Bailey Bosc, an applied behavioral science major, spends time with a child enrolled in KU's Little Steps program. The program works with children with developmental disabilities to help intervene in problematic behavior.

**Little Steps, big progress**

**KU preschool program helps families treat problem behaviors**

Children born with autism, Down syndrome or mental retardation often struggle with severe problem behavior that complicates routine activities such as going to the bathroom, eating a meal or visiting the doctor.

“Problem behaviors interfere with daily living or quality of life,” said Claudia Dozier, assistant professor of
applied behavioral science. “They can be things from physical aggression — hitting, kicking or biting others — to self-injurious behavior like head-banging and self-biting. And property destruction, such as throwing toys, throwing over tables and ripping up materials. They also encompass feeding disorders and toileting difficulties.”

To help treat problem behavior and teach important skills, parents of kids with developmental disabilities in northeastern Kansas have a new option for the care and education of their preschoolers. “Little Steps” is a year-old early childhood intervention program on KU’s Lawrence campus. Using principles of applied behavioral analysis, Little Steps teams children with student teachers who implement individualized programs to improve kids’ social, self-care, motor and pre-academic skills.

“We look at ways in which children’s behavior interacts with their environment,” said Pamela Neidert, assistant professor of applied behavioral science at KU. “If there’s a problem with a behavior, we can figure out why it’s occurring and how we can rearrange the environment — meaning we change the type of things that the child is working on or how teachers are interacting with them, such that the behavior has a more socially appropriate outcome.”

For tuition that costs little more than a standard preschool, Little Steps provides one-on-one instruction five days a week for kids from ages 2 ½ to 7 years. At the same time, the program trains KU undergraduate students to become the next generation of applied behavior analysts. Little Steps is part of the Edna A. Hill Child Development Center in KU’s Department of Applied Behavioral Science.

Parents are integrated into the Little Steps program as much as possible, and parent training will be emphasized even more as the program matures.

“Parents participate in the initial assessment procedure and drive the specific goals that we end up working on with the kids,” Neidert said. “Then we hold biweekly team meetings so parents are aware of what the results are showing so far. Also, we hold monthly parent training meetings where we communicate with the parents what’s working with their children. We’d like to make sure that this becomes a larger component than it is and even offer parent training to the community at-large, where it’s not limited to the parents of kids in our care.”

In addition to making a difference in the lives of the children and parents now involved in the program, Little Steps is contributing to research in early childhood intervention.

Current investigations under way include assessment and treatment of severe problem behavior; increasing tolerance of medical examinations;
assessment and treatment of pediatric feeding disorders; and toilet training.

“We present our findings at regional and local conferences and also at a global conference held by the Association for Behavioral Analysis International,” said Dozier. “When our studies are completed, we also submit them to journals.”

Program founders Dozier and Neidert say future research efforts will focus on how children move from an early childhood intervention program like Little Steps into regular schooling.

“In our program, we don’t want to keep kids for a really long time,” said Dozier. “We want to teach them what they need to know to transition into kindergarten or first grade. We need to know where are they going, what are they expected to know and how to get them there as quickly as possible.”

Insurance premiums to rise as much as 8 percent

Co-pays, deductibles also up; enrollment under way

Health insurance premiums for KU employees will increase in 2011 as much as 8 percent, depending on the plan, coverage level and salary tier. Deductibles and coinsurance payments are on the rise as well.

Employer costs are going up 15 percent as well. Information about changes to the plans also can be found in materials send to employees by campus mail earlier this month. Those changes include:

- The age of eligible dependents who can be covered under the plan changed from age 23 to 26
- Plan A: increased deductible and coinsurance maximums as well as the office visit copayment
- Plan B: added deductible, increased coinsurance amount and maximum
- Plan C: new limited flexible spending account offered for dental and vision expenses only
- Health Care flexible spending account: over-the-counter drugs will require a doctor’s prescription to be considered reimbursable
- Prescription drug: oral cancer drugs will be covered in the same manner as IV cancer medications
- Autism coverage – new pilot program for 2011
Open enrollment for health insurance and flexible spending accounts is under way and will run through Oct. 31. Open enrollment changes will be effective Jan. 1. Information can be found in the distributed packets and online at http://www.hreo.ku.edu.

All employees enrolled in a health plan must complete the tobacco certification online during open enrollment. The certification process must be completed annually during open enrollment. If the tobacco certification is not completed, Kansas Health Policy Authority will default the employee into the non-disclosure category, which has an additional $40 per month tobacco user premiums.

Additionally, employees must participate in online open enrollment if, for plan year 2011, they want to enroll in a flexible spending account for health and/or dependent care, want to participate in the HealthyKIDS program or if they want to make changes to their health plans or to change who is covered under the plan.

Four open enrollment meetings are scheduled in which representatives from the Kansas Health Policy Authority will present information, answer questions and hear concerns and feedback. Faculty and staff are encouraged to attend one of the 90-minute meetings:

9 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., Oct. 13, Big 12 Room, Kansas Union
9 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., Oct. 21, Gridiron Room, Burge Union

The Kansas Health Policy Authority also will hold meetings in Lawrence for retirees with coverage, known as direct bill, under the state of Kansas health plan at 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Nov. 8 at the 4-H County Fairgrounds, Building 21. Open enrollment for retirees/direct bill is Nov. 15 through Dec. 15. Retirees can call the Direct Bill Call Center toll-free at (866) 541-7100 starting Nov. 1.

Additional meeting dates and locations for active employees and retired employees can be found at hreo.ku.edu.

Faculty and staff are encouraged to participate in online open enrollment early in October in case assistance is needed with the password to access the State of Kansas Employee Self-Service Center; if assistance is needed, contact the Help Desk in Topeka at (785) 296-1900 or toll free at (866) 999-3001. For benefits-related questions, contact the benefits open enrollment hotline at 864-7402, stop by 150 Carruth-O'Leary between 7:30 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday; or e-mail benefits@ku.edu.
Accesso is an online tool developed at KU to bring a new approach to Spanish-language teaching.

'Accesso' takes Spanish-language learning online, engages students

Web-based tool developed at KU changes methods of instruction

After navigating a new online tool for second-year Spanish classes, a student told Amy Rossomondo that it wasn’t anything like her high school Spanish class. That was exactly the point.

Rossomondo, assistant professor of Spanish and co-director of the Spanish Basic Language Program, teamed up with her colleagues to develop Accesso, a Web-based digital curriculum that structures critical exploration of the Spanish-speaking world so it is accessible to intermediate-level learners in third- and fourth-semester Spanish classes.
“It’s not a textbook,” Rossomondo said. “It’s not flat. It’s multidimensional, a hub.”

Amy Rossomondo

The site covers the basics such as grammar, pronunciation and verb conjugation, but does it in an interactive format that encourages students to get involved and not only learn the language but also learn about the people who speak it.

Now in its second year of use, Accesso was born after Rossomondo was asked to write a textbook. Frustrated by not being able to achieve the interactivity she desired, she decided to pursue an open access Spanish teaching tool. With the help of the Ermal Garinger Academic Resource Center, the Department of Spanish and Portuguese and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the site was born.

“We’re trying to give students the tools to access the world in Spanish,” Rossomondo said.

The site features information on Spanish-speaking areas of the world. Each section has cultural and historical information as well as examples of people speaking with accents and dialects native to the region. The goal is to promote the development of communicative ability and shed light on the millions of people who speak Spanish worldwide and their unique worldviews.

Technology is what sets the tool apart from traditional texts. Instructors develop curricular content based on their own research interests and develop lesson plans for class activities, which encourage students to contribute information about current events in Spanish-speaking regions. Interviews with international and Spanish-speaking KU students are featured throughout.

The site is used as a tool for intermediate classes but also can pay off for grad students, Rossomondo said. Grad students contribute content and can record and upload video of themselves teaching, which they can later show to prospective employers. There are also links to pages with bio information for student content creators.

The site is ever-changing.

“The nice thing is, because it’s digital, we’re able to update it constantly,” Rossomondo said. “It’s always going to be growing.”

Accesso is being used in new ways in the classroom. Many rooms are equipped with projectors to display the site, and the department, with the support of the College and the Ermal Garinger Academic Resource Center, is testing its use with iPads and Netbooks and will
survey students about which they liked better.

Students and instructors at KU aren’t the only ones who’ve seen the potential in Accesso. It’s now in use at Marquette University and is under consideration at other institutions as well.

Educational units within the site will present students with written passages, videos and presentations, followed by questions to test their comprehension. They are not just passages designed for memorizing dialog or learning how to order at a restaurant either. Students have shared material about topics such as immigration, earthquakes and politics.

“We tend not to shy away from controversy,” Rossomondo said. “Because we feel this is a university, and if you can’t have lively, open discussions here, where can you?”

Accesso is online at www2.ku.edu/~spanish/acceso/.

Follow Oread on Twitter

Content to be sent throughout the week

Oread used to show up in your mailbox, then in your inbox. Now, you can follow Oread wherever you go. That’s right, we’re Tweeting.

You can follow Oread on Twitter at twitter.com/kuoread. Tweeting (or Twitter) gives us another way to bring the news and accomplishments of KU faculty and staff to campus employees.

Be sure to follow us, we want to get the news about KU and its outstanding faculty and staff to as many people as possible. But also let us know if your school, unit or department is Tweeting as well. It’s our job to know what’s happening at KU, and this is one more way for us to share a dialog about our university.

Let us know what you’d like to see us Tweet about. Or feel free to contact us at oread@ku.edu.
The Biodiversity Institute, housed in Dyche Hall, will get a significant research boost thanks to a $1.5 million grant from the National Science Foundation and matching funds from KU.

**Grant, matching funds to help give Biodiversity Institute research power boost**

A prestigious four-year, $1.5 million federal stimulus grant, combined with funds allocated by KU, is expected to transform the research capabilities of KU’s Biodiversity Institute.

The grant from the National Science Foundation will fund major laboratory renovations, advance and modernize research facilities and increase the capacity for training graduate students in biodiversity science in
Dyche Hall, a 107-year-old building.

Specifically, the funding will

— Revamp a five-laboratory Genomics Complex for sequencing genetic material, cloning ancient DNA and preserving 80,000 genetic samples in a cryogenic facility

— Install new biotic and morphology analysis laboratories for exploring the body and skeletal attributes of organisms

— Install a modern Geographic Information Systems laboratory for analyzing and forecasting environmental phenomena, such as the potential spread of diseases and pests

— Install a modern, four-fold larger data server room to store and provide global access to biodiversity information

The grant is complemented by a $1.3 million project funded by KU for upgrading Dyche Hall’s electrical, cyber and heating and air conditioning service.

Construction is expected to begin in November and will conclude by 2013.

The National Science Foundation awarded the grant through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 under a program titled Academic Research Infrastructure: Repair and Renovation.

“This major investment in the Biodiversity Institute by the National Science Foundation speaks to our international and national leadership in research and research training in biodiversity science,” said Leonard Krishtalka, director of the Biodiversity Institute. “This project will keep KU and our scientists and students at the forefront of knowledge discovery of the life of the planet. It will enable us to tackle more complex research problems facing science and society, from deciphering the tree of life of animals and plants, to forecasting the effects of climate change on the potential spread of deadly diseases and harmful pests.”

The Biodiversity Institute, which includes the Natural History Museum, is a research center with a worldwide collection of 8 million plants and animals and 1.2 million archeological artifacts. More than 120 scientists and graduate students in the institute study the species, ecosystems and cultures of the planet to understand the history, composition, geography and evolution of life.
Enrollment data shows new class has highest ACT average in KU history

KU enrolled its most academically talented class yet, with this year’s freshmen having a record average ACT composite score of 24.9. The national average is 22.

A third of the Class of 2014 scored 27 or higher on the ACT. Nine KU students earned a perfect ACT score of 36.

The class’ high school grade-point average of 3.48 also is a record, topping a mark set five years ago.

“Our goal is always to attract the best and brightest students,” said Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little. “These talented and creative students who challenge each other are key to the educational experience. In addition to our outstanding faculty, our outstanding students are what make KU a great place to be.”

Staff from the Office of Admissions worked closely with high-achieving high school students to remind them of everything KU has to offer.

“Recruitment is a goal of everyone at KU,” Gray-Little said. “We will continue to reach out to students from Kansas, the nation and the world to remind them of the opportunities on Mount Oread.”

The university has initiatives under way to further strengthen KU’s appeal to the best and brightest students, including efforts to raise retention and graduation rates and place increased emphasis on undergraduate research and international study opportunities. New initiatives to identify students who need assistance and provide them with timely support also are being instituted.

Overall enrollment at the Edwards Campus held steady from the previous year, with two Edwards Campus programs, social work and business, seeing significant increases.

The School of Social Welfare was up 19 percent and the School of Business was up 14 percent. The increases reflect enrollment in undergraduate and graduate programs on the Edwards Campus.

“We are very pleased with the enrollment of our new bachelor’s of business administration program, which launched this past spring semester,” said Bob Clark, vice chancellor of the Edwards Campus. “The BBA enrollment reflects 86 percent of the business school enrollment increase here at Edwards.”

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The bachelor’s of business administration is the first program supported by the Johnson County Education and Research Triangle initiative.

Student diversity levels reach new high

KU posted record levels for overall diversity and academic talent for its incoming freshman class, and KU’s global appeal hit a new high with 2,345 international students from 112 countries, according to recently released data.

ACT scores for the incoming freshman class averaged a record 24.9, far above the national average of 22. A third of the Class of 2014 scored 27 or higher on the ACT. Nine KU students, up from five in 2009, earned perfect test scores on the ACT or SAT.

This is the most diverse student body in KU history as well, with 14.4 percent of students identifying as American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, African-American, Hispanic, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander or multiple ethnicities. That is up from 12.8 percent in 2009. KU again enrolled students from all 50 states as well as all 105 Kansas counties.

International enrollment increased 9.4 percent to its highest mark since 1993 with — for the first time — a majority of international students enrolled as undergraduates.

“We have enrolled our most academically talented class of freshmen overall,” said Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little. “This is not accidental. This reflects the incredible opportunities that KU offers high-ability students.

“We have initiatives under way to further strengthen KU’s appeal to the best and brightest students, such as improved retention and graduation rates and increased emphasis on the undergraduate research and international study opportunities. We also are implementing new initiatives to identify students who need assistance and providing them with timely support.”

Graduate enrollment increased by 2.2 percent, and enrollment at the medical center campus in Kansas City, Kan., was virtually unchanged with a 0.6 percent increase.

Overall enrollment declined a slight 1.8 percent from 2009 to 29,462. KU hit an all-time record enrollment level of 30,102 in 2008.

Despite tough economic times, enrollment by out-of-state students was stable at 31.6 percent. The overall undergraduate enrollment decline was 3.5 percent.
“Over the next decade, the university’s growing research profile and international programs will be a magnet for undergraduates by providing them unparalleled opportunities for critical thinking and experiential learning,” said Provost Jeffrey S. Vitter. “These KU experiences lead to increased job prospects and career opportunities over the long term.”

Higuchi-KU Endowment Research Awards honor outstanding KU, K-State professors

Two professors from KU and two from Kansas State University are recipients of prestigious Higuchi-KU Endowment Research Achievement Awards for 2010.

The awards, now in their 28th year, honor outstanding accomplishments in research by faculty members at KU and other Kansas Board of Regents institutions. The recognition program was established by Takeru Higuchi, a distinguished professor at KU from 1967 to 1983, and his late widow, Aya.

Four individual awards are given annually. They are named for former leaders of KU Endowment who played key roles in recruiting Higuchi to KU. Their longtime financial support of KU helped enhance university research throughout the state of Kansas.

Each award includes a plaque and a $10,000 grant for ongoing research efforts. The award money can be used for research materials, summer salaries, fellowship matching funds, hiring research assistants or other support related to research.

The 2010 Higuchi Award winners will be recognized formally at a ceremony and reception Nov. 3 at the Adams Alumni Center on the KU campus in Lawrence.

Balfour Jeffrey Award in Humanities and Social Sciences

Hagith Sivan
Hagith Sivan is a professor of history at KU. She joined the faculty in 1993 and is regarded as a world authority on the transition of the Mediterranean region from ancient times to the Middle Ages. Her 2008 work, “Palestine in Late Antiquity,” integrates multiple aspects of history – religion, law, politics and culture – and exemplifies her scholarly engagement and breadth of knowledge in all these subjects. Sivan has made a major contribution to the field of Christian-Jewish studies, reflecting her mastery of a wide range of sources and her literary skill and analytical originality.

**Dolph Simons Award in Biomedical Sciences**

Christian Schöeneich is a professor of pharmaceutical chemistry at KU and chair of the Department of Pharmaceutical Chemistry. He joined the faculty in 1992 and has achieved international prominence for his work on protein oxidation and its importance in human aging and various degenerative diseases, such as Alzheimer’s and diabetes. His discoveries have established him as one of the foremost experts on molecular oxidation and human diseases. In addition to his research — heavily supported by the National Institutes of Health — he serves as a consultant to industry, where his expertise assists in producing chemically stable pharmaceuticals.

**Irvin Youngberg Award for Applied Sciences**

T. G. Nagaraja is a University Distinguished Professor of Microbiology in the Department of Diagnostic Medicine/Pathobiology in the College of Veterinary Medicine at K-State. He joined the faculty in 1980, and his research on microbiology of the gastrointestinal tract in cattle has received national and international recognition. His research contributions are on the use of antibiotics in cattle feeds and causes and preventions of digestive disorders. His research on liver abscesses resulted in four U.S. patents, including one that led to the development of a vaccine. Recently, his research focus is on food safety in beef cattle, especially E. coli O157:H7, a major cause of human food-borne illnesses.

**Olin Petefish Award in Basic Science**

Chii-Dong Lin is a University Distinguished Professor of Physics at K-State and associate director of the J.R. Macdonald Laboratory. He joined the faculty in 1976 and is recognized internationally as a pioneering researcher in several important fields of atomic, molecular and optical physics. His
early career focused on the theoretical description of energetic ion-atom collisions. Later, he turned to studies of ultrafast, intense-field, short-pulse, laser-based physics and is regarded as a world leader in both fields. During his career, Lin has published more than 325 heavily cited scientific papers. In 2009, he organized and chaired a conference that attracted 250 of the world’s leading ultrafast/laser scientists to Manhattan, underscoring his international research reputation.

Fuerst to step down as dean of School of Business, remain on faculty

School of Business Dean William L. Fuerst will step down in June 2011 after serving 11 years, the second-longest tenure of any business dean. KU will launch a nationwide search this fall to select Fuerst’s successor.

Fuerst, who will remain on the faculty, was named dean in June 2000 after serving as associate dean of Texas A&M’s Lowry Mays School of Business. Only Frank Stockton, who served from 1924 to 1947, had a longer tenure as business dean at KU.

Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Jeff Vitter has asked Fuerst to participate in a new venture that seeks to expand connections with area corporations and to create opportunities for student internships, research collaborations and entrepreneurship.

“We appreciate the leadership Dean Fuerst has provided during his long tenure as dean,” Vitter said. “KU has benefited from the quality of our business school and the new programs it now offers. In the same way, I know that he will help improve our efforts in corporate relations.”

During Fuerst’s tenure as dean the school added five majors — finance, supply chain management, management and leadership, marketing and information systems — along with a minor in business and a master’s of business administration with a concentration in supply chain management offered with the U.S.
Army Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth. Academic programs added include the Center for Entrepreneurship and the Institute for International Business. The tenured faculty has grown from 43 to 62, allowing for additional enrollment in the popular business school courses. Enrollment has grown from 1,366 in 2000 to 1,680 now.

The school significantly increased access to business programs, learning experiences and courses for both business and nonbusiness students at KU. Notably, a third of all undergraduates in business now have a study abroad experience, and the Jayhawks on Wall Street and Xplore programs connect students with alumni in business in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Dallas and around the country.

The school also has strengthened relationships with alumni and the business community. Each major has a board of advisers made up of alumni in business in that area, providing expertise and contacts.

“I have been honored to be the dean, and I am very proud of the significant accomplishments in the School of Business during my years as dean,” Fuerst said. “My 30-year career in academia has focused on serving students. We are now better meeting the needs of our students, employers and greater academic community. The school is well-positioned for continued success in the future.”

Fuerst holds a doctorate in management information systems from Texas Tech University and a master’s of business administration from Northern Illinois University. His bachelor’s degree, in psychology, is from Knox College. He was a member of the Texas A&M University faculty from 1979 to 2000.

**Unclassified staff to have representation before regents for first time**

**Joint effort of KU, Wichita State University creates new council**

Unclassified staff, one of the largest groups of employees at Kansas Board of Regents institutions, will soon have representation in front of the board for the first time.
An effort by unclassified staff senates at KU and Wichita State University to form an Unclassified Staff Council was approved at the regents’ September meeting. Faculty, students and university support staff have had representation. The council will now report to the regents twice a year about issues of importance to unclassified staff.

Phil Wilke

KU and Wichita State are the only two regents institutions with governing bodies for unclassified staff. Phil Wilke, media coordinator at Kansas Public Radio and president of KU’s Unclassified Senate, said the idea started on campus a few years ago, when an Unclassified Senate member suggested contacting colleagues at other institutions to discuss concerns of staff. He then learned Wichita State was the only other school with a governing body similar to KU’s.

Wilke began working last spring with Grady Landrum, director of disability services and president of Wichita State’s Unclassified Senate to begin communication with the regents.

“We’re the largest group of employees, but we didn’t have anyone reporting to the regents about our concerns,” Landrum said. “We thought it would make sense to form a group represent us.”

The regents’ Council of Presidents — a board of chancellors and presidents — voted to approve the idea in July. It was then officially proposed to the regents and approved.

Wilke said the council’s first order of business would be contacting colleagues at all regents institutions, informing them of the new council and inviting them to take part in the council and form governance bodies for their unclassified staff. They will report on those efforts in January.

Because the group is brand new, Wilke and Landrum said, it is not yet clear exactly how the council will take shape but that the flexibility is an opportunity.

“Since we’re starting our group from scratch, it can grow into anything,” Wilke said. “We want to get this council up and running quickly and make it a viable organization.”

A representative from the institution that is chairing the President’s Council will chair the staff council. This year, Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little is chair, and Wilke assumed the chair role for the Unclassified Staff Council. The position will rotate annually.

Wilke said he hopes to set a meeting among council representatives next summer to discuss ideas and information to take back to their constituencies. He recommended anyone with questions about or ideas for the council
Search committee named for vice chancellor post

Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little has announced members of a search committee tasked with finding a vice chancellor for public affairs. The position will oversee University Communications, federal and state relations and community relations. The vice chancellor will integrate communications, strategic messaging, outreach and government relations to enhance coordination among those areas, and elevate KU’s reputation and presence across all key constituencies.

Ann Brill, dean of the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications, will chair the committee. Other members are:

- Kevin Boatright, director of research communications, KU Center for Research
- Jerome Davies, senior vice president for development, KU Endowment
- CJ Janovy director of communications, KU Medical Center
- Michael Kennedy, associate dean for Rural Medical Education, KU Medical Center
- Bill Lacy, director, Dole Institute of Politics
- Jim Marchiony, associate athletics director
- Fred Rodriguez, interim associate vice provost for diversity
- Jennifer Sanner, senior vice president for communications, KU Alumni Association
- Todd Cohen, director, University Relations

Employees, students, alumni tell KU story at Kansas State Fair
Nearly three dozen KU faculty and staff volunteered their time to attend the Kansas State Fair and work at the KU booth. The volunteers answered questions about the university, passed out KU goods and visited with fair attendees.

The volunteers came from all corners of the university. KU’s School of Medicine, both the Kansas City and Wichita branches, was well-represented, with more than a dozen volunteers. A sizable contingent of KU alumni also gave their time to help staff the booth, and a group of medical students known as the KU Medical Center Rural Health Interest Group were on hand to take blood pressures and provide blood sugar and other health-related services for visitors.

Volunteers and their departments are listed below.

• Abigail Arthur, School of Medicine-Wichita
• Nicole Banman, Kansas Public Radio
• Claudia Bode, Center for Environmentally Beneficial Catalysis
• Leslie Bretches, School of Medicine-Wichita
• Alicia Ann Clair, School of Music
• Richard Davis, Comptroller’s Office
• Mike Dealy, Kansas Geological Survey
• Gretchen Dickson, School of Medicine-Wichita
• Tyler Doyle, School of Medicine-Wichita
• Meghan Doyle, School of Medicine-Wichita
• Dennis Grauer, School of Pharmacy
• Annette Klaus, School of Medicine-Wichita
• Diana Koslowsky, Department of Public Administration
• Jennie Landrum, Parking and Transit
• Corinne Legleiter, Department of Student Housing
• Bev Mater, retired staff, General Counsel
• Shima McCurdy, Parking and Transit
• Cortney McKay, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
• Kathleen Meara, Office of Research and Graduate Studies
• Tara Morrow, KU School of Medicine-Wichita
• Linda Orr, Hall Center for the Humanities
• Charles Persinger, University Communications
• Allen Rawitch, Office of the Senior Vice Chancellor, KU Medical Center
• Cindy Roth, School of Medicine-Wichita
• Jason Rush, School of Medicine-Wichita
• Karen Schoor, Facilities Operations
• Kristin Scott, Academic Achievement and Access Center
• Jerri Shulda, School of Medicine-Wichita
• Laci Ulrich, Office of Research and Graduate Studies
National report expected to help guide, strengthen KU doctoral programs

The National Research Council has released a major new report that promises to strengthen graduate degree programs at KU and more than 200 other participating institutions nationwide.

The council’s “Assessment of Research Doctorate Programs,” more than five years in the making, is a data-driven study of the quality and characteristics of selected research doctorate programs in the U.S. The report contains comprehensive tables covering several thousand programs in 62 academic fields. Forty-one programs from KU’s Lawrence and Medical Center campuses were included in the study.

“Doctoral education is at the heart of a national research university such as KU,” said Sara Rosen, dean of graduate studies. “As a member of the Association of American Universities, KU is recognized as a strong research university. The defining characteristic of research universities is that they train doctoral students for careers in education, industry, government and other service organizations. The NRC report allows us to see how some of our programs compare nationally.”

KU currently offers doctoral degrees in 112 different fields of study. Its research portfolio and doctoral programs define it as the comprehensive research and doctoral education institution in the state.

“The NRC report provides a snapshot of the doctoral degree programs in the country, based on common characteristics,” Rosen said. “It establishes benchmarks we can use to measure our progress and set strategic priorities for graduate education at KU.”

The 2010 report is only the third produced since 1982. The new edition covers many more programs and provides far more data than either the 1982 or 1995 versions.

“The report is a rich source of data,” Rosen said, “because it’s based on faculty, student and outcomes measures at
the individual program level.” Although KU’s analysis of the data has only begun, indications are that KU programs assessed highly in 1995 continue to be strong. Examples at Lawrence include Spanish and Portuguese, ecology and evolutionary biology, chemistry; and clinical child psychology. Examples at the Medical Center include pharmacology, toxicology and therapeutics, anatomy and cell biology, and molecular and integrative physiology. KU will be analyzing the data in greater detail over the coming weeks.

“We will share the NRC report with deans and department chairs,” Rosen said, “because they need to know how we compare with other universities in each of the multiple program variables that went into the report.” She noted that the KU-specific data have been available internally since submittal to the council, and the KU data have already guided strategic planning in schools and departments. For example, the KU data have influenced selective hiring of new faculty to maintain or strengthen specific programs.

“Of course, the progress we’ve made since the data collection in 2005-06 doesn’t show up in the NRC report,” Rosen said, “but its reliance on data for comparison purposes has made the whole NRC process extremely valuable.”

Several of KU’s strong doctoral programs were not among those the council assessed, Rosen noted, including special education and speech-language-hearing sciences and disorders. In addition, emerging KU doctoral programs in bioengineering, public administration and bioinformatics were not a part of the study.

“The release of the NRC report has been highly anticipated,” said Deb Teeter, director of KU’s Office of Institutional Research and Planning. “Faculty and staff at KU made a concerted effort to ensure that we submitted a complete and accurate data set. The report gives us comparative data that we will mine for some time. It’s information that’s freely available to the public as well as current and prospective students. For comparison purposes, it provides a range of rankings among the 20 variables, rather than a single number.”

Homecoming 2010 to be a 'Rock Chalk Roadtrip'

Robert Eaton, chair emeritus of DaimlerChrysler Corporation, will lead a Rock Chalk Roadtrip for homecoming. Eaton is the grand marshal for this year’s homecoming parade, set for Oct. 23. A native of Arkansas City, Eaton earned his bachelor’s in mechanical engineering.
engineering from KU in 1963.

Homecoming events will begin Oct. 18, and will feature the football game against Texas A&M Oct. 23, at Memorial Stadium.

Alumna Margey Frederick and 10 student finalists for the Excellence in Community, Education and Leadership (ExCEL) Award will also be special guests at the parade. This year’s Spirit of 1912 Award will go to Frederick and her late husband, Bob, former athletics director. Margey completed her KU degrees in 1969 and 1978; Bob earned three KU degrees: a bachelor’s in chemistry in 1962, a master’s in education in 1964 and a doctorate in educational administration in 1984. The two student winners of the ExCEL Award will be announced at halftime of the football game.

KU’s homecoming tradition began in 1912 and has grown to include reunions and community service events. Groups gathering on the Hill during the weekend Oct. 22-24 will include the Black Alumni Chapter, the Class of 1985 and the Band Alumni Chapter. Community service activities begin with the Canstruction and Stuff the Bus events on Oct. 20 to collect canned food for the East Central Kansas Economic Opportunity Corp. The final event of the week, the Jayhawk Jog on Oct. 24, will benefit the United Way of Douglas County.

Homecoming 2010 is led by a 15-member student steering committee and two alumni association staff members: Nikki Epley, director of reunions, and Stefani Gerson, coordinator of student programs. For event details and a complete schedule, visit homecoming.ku.edu. Students and alumni also can follow homecoming activities and updates on Twitter (@KU_Homecoming) and Facebook (2010 KU Homecoming).