Presidential Update
March 23, 2009

Exciting things happen each day on the University of Central Missouri campus. These periodic updates share important news, recognitions, and progress reports regarding ongoing and new initiatives. Campus updates can be found at http://www.ucmo.edu/about/president/letters.cfm.

- Aaron Podolefsky

NCAA Division II Basketball Championship

Congratulations to the Mules basketball team and Head Coach Kim Anderson and his staff on winning the NCAA Division II South Central Region Championship. The team is in Springfield, MA, this week to compete in the NCAA Division II Elite Eight Basketball Championship. We wish them well!

Morrow-Garrison/Student Recreation and Wellness Center Groundbreaking Ceremony

I’d like to invite everyone to the groundbreaking ceremony for the renovation/construction of Morrow-Garrison/Student Recreation and Wellness Center. It is scheduled for 4 p.m. Thursday, April 23.

Byler Distinguished Faculty Award

Each year, UCM recognizes an outstanding faculty member through the presentation of the Byler Distinguished Faculty Award. The 2009 recipient will be announced during a reception at 3:30 p.m. Friday, April 10, in Elliott Union 234A, and be honored during the 2009 spring undergraduate commencement ceremonies. The award is named for William H. Byler, an inventor, author and teacher who graduated from UCM in 1927 with a major in chemistry and physics. He established an endowment fund to provide annual recognition for distinguished faculty performance, evidenced by teaching, scholarly or creative activity and professional related service.
Missouri’s 2009 Gold Star Schools

One of UCM’s charter schools, Academie Lafayette, is the first charter school to receive Missouri’s Gold Star Schools Award. The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) recently announced 15 high-performing elementary schools that were selected to receive the award for 2009. DESE established the Gold Star program in 1991. It is designed to identify schools that are performing at a high academic level or making exceptional progress while serving a significant proportion of disadvantaged students. This is the first year that a Missouri charter school has earned Gold Star status. The Gold Star program is closely aligned with the national Blue Ribbon Schools program conducted annually by the U.S. Department of Education. DESE identifies schools that are eligible for Blue Ribbon honors (based on academic performance criteria) and invites them to apply for the Gold Star award. The state application requires schools to provide evidence of their success in such areas as curriculum, instruction and school leadership.

Governor’s Excellence in Teaching Award

Professor of Chemistry Renée S. Cole has been selected as UCM’s campus recipient of the Governor’s Excellence in Teaching Award. Dr. Cole joins other honorees from Missouri colleges and universities who will be recognized during a luncheon April 22 in Jefferson City. Her selection by the university’s Committee on Faculty Awards was based on nominations and letters of support from faculty members in the fall of 2008. Selection criteria included evidence of effective teaching and advising, innovation in course design and delivery, service to the college and university community, commitment to high standards of excellence, and success in nurturing student achievement. We congratulate Dr. Cole for her achievement!

Central District Honor Award

Professor of Physical Education Dennis Docheff is the recipient of the Central District Honor Award, the highest recognition offered by the Central District Association for the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. Dennis received recognition for the many contributions he has made to the fields of health, physical education, recreation and dance. Congratulations!

Delta Epsilon Chi

The Harmon College of Business Administration added a new student organization, Delta Epsilon Chi (DEX), to its roster in August 2008. The organization’s mission is to enhance the co-curricular education of students with an interest in marketing, management and entrepreneurship. Through state, national, and international competitions, networking, professional development opportunities and community service, DEX members develop specific skills and competencies needed to become successful leaders in business.

UCM DEX members Ben Taylor, Curtis Hartley, Kylie Weaver, Paige Lollar, Jeff Tackett, Kelsey Johnson, Leah Kuchem, and Nick Tapp attended the Missouri State Career Development Conference at the Lodge of the Four Seasons, Lake Ozark, MO. This competition featured over 130 students from more than 10 Missouri and Kansas colleges and universities. In each
competitive event, a score of 70 or higher out of 100 points is considered “proficient” in the subject area. All eight UCM DEX members achieved proficient status in their events, the only chapter to do so at this year’s competition, and seven of the eight members managed top-10 finishes in their categories. Hartley finished second in the “Retail Management” category and then teamed up with Tackett to take first place in the “Business Law” category. With at least a top-three finish in each of these categories, Hartley and Tackett qualified for the International Career Development Conference April 22-26 in Anaheim, CA.

**UCM Debate Team**

Congratulations to Jack Rogers and the UCM Debate Team -- Zack Dodson, Andrew Goring, Danny Province, Adam Blood, Mark Wonnacott, and Janis McCambridge -- for their outstanding efforts in representing UCM during the 2009 Montgomery Cup Exhibition Debate Tour of the United Kingdom. The team, which was victorious in several of the debates, returned last week.

**Missouri Safety Center Director**

Following an eight-month search process, Terry Butler has been selected as director of the Missouri Safety Center. Terry has served as interim director since July 2007.

**NCAA-II Championships – Houston**

Congratulations to the student athletes who recently participated in the NCAA-II Men’s and Women’s Indoor Track and Field Championships in Houston, TX. Sophomore Drew Frizzell won the national championship in the weight throw; junior Anne Carlson won the national championship in the heptathlon; and sophomore Jenna Schmidt won the national championship in the high jump. Placing in the NCAA-II Championship for wrestling were junior William Forrest; junior Cory Bloodgood; and sophomore Denis Ryzhov.