adjacent streetscape along Rainbow Boulevard.

KU Endowment offices on the Kansas City, Kan., campus currently are located in the medical center’s support services facility at 2100 W. 36th Ave.

KU Endowment posts record year in university support
KU Endowment provided a near-record $105.4 million in support to KU’s four campuses in fiscal year 2009, which ended June 30, including a 7 percent increase in student support over the 2008 fiscal year. This is the second-highest level of support KU Endowment has ever supplied to KU.

“Private philanthropy plays an increasingly important role in ensuring KU’s position as a world-class institution,” said Dale Seuferling, president of KU Endowment. “Thanks to the generosity of KU alumni and friends, we’re able to provide crucial support to the university.”

Funds distributed to KU in fiscal year 2009 included

— 29.3 million in student scholarships, fellowships and awards. Student loans brought total student support to $34.5 million. Private contributions to KU Endowment provide virtually all scholarships, fellowships and student awards at KU, benefiting more than 6,500 students.

— $22.7 million in support to faculty, a 16 percent increase over the previous year. KU Endowment funds provided more than 86 percent of total funding for KU’s distinguished professors, including 145 professors who hold named, endowed positions. It also supports faculty development and awards.

— $31.6 million for program and educational support, a 32 percent increase from the previous year. This strengthens academic programs and brings renowned scholars, artists and performers to KU. It also expands the holdings of KU’s libraries and museums.

— $21.7 million for facilities support, a 47 percent decrease from fiscal 2008. This amount fluctuates from year to year, depending on the timeline of construction projects.

In fiscal year 2009, the market value of endowed funds dropped by 22 percent, ending the fiscal year at $960 million. The market value of KU Endowment’s total assets ended fiscal year 2009 at $1.36 billion, down from $1.68 billion at the end of fiscal year 2008.

KU Endowment invests its endowed funds in a diversified portfolio. The long-term investment pool is made up of about 2,700 individual funds established by donors. This comprises 68 percent of KU Endowment’s total assets.

“Over time, investment performance reflects favorably on our strategy of building a well-diversified, equity-oriented portfolio,” Seuferling said.

Despite challenging economic times, a record number of donors — 45,186 — contributed a record $106.4 million to KU Endowment in fiscal year 2009.

Department of Energy launches graduate fellowship program

U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu has announced that up to $12.5 million in funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will be awarded in early 2010 to support at least 80 graduate fellowships to U.S. students pursuing advanced degrees in those fields through the newly created Department of Energy Office of Science.
Graduate Fellowship program. The goal of the fellowship program is to encourage outstanding students to pursue graduate degrees in physics, chemistry, biology, mathematics, engineering and environmental and computer sciences — fields that will prepare students for careers that can make significant contributions in discovery driven science and science for national needs in energy and the environment.

“Training the next generation of U.S. scientists and engineers is critical to our future energy security and economic competitiveness,” Chu said. “This fellowship is part of the administration’s effort to encourage students to direct their talents towards careers in science and our nation’s next technology revolution.”

To be eligible for the fellowship, applicants must be U.S. citizens and currently a first- or second-year graduate student enrolled at a U.S. academic institution, or an undergraduate senior who will be enrolled as a first-year graduate student by fall 2010. Applicants must be pursuing graduate study and research in the physical, biological, engineering and computational sciences. Interested students can apply online at http://www.scied.science.doe.gov/SCGF.html

Each fellowship award will be $50,500 per year for three years to provide support for tuition, living expenses, research materials and travel to research conferences. Fellowships will be awarded on the basis of peer review. The application process is open and completed applications are due Nov. 30.

KU Hospital selected for 'best places to work in health care' list

KU Hospital has been named to Modern Healthcare magazine’s Best Places to Work in Healthcare. The list includes hospitals, providers, suppliers, payers and associations with at least 25 employees.

Modern Healthcare will reveal the specific rankings in a special supplement to be published Oct. 26. The supplement also will recognize the top places to work by industry segment (provider, payer and vendor) and number of employees, and will profile some of the recipients.

Modern Healthcare partnered with Best Companies Group, a Pennsylvania-based firm that administers “best places to work” programs nationwide. Modern Healthcare conducted the program to recognize outstanding employers in the health care industry on a national level.

“We are thrilled by the national recognition,” said Bob Page, president and chief executive officer of KU Hospital. “We have known for some time our hospital has established a great relationship with our staff. Our turnover is very low. More importantly, our quality of care and patient satisfaction is very high, reflecting a staff which shares the organization’s values and commitment.”