These bed bugs won’t bite

Parasite zoo' keeps critters, tapeworms for educational purposes

When mothers advise their children “don’t let the bed bugs bite,” they’re not just reciting an old saying. “The bed bugs do bite,” said Debby McMullen,
laboratory supervisor at Student Health Services.

Pat Moody, medical technologist with Student Health Services, displays an ascaris lumbricoides, a specimen at the organization’s "parasite zoo."

The bed bugs in KU’s "parasite zoo" are safely preserved in formaldehyde, and won’t be biting anyone. The tiny, often obnoxious bugs are stored in Watkins Memorial Health Center, along with other creepy critters like tapeworms, deer ticks and crab lice.

The preserved parasites are used as educational tools for students and staff. The specimens are commonly found in Douglas County, and unfortunately can show up on campus as well.

“'We keep the zoo so students can recognize what the parasites are if they come in contact with them,” said Mai Hester, marketing coordinator with Student Health Services.

“Sometimes students come in with bites and ask, ‘what is this? What’s biting me?’”

Bed bugs are among the collection at Watkins Health Center’s "parasite zoo."

Students aren’t the only ones gazing at the miniscule parasites. McMullen said medical staff at Watkins Health Center often refer to the zoo for information on what they may be dealing with.

Although the zoo permanently resides in the Watkins lab, McMullen said it often goes on tour, to staff workshops and at events like Health Fest, where students can see the parasites and learn.

“'It’s kind of fun. It’s kind of gross,” McMullen said of exhibiting things like the several-foot-long tapeworm in a jar. “It often leads to questions of what it is and how to avoid it.”

All of the specimens were either taken from patients served at Watkins or donated by faculty or community members. Faculty have also contributed to the knowledge behind the zoo. Lab staff have worked with faculty from the entomology department to learn about the fine differences between kinds of ticks. If a patient was dealing with a deer tick, testing for Lyme disease may be necessary. Other kinds of ticks are not as likely to spread disease, said Pat Moody, medical technologist at Student Health Services.

Anyone who would like to see the jars of tapeworms, ticks and parasites can pay a visit to the Watkins lab. It is open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday and from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. Sunday.

The parasite zoo may be one of Watkins’ most unique features, but the center offers a wealth of health resources for faculty and staff. One of
the most popular is the center’s nutritional counseling. A staff dietitian can offer information for diabetics, eating disorders and exercise tips. The center offers “Ask a Dietitian” on Mondays at the Ambler Student Recreation Fitness Center and Wednesdays at Ekdahl Dining Commons. Faculty and staff can ask dietary questions for free, and private appointments are also available.

Watkins also offers a full-service pharmacy and lab that can perform blood draws, tests, radiology and other services, and all are available to faculty and staff. Employees traveling abroad can also visit the center for advice on necessary shots and immunizations. The clinic is the only one in Douglas County that offers the service. The center also offers physical therapy on campus.

While Watkins can help keep employees healthy, staff from the center can also help educate KU’s students.

“We have health educators that visit classes and speak on a variety of topics, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder,” Hester said. “They also do general health such as alcohol safety and sexual health. We can cover just about any topic.”

Cancer center to recruit 25 more scholars

Director says center needs $4 additional $4M in funding for designation

Obtaining more funding, attracting world-class scholars and ensuring KU has state of the art research facilities will be key to KU’s mission of becoming a National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center.

That was the message Roy Jensen delivered in his second State of the Cancer Center Address on Aug. 24 in Simons Bioscience Research Laboratories. Jensen, director of the KU Cancer Center, gave similar presentations at the KU Medical Center and KU School of Medicine-Wichita as well.
KU will submit its application to the National Cancer Institute in 2011. Several steps need to be taken before that date to ensure the application has a good chance at being successful, Jensen said.

The cancer center and associated researchers currently have about $7.1 million in NCI funding. Jensen said they need about $11 million by the application date.

One of the best ways to increase research funding is by recruiting more world-class cancer researchers to KU. Jensen said the cancer center is focused on recruiting 25 additional cancer scholars to KU in the next few years. To convince talented scholars to come to KU, facilities must be state of the art.

Jensen pointed out two facilities that will aid in the quest for NCI designation. The Phase I Clinical Trials Center in Fairway is slated to open in mid to late 2011. The Hall Family Foundation recently donated $11 million for the facility, and Johnson County voters last year approved a sales tax that will generate $15 million annually, $5 million of which will go to the facility. The Wahl/Hixon Research Complex on the medical center campus will also be devoted entirely to cancer research. The $26.4 million renovation, which was funded by the Kansas Bioscience Authority, will be completed in three stages beginning in summer 2010.

“We have a lot of work to do. We have to be focused and be sure we submit the very best application we can,” Jensen said.

Although work remains, Jensen highlighted several areas of progress. One key to designation is making sure discoveries benefit cancer patients throughout the region. The KU Cancer Center has formed partnerships with institutions throughout the region, including the Midwest Cancer Alliance, Kansas State University and hospitals throughout Kansas and western Missouri. Physicians routinely visit clinics throughout the region to share their expertise as well.

Phase I clinical trials are also vital in securing a designation. The center recently expanded a Phase I clinical trial of anti-cancer drug Nanotax to Wichita. The trial was originally opened at the cancer center in Kansas City last year. The center also recently became one of 12 sights nationally to take part in a trial to determine the effectiveness of 3D automated breast ultrasound. Clinical cancer services provided by the center have also increased by double-digit percentage rates for the past several years, Jensen said.

The School of Pharmacy has played a large role in progress that will help secure NCI designation, Jensen said.

“Our School of Pharmacy is absolutely setting the pace nationally for academic drug discovery, delivery and development.”

Necessary leadership for a comprehensive cancer center was appointed this year, with the appointment of Matthew
Mayo, director of the Center for Biostatics and Advanced Informatics, as the associate director of shared resources. Stephen Williamson is the new medical director for the clinical trials shared resource, and Becky Hubbell has been named senior executive director of clinical research operations.

Val Stella, University Distinguished Professor of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, was quick to recognize Jensen when the topic of leadership arose. Stella has been at KU for 37 years and said this effort for NCI designation has the best chance of success that he’s seen, thanks in large part to Jensen’s leadership.

Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little asked what the timeline is for receiving word about KU’s application.

After it is submitted in 2011, a site review team will visit the KU Cancer Center, most likely in early 2012. The team will then write a report and suggest a score to the parent committee. That committee will meet later in the year and decide whether or not to accept the application.

“I’m committed to an outcome, to a destination, and we’re going to make it,” Jensen said.

Stadium expansion would provide unprecedented $40M for KU academics

Revenue from a proposed club-seating addition on the east side of Memorial Stadium would be directed to a $40 million commitment by Kansas Athletics Inc. to academic programs at KU, Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little and Athletics Director Lew Perkins have announced.

The project, which requires approval from the Kansas Board of Regents, has been submitted for inclusion on the regents’ Sept. 16-17 meeting agenda.

“I’m pleased to support this project because of its unprecedented $40 million investment in academics,” said Gray-Little. “Collegiate athletics provides a number of benefits to universities, both tangible and intangible, but there can be no question about the tremendous value of this commitment to KU students, teachers and researchers. I thank Athletics Director Lew Perkins for making this commitment, which shows how success on the field can translate into direct support for the academic mission.”

Gray-Little said specific allocations of the $40 million investment were yet to be determined, but it would support
students, faculty and academic programs. She has identified increasing the undergraduate graduation rate, enhancing KU’s scholarly and research profile and securing additional resources as the three initial goals she intends to pursue as chancellor.

The Gridiron Club would be housed in a tower on the east side of Memorial Stadium and would seat some 3,000 fans. It is designed to complement the existing west side scholarship suites and enhance the appearance of the stadium from neighborhoods to the east. Revenues from the sale of seats in the club are expected to finance the project’s $34 million construction cost and the $40 million commitment to academic programs. Pricing and other details on seating in the club will be announced at a later date.

“We are impressed with Chancellor Gray-Little’s vision for the University of Kansas and want to do our part to make it a reality,” said Perkins. “Everyone at Kansas Athletics believes that the academic success of the university is paramount, so we’re excited to make this investment in the future academic success of KU. We encourage others to invest in the future of this great university.”

Students from the Potter Lake Project and staff from the Kansas Biological Survey and Design and Construction Management place an aerator in Potter Lake. Three aerators and a skimmer were placed in the lake to help fish survive and remove excessive plant growth. Pictured, from left, are Russell Benke, electrical engineer, Design and Construction Management; Jason Hering, student; Matt Nahrstedt, student

Mike Krings/University Relations
Group takes steps to clean up Potter Lake, help fish survive, thrive

Aerators, skimmer installed in campus pond

The fish were supposed to eat the excessive vegetation in Potter Lake. But the plants turned out to be too prolific, and it wasn’t a fair fight, so a group of concerned students and staff stepped in to help the Asian grass carp clean up the venerable campus lake.

The Potter Lake Project, a student group dedicated to preserving and restoring the historic part of campus, set out on the lake late last month with the help of staff from the Kansas Biological Survey and Design and Construction Management to install three underwater aerators.

The aerators, anchored by concrete at three points around the lake, will help oxygenate the water. The aeration system forces air through a diffuser creating small bubbles that rise to the surface. The bubbles introduce oxygen to the bottom of the pond and mix the water layers. Excessive plant life and decayed material was taking too much oxygen from the water, causing some of the fish to die. Fourteen adolescent Asian grass carp were placed in the lake in March as part of the Potter Lake project. The fish were introduced to eat the vegetation and decomposing plant material that routinely expanded, causing water quality and odor problems. On the day the group dropped the aerators, a fine green layer of mossy sludge composed of small floating plants duckweed and watermeal covered the lake’s surface. A student helping in the effort compared its appearance to that of a golf course green.

“Adding the grass carp is a biological control that is pretty benign,” Scott Campbell, a research associate with the Kansas Biological Survey, said when the fish were introduced. “They typically lounge around the shore, grazing on vegetation like a cow or a manatee.”

The fish were donated free of charge by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks. The students also installed a “skimmer” that will draw in water, filter out the green muck, and return it, clean, to the lake.

Matt Nahrstedt and Melissa Allen, students leading the effort, said the aerators and skimmer should make a noticeable difference in
the lake by early September. The installation of the aerators is one step in maintaining a healthy ecological balance for the long-term life of the campus lake. Last spring the group completed a master plan regarding the lake’s vegetation, water quality and ecology and presented it to campus administrators, with recommendations for future measures.

“This is an in-between step of sorts, as opposed to dredging the lake, which would be ideal, but would cost thousands of dollars,” Allen said. “This is a cost-effective way of rejuvenating the lake.”

KU honors faculty with $5,000 Kemper fellowships

Most students probably expect discussion of the syllabus and expectations on the first day of class. A handful got a visit from new Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little and a camera crew informing them they were in class with one of KU’s best educators.

Gray-Little and fellow administrators made several surprise visits to classes over the first few days of class to present W.T. Kemper Fellowships. In all, 20 faculty members will receive the fellowships. The fellowships, determined by a faculty panel, recognize faculty members for outstanding teaching and advising and come with a $5,000 award. This year’s Lawrence campus winners are listed below. Kempers at the KU Medical Center are still being presented.

• Ruth Ann Atchley, associate professor of psychology  
• Cindy Berrie, associate professor of chemistry  
• Byron Caminero-Santangelo, associate professor of English  
• William Comer, associate professor of Slavic languages and literature  
• Stuart Day, associate professor of Spanish and Portuguese  
• Leisha DeHart Davis, associate professor of public administration  
• Heather Desaire, associate professor of chemistry  
• Sandra Gray, associate professor of anthropology  
• Andrea Greenhoot, associate professor of psychology  
• John Hachmeister, associate professor of visual art  
• Audrey Lamb, assistant professor of molecular biosciences  
• Todd Little, professor of psychology  
• Deborah Smith, associate professor of ecology and evolutionary biology  
• Kent Spreckelmeyer, professor of architecture and urban planning  
• Susan Stagg-Williams, associate professor of chemical and petroleum engineering  
• Leslie Tuttle, assistant professor of history

Bios of Kemper recipients and videos of the presentations are online at http://www.news.ku.edu/2009/august/21/kemper3.shtml.
KU center lands nearly $2 million to take part in NASA study of ice sheets

Researchers from the Center for Remote Sensing of Ice Sheets received almost $2 million in funding to take part in NASA’s Operation ICE Bridge program.

Earlier this year, attention focused on the coming end of NASA’s ICESat satellite, which will cease observations sometime this year. Operation ICE Bridge is intended to continue research until a new satellite can be launched. CReSIS and KU have been chosen to be a major part of that effort.

As part of Operation ICE Bridge, three CReSIS radar systems will fly along with sensors from other institutions aboard a NASA DC-8 aircraft this fall to characterize Antarctic ice sheets, ice shelves, outlet glaciers and regional sea ice.

“It is also a testament to the quality of work pioneered by CReSIS Director Prasad Gogineni for more than 15 years in the field of radar echo sounding of the polar ice sheets. Our capability to meet NASA’s requirements is possible, in part, thanks to prior funding from NASA and the National Science Foundation.”

Between Oct. 15 and Nov. 21, approximately 18 science missions of about 11 hours each will be flown from a combination of high and low altitudes. The missions will be based out of Punta Arenas, Chile, and will fly over the Antarctic peninsula, the West Antarctic Ice Sheet and other regions in that area. This will be the first of several Antarctic campaigns planned for the next few years.

The radar data collected during the CReSIS missions, together with data collected by laser altimeters and other onboard sensors, are intended to provide critical ice thickness data on the properties of the rapidly changing ice streams and for the sea ice.

Along with the benefits from an environmental and scientific point of view, Allen points out that grants such as this lead to better research and results in the future.

“Work of this kind benefits KU and CReSIS as it allows us to advance the state-of-the-art while training the next generation of scientists and engineers,” he said. “Also, because of this work we will be well positioned for future opportunities requiring these technologies and capabilities.”

CReSIS is a Science and Technology Center established by the NSF in 2005 with the mission of developing new technologies and computer models to measure and predict the response of sea level change to the mass balance of ice sheets in Greenland and Antarctica. CReSIS provides students and faculty with opportunities to pursue research in a variety of disciplines; to collaborate with world-class scientists and engineers in the United States and abroad; and to make meaningful contributions to the ongoing, urgent work of addressing the impact of climate change.
Tuition assistance granted to 174 staffers

The Tuition Assistance Program has granted 174 awards this fall to staff members. The program provides assistance to qualifying employees to take one course up to five credit hours per semester. Details are online at http://www.hreo.ku.edu/benefits_pay/benefits_info/tuition_assistance.

For more information, contact Mary Karten at 864-7346 or mkarten@ku.edu. The deadline for applying for assistance for the spring semester is Nov. 6. Tuition assistance recipients, their positions and departments are listed below:

Usibaka "Gbaike" Ajayi, adviser, education; Daniel Alam, information specialist I, administration and finance; Patrice Anderson, administrative associate sr., Facilities Operations; Christie Appelhans, assistant to the dean, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Deanne Arensberg, administrative associate, Student Health Services; Cori Ast, communications coordinator, Dole Institute of Politics; Heather Attig, program assistant, University Relations; Alex Baker, information specialist I, social welfare; Nicole Banman, administrative professional, Kansas Public Radio; Rochelle Bass-Montgomery, administrative professional, graduate studies; Kimberly Bates, coordinator, Academic Achievement and Access Center; Cynthia Beall, program assistant, Higuchi Biosciences Center;

Loren Bennesh, grant monitor, Institute for Policy and Social Research; Mara Bertsch, administrative associate, Student Health Services; Sam Billen, administrative associate sr., study abroad; Emmanuel A. Birdling, program assistant, African/African-American studies; Mark Bomgardner, program manager, Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center; Amy Borton, administrative associate, aerospace engineering; Boone Bradley, systems specialist, Center for Research on Learning; Marisa Bregman, program assistant, Lied Center; Keith Bryant, custodian, Recreation Services; Allison Carfagna-Bonga, administrative associate sr., electrical engineering and computer science; Melissa Caywood, medical staff professional, Student Health Services; Nicole Chapman, administrative associate sr., College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Monica Claassen-Wilson, information specialist I, libraries; Stacy Cohen, project coordinator, Center for Research on Learning; Matthew Cook, technology support tech, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Elizabeth Crickard, project manager, social welfare; Rachel Crist, program assistant, Applied English Center; Joseph Custer, associate librarian, law library; Luke Daniels, maintenance/service worker, Facilities Operations; Cynthia Davis, administrative associate sr., Army ROTC; Luz Angelica Dean, custodian, housing maintenance; Lindsey Deaver, adviser, mathematics; Erin Depperschmidt, graphic designer, Lied Center; Bailey DeReus, adviser, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Jeanne Disney, project coordinator, Center for Research on Learning; Carol DiVibbiss, administrative associate sr., University Career Center; Jeremy Early, assistant director, Student Financial Aid; Richard Edginton, program assistant, education; Martha Elford, project coordinator, Center for Research on Learning; Clinton Everhart, assistant director, Student Financial Aid; Ed Foley, coordinator, Edwards Campus; Aimee Garcia, accountant, Comptroller's Office; Jennifer Gay, program specialist I, Student Financial Aid; Allison Gill, interpreter, Academic Achievement and Access Center;
Rebecca Gillam, project coordinator, education; Kim Glover, trainer, libraries; Howard Graham, coordinator, athletics; Randi Hacker, project coordinator, Center for East Asian Studies; David Hageman, information specialist I, electrical engineering and computer science; Ariel Heckler, administrative assistant, Transportation Research Institute; Troy Heidner, information specialist I, electrical engineering and computer science; Daniel Hellebust, information specialist I, Center for Remote Sensing of Ice Sheets; Kristi Henderson, coordinator, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Justin Henning, information specialist I, University Relations; Charles Zachary Henry, information systems analyst, Information and Telecommunication Technology Center; John Hindes, extension assistant, Continuing Education; Lavonne Holmgren, project coordinator, Center for Research on Learning; Xiaolin Charlene Hu, education support technologist, Continuing Education; Annette Wendy Huggins, administrative associate, Kansas Public Radio; Heidi Hulse, adviser, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Maud Humphrey, administrative associate sr., history of art; Stephen Ingalls, associate director, Center for Remote Sensing of Ice Sheets; Jane Irungu, associate director, African/African-American studies; Lucas Jacobsen, administrative associate sr., mechanical engineering; Tobin Jennings, program assistant, Center for Research on Learning; Jessica Lea Johnson, project coordinator, Spencer Museum of Art; Anne Madden Johnson, information systems supervisor, business; David Keith Johnson, research assistant, bioinformatics; Stephen Johnson, research associate, Tertiary Oil Recovery Project; Christopher A. Jones, coordinator, athletics; Kevin Kenn, accountant, Comptroller's Office; Emily Kennedy, administrative associate sr., Institute for Policy and Social Research; Sarah Kerwin, administrative associate sr., Parking and Transit; Rose Kopf, maintenance/service worker, Spencer Museum of Art; Elisa Krapcha, program assistant, Admissions and Scholarships; Alice Ming-Hsiang Kuo, program assistant, Transportation Research Institute; Jennie Landrum, administrative associate sr., Parking and Transit; Linda LaPierre, administrative associate, education; Kirk Larson, hazardous waste technician, environment, health and safety; Melody Lawrence, administrative associate sr., education administration; Crystal Leal, administrative associate, electrical engineering and computer science; Angela Lenahan, administrative associate sr., Parking and Transit; Amy Leyerzapf, assistant director, athletics; Katherine Logan, administrative associate, public administration; Ashley Lonnberg, administrative associate sr., engineering; Robert Anthony Lopez, coordinator, study abroad; Chris Lorenzen, information specialist I, Bureau of Child Research; Feloniz Lovato-Winston, administrative associate, business; Elizabeth Luther, accountant, International Programs; Teresa MacDonald, project director, Natural History Museum; Peter Macfarlane, assistant scientist, Kansas Geological Survey; Susan E. MacNally, assistant director, research and graduate studies; Margaret Mahoney, administrative associate sr., Dole Institute of Politics; Matthew Maksimowicz, instrumentation technician, Transportation Research Institute; Diana Marrs, education support technologist, Edwards Campus; Nora McAfee, program assistant, education; Brenton McCall, safety and security, Public Safety Office; Michelle McCarty, animal science worker, Animal Care Unit; Debbie McCord, coordinator, social welfare; Lucy McGilley, director, program coordination, engineering; Jenny Memmott, executive assistant, provost's office; William Metz, maintenance/service worker, KU Memorial Unions; Peggy Miksch, technical assistance officer, Bureau of Child Research; Paul Mobiley, program assistant, admissions and scholarships; Elizabeth Mole, maintenance/service worker, Facilities Operations; Melinda Montgomery, lecturer, mathematics; Julie Morris, research assistant, Bureau of Child Research; John Mulvihill, accountant, engineering; Joseph "Eddie" Muñoz, administrative associate, University Advising Center; Doug
Nickel, adviser, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Nathan Oborny, systems software analyst, chemical and petroleum engineering; Moira Ozias, assistant director, KU Writing Center; Anna Paradis, administrative associate sr., engineering; William Parrott IV, information specialist I, Student Success Technology Services; Elizabeth "Elise" Patrick, administrative assistant, Student Success; Margaret Perkins-McGuinness, development director, Spencer Museum of Art; Voneita Peterson, administrative associate sr., business; Jennifer Phillips, operations manager, environment, health and safety; Adam Pousson, information specialist I, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Amy Price, administrative associate sr., graduate studies; Ashleigh Price, research assistant, Higuchi Biosciences Center; Tamara Radohl Sigley, program assistant, social welfare; Angela Rathmel, library assistant, libraries; Adam Reilly, library assistant, libraries; Nicole Richardson, research assistant, Bureau of Child Research; Lauren Roberts, adviser, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Daniel Rolf, manager/administrator, architecture, design and planning; Drew Rosdahl, information specialist I, Bureau of Child Research; Kathy Rose-Mockry, program director, Emily Taylor Women’s Resource Center; Jon Rossillon, manager/administrator, environment, health and safety; Amber Rowland, project coordinator, Advance Learning Technologies in Education Consortium/Center for Research on Learning; Carol Rudolph, administrative associate sr., University Registrar; Barbara Russell, administrative assistant, Office of Institutional Research and Planning; Rafael Sanchez, administrative associate, pharmacy;

Jennifer Schmitendorf, administrative associate sr., Continuing Education; Sarah Scholle, administrative associate sr., Admissions and Scholarships; Brent Schultz, administrative associate, Applied Behavioral Science; Jeff Severin, manager, Center for Sustainability; Rhonda Sharp, associate administrator, Student Success; Nicolas Shump, assistant director, Admissions and Scholarships; Rachel Sorrels, administrative associate sr., Student Health Services; Patricia Soucy, coordinator, engineering; Georgiana Spear, assistant director, business; Sondra Speer, administrative associate, philosophy; Kim Spencer, program assistant, Lied Center; William Steele, administrative associate sr., graduate studies; Mary Strickell, administrative associate sr., psychology; Diane E. Taveggia, lecturer, Applied English Center; Annette Tatemeyer, program assistant, engineering management; Jean Thoma, associate, athletics; Tegan Thornberry, program assistant, athletics; Gail Tiemann, project coordinator, Center for Research on Learning;

Phuong Tran, systems specialist, ALTEC/CRL; Paul Trana, program associate, education administration; Kristin Trendel, director, New Student Orientation; Savanna Trent, administrative associate, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; M. Altaf Uddin, systems specialist, law; Jayme Uden, assistant director, housing; Danielle Vanderbilt, information specialist I, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Christina Van Nostrand, program assistant, Kansas Public Radio; Leslie von Holten, program assistant, Center for East Asian Studies; Michael "Shawn" Wade, library assistant, libraries; Patricia A. Wakolee, coordinator, University Advising Center; Dara Wampler, administrative professional, Admissions and Scholarships; Tatyana V. Wilds, coordinator, Russian, East European and Eurasian studies; Linda J.B. Wiley, administrative associate, molecular biosciences; David Wiley, coordinator, study abroad; Cathleen Wilkinson, accountant, student financial aid; Sheree Willis, executive director, Confucius Institute; Celeste Morgan Yaluk, administrative associate sr., International Programs; Kristin Zachrel, library assistant, libraries; Xiaobin Zuo, research associate, chemistry.
Researchers receive $1M to study obesity, self-advocacy for individuals with disabilities

Two U.S. Department of Education grants worth more than $1 million have been awarded to researchers at the Life Span Institute. The projects focus on weight loss and self-advocacy.

Muriel Saunders and Amanda Reichard, assistant research professors, and Richard Saunders, senior scientist, received $599,467 for three years to implement and study a weight loss program for people with physical disabilities in Wichita. The project will educate participants about a diet for weight loss and weight management, and then evaluate the health outcomes of resulting weight loss. All three researchers are associated with the Research and Training Center on Independent Living at the Life Span Institute. Richard and Muriel Saunders also are affiliated with the Life Span Institute at Parsons and KU’s Center for Weight Management and Physical Activity, which will take part in the grant. Researchers at the KU Medical Center are also co-investigators on the project.

Glen W. White, professor of applied behavioral science, Jean Ann Summers, research professor, and Cathy Rooney Howland, project coordinator, received $598,770 for three years to develop a training technology based on the Americans with Disabilities Act. The training will provide students with disabilities the knowledge and skills to acquire the ADA accommodations they need to succeed in postsecondary educational settings. White directs the Research and Training Center on Independent Living, where Howland is also on the staff. Summers is with the Beach Center on Disability. KU’s eLearning Design Lab will partner on this project, under the direction of Ed Meyen.

Both grants respond to the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research field-initiated program of research. Institute projects support the full inclusion and integration into society, employment, independent living and economic and social self-sufficiency of individuals with disabilities.

Losing It

Obesity impacts all aspects of life, whether a
person is disabled or not. Being overweight or obese are also independent risk factors for chronic diseases such as cancer, diabetes, hypertension and cardiovascular disease.

People with physical disabilities have obesity rates that exceed those for the general population. They are more likely to have limited physical activity and to consume energy dense diets, which include foods that have a large number of calories in a small volume. But research on weight loss and management for people with physical disabilities has been limited.

The weight loss project will compare the effectiveness of a specially designed diet to a “usual care” diet. It is modeled on a highly successful three-year pilot investigation nearing completion in northeast and south-central Kansas on weight loss in individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including those with physical disabilities. That project was supported by a grant from Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Study participants will follow a diet for weight loss and maintenance, and will receive encouragement to participate in a physical activity program appropriate for their physical abilities. The cost and public policy implications of weight loss will be considered as well. Health care usage patterns and improvement in secondary health outcomes – such as diabetes and hypertension – will be analyzed through Kansas Medicaid claims data.

**Getting to Yes**

In addition to the other benefits of a college education, research has shown that people with disabilities are more likely to be employed if they complete post-secondary education. To improve their success rate in college, however, most students need to learn self-advocacy skills that will also serve them well in employment and other post-school settings.

The accommodations training technology project is designed to improve students’ self-advocacy skills and knowledge about their legal rights and responsibilities under the ADA. College students who have disabilities don’t always know what they are entitled to under this law, nor how to request accommodations from their teachers or institutions. While students are entitled to receive reasonable classroom accommodations, they must request them first.

The level of self-advocacy that students with disabilities need in college settings can be intimidating, though. In elementary and secondary schools they likely had teachers and school specialists arrange support services for them as part of their individualized education plans, in addition to involvement from their parents.

The project will provide information and training to students through a state-of-the-art interactive computer program that meets the learning preferences of
Committee formed to help inform furlough plan

Group to guide policy, should measure be necessary

A committee of faculty and staff from the Lawrence and Edwards campuses is developing recommendations for a plan to implement furloughs, should they become a necessary step in dealing with the ongoing budget crisis.

Interim Provost Danny Anderson appointed the Furlough Plan Development Committee in early August. The group is meeting bi-weekly through the end of this month and will deliver recommendations for a plan to Anderson in early October. Diane Goddard, vice provost for finance, is chair of the committee and said the group will make recommendations it hopes will be included in a plan, whether furloughs are necessary soon or in the future.

“We’re working with an eye toward a plan that may not even be necessary now, but could be implemented in five to 10 years if we see another budget crisis,” Goddard said.

Committee members strongly encourage any faculty or staff members with feedback, questions or ideas to contact them, Goddard said.

Committee members are Stuart Bell, dean of the School of Engineering; Barbara Romzek, interim vice provost for academic affairs; Pamela Bray, assistant dean, Edwards Campus; John Stratton, president of University Senate and associate librarian; Lisa Wolfwendel, president of Faculty Senate and professor of educational leadership and policy studies; Jeannette Johnson, president of Unclassified Senate and assistant to the provost; Dennis Constance, president of University Support Staff Senate and custodial supervisor, Facilities Operations; Lori Reesor, associate vice provost for Student Success; Linda Sadler, assistant vice provost for research and graduate studies; Mason Heilman, student body president; and Richard McKinney, associate vice provost and budget director. Ola Faucher, director, Human Resources and Equal Opportunity; and Rose Marino, associate general counsel, are advising and assisting the committee.

The committee is reviewing furlough plans from other universities and discussing aspects of plans that may or may not work for KU.
Goddard said it is unlikely a “one-size-fits-all” plan will be developed, but considerations are being made for the unique needs of KU.

“We’re trying to be sensitive to the needs of campus units, as well as the needs of individuals,” she said.

One likely recommendation is that staff whose annual salary is below a certain amount will be exempt from furloughs. An exact amount has not been determined. The possibility was mentioned in budget forums last semester.

Although Goddard said she hopes furloughs will not be necessary this fiscal year, the university must prepare for the possibility. Faculty and unclassified professional staff were told of the possibility in annual salary notifications that were sent in July. University support staff can see the notification in the Kyou portal on the employee info tab.

Goddard stressed that all employees can provide input to the committee as the recommendations are developed. Deans, directors and department chairs will have a chance to comment on it. Once recommendations are made, and as a plan is developed, they will be vetted by the provost’s office, as well as the chancellor’s office, general counsel and Human Resources and Equal Opportunity as a furlough plan is developed. The committee will share its recommendations and Lawrence campus leaders and will discuss the plan with leaders at the KU Medical Center.

The KU Medical Center has also formed a committee that will make recommendations to Barbara Atkinson, executive vice chancellor, within a similar time frame. Karen Miller, senior vice chancellor and dean of the schools of allied health and nursing, is chair of the committee. She said the committee is also making recommendations should furloughs become necessary in the future.

Ed Phillips, vice chancellor for administration, is helping lead the committee. School of Medicine members are: Mark Cohen, surgical; Mark Fisher, biochemistry and molecular biology; Gary Gronseth, neurology and Faculty Council chair elect; Tom Imig, molecular and integrative physiology; Garold Minns, internal medicine and associate dean of academic and student affairs-Wichita; Scott Moser, family community medicine-Wichita and Education Council chair; Ken Peterson, biochemistry and molecular biology and Faculty Council vice chair elect; Peggy Petroff, anatomy and cell biology; Donna Sweet, internal medicine and promotion and tenure chair-Wichita; and Tim Williamson, internal medicine and Faculty Council chair.

School of Nursing and School of Allied Health committee members are: Debb, School of Allied Health Steering Committee; Kathy Fletcher, School of Nursing; Shonte Hutson, assistant director, clinical learning lab staff, School of Nursing;
Patricia Kluding, School of Allied Health; and Lou Loescher-Junge, assistant dean for administration, schools of allied health and nursing. Susan Carlson, School of Allied Health and co-chair of KU Medical Center's Faculty Assembly, is governance representative; Samantha Machen is a student representative; and Gregory Kopf, executive director of the KU Medical Center's Research Institute is the research institute representative.

“All committee members are interested in hearing from their colleagues and strongly encourage people to reach out to them with any suggestions or feedback they might have,” Goddard said.

Comments and suggestions can also be sent to provost@ku.edu.

Provost search committee named

Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little has announced a 16-member committee that will conduct a national search for the next provost and executive vice chancellor for the Lawrence campus.

Danny Anderson is serving as interim provost until a permanent hire is made for the position. He succeeded Richard Lariviere, who left KU earlier this year to become president of the University of Oregon.

Mabel Rice, the Fred and Virginia Merrill Distinguished Professor of Advanced Studies, will chair the committee. Other committee members are: Ann Brill, dean of the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications; Marta Caminero-Santangelo, chair of the English department; Lisa Friis, associate professor of mechanical engineering; Diane Goddard, vice provost for business and finance; John Hachmeister, associate professor of visual art; Bob Hanzlik, professor of medicinal chemistry; Christopher Haufler, chair of the ecology and evolutionary biology department; Mason Heilman, student body president; Jeannette Johnson, assistant to the provost and president of Unclassified Senate; Paul Koch, professor of business; Stacy Leeds, professor of law; Terry Proctor, specialist, Human Resources and Equal Opportunity; Paul Terranova, vice chancellor for research, KU Medical Center; Milton Wendland, graduate student; and Lisa Wolf-Wendel, professor of educational leadership and policy studies and president of Faculty Senate.
KU encourages precautions for faculty, staff to deal with H1N1 flu

University officials are urging faculty, staff and students who experience flu-like symptoms to stay home to help prevent the spread of infections. A strong resurgence of the H1N1 (swine) flu virus is expected this fall.

Administrators are also urging a series of proactive precautions such as washing hands frequently, coughing and sneezing into a sleeve instead of a hand and getting a seasonal H1N1 flu vaccination shot when available.


Interim Provost Danny Anderson recently encouraged faculty members to develop strategies to ensure continuity in academics if significant absences become necessary. Specifically, Anderson urged the following strategies:

• Develop contingency plans for dealing with student absences because of flu, both during the semester and final examinations.

Avoid policies that encourage infected individuals to come to class or examinations.

• Do not compromise academic standards; do think about alternatives for effectively accomplishing your course goals under unpredictable circumstances.

• Be attentive to your own health and encourage departmental planning to deal with possible illness among faculty and GTAs.

• Include links on your syllabus or course Blackboard site for the KU Pandemic Response Plan and the “Personal Guide to Protect Against Flu.”
English professors secure grants from National Endowment for Humanities

Programs will support elementary, secondary educators

Two faculty members from the Department of English have received grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities to support programs for teachers.

Maryemma Graham, professor, received a $200,000 grant to conduct a two-week institute on “Native Son” author Richard Wright for 30 secondary school teachers. Janet Sharistanian, associate professor, earned a $139,654 grant for a five-week seminar on the United States and World War I for 16 elementary and secondary teachers.

KU received two of the three NEH grants recently awarded to projects in Kansas. A third grant went to the Kansas Humanities Council for a project focused on the state’s history. All three grants in Kansas received an NEH “We the People” designation for their efforts to strengthen the teaching, study and understanding of American history and culture.

Graham’s project, Making the Wright Connection: Native Son, Black Boy and Uncle Tom’s Children, will be offered July 11 to 24. Teachers will explore Wright’s books within their historical contexts. The institute, sponsored by KU and the Project on the History of Black Writing, based at KU, follows the 2008 national and international events commemorating the 100th anniversary of Wright’s birth.

KU faculty working with Graham include Madison Davis Lacy, associate professor of film and media studies, and Randal Jelks, associate professor of American studies. Visiting scholars include Jerry W. Ward Jr. of Dillard University in New Orleans and Howard Rambsy of Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville.

The institute will include three public events, two of which will be at the Hall Center for the Humanities: a screening of the film “Soul of a People: Writing America’s Story,” directed by David Taylor, and a talk by Wright’s eldest daughter, Julia. The 1995 film “Richard Wright: Black Boy,” directed by Lacy, will be shown at KU’s Sabatini Multicultural Resource Center.
Participating teachers will help prepare a digital sourcebook on the Web for educators. Jim Jewell and Mark Crabtree of KU Media Productions will create the interactive Web resource. The sourcebook will include links to Wright conferences and previously unused film footage housed at Mississippi Public Broadcasting in Jackson. Ultimately, teachers and students will be able to produce a wide range of materials from videos and podcasts to musical raps and photo essays about Wright through the digital sourcebook.

The institute will include a day-long visit to the American Jazz Museum in Kansas City, Mo., a presentation at the Spencer Museum of Art by Saralyn Reece Hardy, director, titled “Reading Wright Through Images and Text” and a workshop on “Reading Richard Wright through Material Culture” by Lawrence textile artist Marla Jackson.

For more information about Making the Wright Connection, visit www.richardwrightat100.ku.edu.

Sharistanian’s project, America and The Great War: An Interdisciplinary Seminar in Literature and History, will be offered June 27 to July 30. Ted Wilson, professor of history, is co-directing the seminar in which participants will examine America’s relationship to World War I with a combination of literature, history and visual arts. Field trips are planned to the National World War I Museum in Kansas City, Mo., and Fort Leavenworth.

In addition, Sharistanian and Stephen Goddard, professor of art history and senior curator at KU’s Spencer Museum of Art, are planning an exhibition at the museum focused on art reflecting the impact of the war. Sharistanian also is working with John Staniunas, chair of the theatre department, to include a summer 2010 University Theatre production of the World War I play “Billy Bishop Goes to War.”

Annual dinner to recognize University Support Staff retirees

Thirty-five retiring employees will be honored at the 31st annual University Support Staff retirement dinner Sept. 24. The event honors employees for their service to KU and provides them with a memento of their time at the university.

The event will begin with a reception at 6 p.m. at the Big 12 Room in the Kansas Union. Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. Meals are
complimentary for the retiree, one guest and the departmental administrator who will introduce the retiree. The dinner will cost $13 for other guests. For more information, contact Mary Karten at Human Resources and Equal Opportunity, 864-7346.

Ola Faucher, director of Human Resources and Equal Opportunity, will give the welcome and introductions, and Danny Anderson, interim provost, will present the recognition of retirees and present mementos.

Retirees, their departments and years of service are below:

Priscilla Miller Abbott, Student Health Services, 26; Mary Acher, International Student and Scholar Services, 11; Alice E. Achten, Information Services, Information Technology, 12; Patricia M. Bame, Student Financial Aid, 31; Stanley G. Brown, housing maintenance, 20; Pamela A. Byrn, athletics, 36; Orlena Faye Carr, social welfare, 29; Patricia Y. Childress, KU Memorial Unions, 15; Robert E. Christensen, Bureau of Child Research, 31; Georgia Damis, East Asian languages, 28; Michael L. Flaig, Public Safety Office, 24; Richard E. Fowler, Facilities Operations, 36; Jane M. Gunther, Facilities Operations, 28; Carlena M. Haney, journalism, 15; Kathy Ann Horton; Information Services, Information Technology, 23; Mary Ann Huslig, Comptroller's Office, 31; Delbert E. Jarvis, Instructional Development and Support, 32; Randall L. Kern, Public Safety Office, 29; Norman V. Lawrence Jr., electrical engineering and computer science, 31; Nancie Jo Davis Lockwood, history, 15; Judith L. Pinegar, Student Health Services, 36; Georgia J. Porter, civil/environmental/architectural engineering, 39; Linda Kay Pritchard, Dole Institute of Politics, 17; Michael J. Riner, Public Safety Office, 32; Stephen C. Saunders, Facilities Operations, 20; Mary Sharp, KU Memorial Unions, 20; Roy L. Steadham, housing maintenance, 21; Ruth A. Swain, Continuing Education, 25; Marta M. Szucs, University Registrar, 8; Terrance R. Unfred, Facilities Operations, 31; Margie Irene Wilks, Facilities Operations, 19; Henry E. Wilks Sr., Facilities Operations, 16; Mary F. Williams, Comptroller's Office, 16; Andrea L. Yewell, Kansas Geological Survey, 24; Maxine Younes, Tertiary Oil Recovery Project, 33.

Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center hosts first graduation in new facility
Integrity Auditorium to house functions, training exercises

Kansas Attorney General Steve Six addressed new law enforcement officers Aug. 28 at the first graduation ceremony to be conducted in the newly constructed 800-seat Integrity Auditorium at the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center.

The center, a division of KU Continuing Education, is located one mile west and one mile south of Yoder, south of Hutchinson.

Six, who earned a law degree at KU, and other officials congratulated about 50 graduates of the 203rd basic training class.

The new auditorium is part of a $16.4 million two-phase capital improvement project.

Phase one began in January 2008 and was completed in July. It includes a three-story, 63-room residence hall with 126 beds, an 800-seat multipurpose training auditorium that can be divided into three training classrooms, a new front entrance reception area and additional parking. The new facilities were designed by Lawrence-based Treanor Architects and constructed by the Wichita-based Law Company at a cost of $9.5 million.

Phase two, which began in July, will feature a 1.78-mile emergency-vehicle drivers’ training course with concrete, asphalt and gravel surfaces and a skid pad; training classroom; vehicle storage buildings; a tactical-shooting training building and other facilities improvements.

A formal dedication ceremony is planned following the completion of the second phase in January.

Established by the Kansas Legislature in 1968, the center trains the majority of municipal, county and state law enforcement officers in Kansas and oversees the training of the remaining officers at seven authorized and certified academy programs operated by local law enforcement agencies and the Kansas Highway Patrol.

About 350 officers enroll annually in the 14-week basic training program. In 2008, the center offered continuing education and specialized training to more than 4,700 Kansas officers. Funding for the training center is generated from court docket fees from municipal and state courts. No funds from the state’s general revenue are used to operate the center.

College launches 'passport to the arts' program
KU’s new School of the Arts is offering an easy-to-get passport that will take patrons on a journey of campus and Lawrence arts communities without the hassles of international travel.

The Passport to the Arts program is part of a yearlong celebration designed to officially introduce the School of the Arts to the KU and Lawrence communities. Housed within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the School of the Arts was created from a reorganization of KU’s fine arts programs. The School of the Arts is home to four departments: dance, film and media studies, theatre and visual art.

“As a new participant in the arts in Lawrence, the School of the Arts is eager to use its resources to help promote the arts across the community and KU through the Passport to the Arts program,” said Liz Kowalchuk, associate dean for the School of the Arts. “The passport offers incentives for patronage of the arts and works to strengthen relationships between those in academic arts and community arts. I’m excited to bring together students, faculty and those in our vibrant arts community to celebrate all KU and Lawrence have to offer.”

The College’s official introduction of the School of the Arts and kick off to the Passport to the Arts program will begin with a celebration at 5 p.m. Sept. 24 at the Spencer Museum of Art. Attendees will have the opportunity to meet arts leaders, learn more about the new school and participate in drawings for tickets to exclusive performances and activities offered by the four departments.

“As part of the largest academic unit on campus, the School of the Arts has the opportunity to inspire and increase participation in the arts among the Lawrence and KU community,” said Gregory B. Simpson, interim dean of the College. “This partnership also offers fresh possibilities for collaboration between the arts and the broad disciplines of the College, paving the way for unique innovations and ideas.”

After participants obtain their passports at the kick off, they can earn stamps by attending events listed at www.artspassport.ku.edu. When individuals attend an eligible event, they will get a stamp in their passports. Those who collect one stamp at a KU or School of the Arts event and another stamp from a community arts event in a month will be eligible for that month’s coupon. If they collect three stamps from KU or School of the Arts events and three stamps from community arts events from October through April, they will be eligible for a free student-designed T-shirt and an invitation to an exclusive year-end celebration of the arts party.

A downloadable version of the passport is available at www.artspassport.ku.edu. They also can be picked up at partner locations throughout
Lawrence, including the Lied Center, Spencer Museum of Art, University Theatre, Lawrence Arts Center, Lawrence Community Theatre, Lawrence Public Library, Liberty Hall and Van Go Arts.