mosaics

a student’s unique research in archaeometry
FEATURES

Take Action 16
Oscar Has a Mizzou Friend 17
Bones to Pick 18
Great Grades, Big Hearts 19
Trash Mountain 20
Infectious Involvement 20
Adventures in Archaeometry 22
The Superman of Pop Culture 26
Nerds in Training 28
This Sun Shines in Statistics 30
Heartbreaking Work with Heartwarming Results 32
Hats Off to a Clever Student 34
Religion Matters to Steve Friesen 36
Cutkosky’s Compelling Search for Answers 38
Art on the Quad 40

Dreams Coming True

DEAN RICHARD B. SCHWARTZ

As I write this, in late September, we are about to depart for New York to see the dreams of young playwrights, actors and stage technicians come true through our Mizzou on Broadway program. Last week the University dedicated our new Life Sciences Center. One of the personal thrills for me was the opportunity to meet with individuals — particularly Dean Emeritus Roger Mitchell — who had dreamed of such a building many years ago and now were able to see their dreams rise up from a parking lot in the form of a magnificent research building.

As many of you know, we share Chancellor Emeritus Richard Wallace’s dream to build an arts village on our campus. We take heart in the fact that the Life Sciences Center, which also required years of planning, is now a reality and that such a dream could come true very quickly once the bipartisan efforts of Sen. Kit Bond and Gov. Bob Holden were matched with the generosity of private donors. The collaborative efforts of our supporters are paralleled by the collaborative efforts of the schools and colleges that have come together to share this wonderful resource and contribute faculty to the Center’s interdisciplinary research efforts.

As you read through this issue of Mosaics you will be struck by the number of other dreams that have become realities. Some involve the desire to create art and music, some the solving of recalcitrant problems in the mathematical and natural sciences. Some of us dream of recapturing key elements of our past, and some help us prepare for the future. Some study such ancient phenomena as oral poetry; others utilize the Internet to facilitate discussion of such ancient issues as the nature and extent of human knowledge.

We take special delight in seeing the dreams of our students come to fruition, and there are dreams aplenty in these pages — from the curing of disease to the preservation of our environment and the enhancement of life for our world’s citizens. As always, the achievements are impressive, and, as always, there are far too many to enumerate in these pages. Our students and faculty continue to win notable prizes, and they continue to receive distinguished fellowships and other forms of recognition. They do so in every area of human thought and endeavor, and their successes stimulate dreams in those who follow them.

Perhaps in this election year I might indulge in a small bit of partisanship and say that the breadth and variety of interests and accomplishments in our college is particularly striking. At the same time, I must acknowledge that our special strength is our ability to cooperate and collaborate with our colleagues across this great University. As always, our students are the principal beneficiaries of these efforts.
BEST NATIONALLY

EDUCATION EXPERTS AND EDITORS OF THE “2005 BEST COLLEGES” ISSUE OF U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT list MU’s Campus Writing Program among those cited as outstanding examples of academic programs believed to lead to student success.

Director Marty Townsend was delighted to see the program included on the 2005 list, as it has been for 2003 and 2004. In other commendations, the National Council of Writing Program Administrators has called MU’s program one of the premier programs in the nation.

“The MU faculty members who teach our writing-intensive courses are the reason behind our having been selected for this honor,” Townsend says. “They teach academically rigorous courses to our undergraduate students, who graduate with one of MU’s ‘hallmark’ characteristics, the ability to communicate well to diverse audiences.”

Other universities joining MU on the listing include Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Cornell and Duke.

AUTHORS EARN ACCOLADES

PROFESSOR EMERIT A MARGARET SAYERS P EDEN, BA ’48, MA ’63 ROMANCE LANGUAGES, PHD ’66 ENGLISH, TOLD A FRIEND THAT SHE WOULD CRAWL TO NEW YORK TO COLLECT HER MOST RECENT PRIZE, THE PEN AMERICAN CENTER’S TRANSLATION AWARD.

She won for her work on the novel Sepharad by Spanish writer Antonio Muñoz Molina. The award is co-sponsored by the Book-of-the-Month Club and is considered the highest recognition for translators. Peden’s career as a translator picked up steam when she retired in 1989 from MU, where her specialty was Latin American literature. She has translated 50 works, mostly novels.

An intellectual how-to book by John Miles Foley, Curators’ Professor of English and Classical Studies, is gathering praise as it explains how to grasp the meanings behind oral poetry. Choice magazine selected How to Read an Oral Poem for its 2003 Outstanding Academic Title award.

Among the examples of oral poetry in the book are works of North American slam poetry and Mayan storytelling. Foley, who directs MU’s Center for Studies in Oral Tradition, enhanced his book with audio and video examples of oral poetry that are available at oraltradition.org. This is Foley’s second book to receive the Choice award. Homer’s Traditional Art won the award in 2000. Fewer than 3 percent of the 23,000 titles submitted to Choice receive this prize.

Winning a writing award at any time in a career is exciting but especially for a first book. Now multiply that excitement by two because Associate Professor of history Carol Anderson gathered two prestigious awards for her debut work Eyes off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955.

Anderson received the 2004 Myrna F. Bernath Book Award for the best
book written by a woman in the field of U.S. foreign relations history in 2002 and 2003. The Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations bestows the award. Anderson also won the Gustavus Meyers Outstanding Book Award for her efforts in furthering understanding of the complexities of bigotry and attempting to overcome it. *Eyes off the Prize* investigates lingering oppression from the civil rights era.

**Fathers of Invention**

Inventions fascinate people. Discoveries that improve daily living can be as basic as a better toothbrush, as varied as liquid crystal display (LCD) technology or as mystifying as the color-changing ink on U.S. currency.

A new physics course, Science and Inventions, offered for the first time this winter semester, explores 2,000 years of inventive discoveries.

Professor Henry White, who has been honored by Missouri’s four-campus system as one of its top entrepreneurs of scientific discoveries, teaches the new general-education course that shows nonscience majors the interplay of science and civilization.

“People invent things, but all aspects of the invention aren’t understood until later,” he says. “After the invention of the steam engine, for example, scientists learned a lot of basic ideas of thermodynamics.”

White leads his students through a discovery process that explores the inventions of Newton and Galileo and delves into modern innovations. He challenges students to project civilization’s needs for the future, such as how to keep global warming to a three-degree rise in temperature to meet the world’s quickly growing use of energy.

With the help of interactive technology, students have the opportunity to participate in discussions with inventors, and White has the option of involving physics department alumni who are inventors.

* Inventors credited with developing the Oral-B CrossAction toothbrush, LCD technology and color-changing ink for currency are physics alumni Stephen Thaler, PhD ’82, of St. Louis; Jim Fergason, BS ’56, of Redwood City, Calif.; and Jim Seeser, MS ’67, PhD ’70, of St. Louis.

**Popular Politics**

The political science department is experiencing a new popularity and has an expanding influx of undergraduate students.

Department Chair John Petrocik reports a 50 percent increase in the past five years; 627 students have declared themselves political science majors, double majors or dual majors for the 2004-05 academic year.

Attempting to decipher the reasons for the growing interest in political science is almost, well, a science. In the early 1990s, the department reported 439 undergraduates, but by 1996, that population dropped to 291.

Student Adviser Donna Hanly remembers the decline. She speculates that because many political science majors use the degree as preparation for law school, some of the downswing might hinge on the students’ esteem — or lack thereof — for law and lawmakers.

“The TV airing of the O.J. Simpson trial may have taken its toll,” she theorizes. “We’re affected by things like that.”

Hanly characterizes political science majors as active, bright students who see politics as a way to make a difference in the world. She thinks their desire to help society might explain the continual increase in majors since 1996.

Petrocik gives credit to the faculty for attracting more students through classes that are interesting and well-taught. Numerous faculty members have taught the basic course, Introduction to American Government.

Petrocik says that some theorists see rising political acrimony as a deterrent to interest in politics but that others believe the conflicting views attract people, particularly younger people who are not necessarily put off by harsh political debate.

Although it falls to Petrocik to solve the problems of accommodating so many students, he’s enjoying the popularity of political science. Hanly stays positive about her hyper-busy advising schedule by focusing on the quality of the students.

“Like at Lake Wobegon, our students are above average,” she says.

*Quilted artwork stitched by Mary Ann Petrocik decorates the hallway of the political science department.*
PROLIFIC PROFESSORS

GETTING GOOD REVIEWS ISN’T JUST FOR MOVIES, MUSIC AND ART. COMMUNICATION REVIEWERS DETERMINE HOW PRODUCTIVE PROFESSORS ARE BY EXAMINING HOW MANY ARTICLES THEY PUBLISH.

A recent ranking of the top 50 most productive communication professors lists Bill Benoit No. 2 and Michael Kramer No. 36 nationally for published research in the field.

A team of researchers from the University of Alabama at Birmingham checked the articles published in 24 communication journals during a five-year period from 1996 to 2001. Benoit had 28 articles published, and Kramer had nine. As a unit, MU’s communication department ranked fourth nationally for productivity.

But professional journals aren’t the only outlets for the findings of these professors. Benoit’s research is used frequently by the national media. One of his studies on negative political campaign tactics made its way to the White House during the early stages of the 2004 presidential campaign. He’s been quoted recently on Crossfire, Inside Politics and National Public Radio and in USA Today, The Los Angeles Times, The Washington Post and Atlantic Monthly.

In another form of communication, Benoit and a team of doctoral students created a Presidential Campaign 2004 Web site to help inform voters. As a scholar of political campaigns, Benoit is interested in such topics as campaign history, analysis of polls, debates, news coverage and political ads and posts information on those subjects on the Web site.

Glenn Hansen, PhD ’04 communication, who assisted with the Web page as a doctoral student, confirms that Benoit is adept at modeling his communication skills with students. Benoit and Hansen co-wrote 13 articles that appeared in refereed journals and one book.

“I have learned a great deal about the publishing process and have acquired skills that will last a lifetime as a result of this mentoring,” Hansen says.

Among Kramer’s published articles are studies of communication in the workplace, especially communication methods connected with job transfers and promotions. He explores the delicate interactions among colleagues as relationships change, such as when former supervisors become peers or former peers become subordinates.

With his colleague Jon Hess, Kramer published an article on managing emotion that was widely used by the media. Kramer and Hess found that people prefer co-workers who keep their emotions in check at the office.

VIRTUAL VOYAGE ACTUAL AWARD

A NATIONAL HISTORY AWARD HAS HONORED MU’S GEOGRAPHIC RESOURCES CENTER (GRC) FOR ITS LEWIS AND CLARK HISTORIC LANDSCAPE PROJECT. THE GRC IS CENTERED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY.

The 2004 Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) commends the center for achievement in the preservation and interpretation of history.

GRC Assistant Director James Harlan led a team of more than 50 students in creating computer-generated maps of the Missouri River as seen by Lewis and Clark. The maps display geographic information obtained from the explorers’ journals and from 18th and 19th century land survey notes.

From those maps, Harlan and collaborator James M. Denny wrote and published an Atlas of Lewis and Clark in
Missouri. The atlas provides astonishing detail and allows readers to understand why the landscape of the Lewis and Clark era differs so much from the landscape of today.

The project gained national attention through a feature story and photos in the April 2002 issue of National Geographic. Harlan devised the project as a commemorative effort for the nation’s Lewis and Clark bicentennial.

Readers can take an explorative trip by viewing the maps online at lewis-clark.geog.missouri.edu. Among the mapped features are campsite locations, photo-realistic images of important river landmarks and animated virtual Missouri River travel.

REVIEWS TO DIE FOR

Carolyn Worra, MM ’93 vocal performance, dies on stage frequently. The soprano might feign mortality in operatic roles, but she’s alive and well in the minds of music critics. Reviewers rave about her performances with opera companies nationally.

Note this sampling of reviews from critics at such publications as The New York Times and the San Francisco Chronicle: “Luscious voice... Bel-canto brilliance... She stole the show... Deliciously feminine... Pearly tone and elegant technique... Adept at comedy... An easy voice that made one want to hear more.”

Worra, who lives in New York, is a frequent performer in lead roles at New York City Opera, and she appears with numerous opera companies nationally. She’s preparing for the ultimate auditions for the big companies while finishing her doctorate in voice at Indiana University. She makes time for concert performances as well as teaching voice and piano lessons and is thinking about recording a CD. “I love the variety,” she says.

Worra returned to Columbia in March for an opera gala at the historic Missouri Theatre. With lengthy applause and shouts of “Brava,” the home audience obviously appreciated her performance of excerpts from La Traviata, accompanied by the Columbia Chorale and Civic Orchestra. Tenor Stuart Lutzenhiser joined Worra in two selections from the opera.

Worra says she felt the warmth of the audience that night. “It was exciting. Right away I spied my best friend and my favorite former professor in the audience.” Worra is referring to Melinda Lein, a visiting faculty member and vocal coach at MU, and Associate Professor Michael Budds.

“I thought she was fabulous,” Budds says. “She sings wonderfully, and she’s as nice as she sings.”

The professor and his former student met for lunch while she was in town. Budds recalled sitting on Lowry Mall with Worra as a student and discussing her career potential. He advised her then to work toward an opera career rather than risk regretting never having tried.

She sang the title role in Daphne at New York City Opera in the fall and in March 2005 will sing the lead role in The Merry Widow at Opera Memphis with another MU vocalist, Ryan MacPherson, BES ’97, in a lead tenor role.

Dramatic Tension

The visit with Edward Albee was incredible. All the while he was there, the bargain hunter in me kept saying, “We’re...”
Graduate student David J. Eshelman had the good fortune to sit next to playwright Edward Albee one day last spring during a luncheon on campus.

Eshelman fully comprehends the value of having a personal conversation with the writer who has been called America’s greatest living playwright.

“It was somewhat disconcerting to know that the author of Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf? was next to me, not enjoying his chicken,” Eshelman says.

The Pulitzer Prize- and Tony-winning playwright, who has written more than two dozen plays, spent several days on campus in March through the Center for the Literary Arts. He presented the first Proctor Distinguished Author Lecture and worked with students in several classes.

Among the classes Albee visited was David Crespy’s graduate seminar on playwriting. Imagine the tension as the playwright walked into the seminar room and seated himself at the table to talk to the six students about their plays.

Eshelman describes the experience:

“He read our plays, which had the potential for being a painful experience, but instead, we found Mr. Albee to be incredibly kind. It was fascinating to see what he noticed in the plays.”

In a casual start to class, Albee amused the group with his observations that writers shouldn’t dabble in genres outside their expertise. “Tennessee Williams (a former Mizzou student) wrote some nice short stories, but he was a better playwright,” Albee said. “Arthur Miller wrote a novel. Don’t read it!”

As Albee moved into the critiques of student plays, he scattered compliments among his recommendations for changes.

Eshelman learned that the script he had written as a 10-minute play, The Feminist Yeti, should be expanded into a longer play. “It ends without a conclusion,” Albee said. Albee’s later assurance that the dialogue was OK probably sounded like high praise.

Eshelman’s full-length musical, A Taste of Buffalo, elicited an observation from Albee that this may be the first musical ever written about civics. Albee asked Eshelman if he had written the play for its civic usefulness and then urged him to focus on that. Eshelman’s hometown is Buffalo, N.Y.

“He pointed out places where the script was slow,” Eshelman said. “I agree with him totally on those places. Also, he pointed out awkward language in my songs. I will look into that.”

Albee cautioned the students not to be too topical in plays because people can play tricks on authors by dying or going to prison. “You’ll have to take the line about Martha Stewart out,” he suggested to Marlys Johnson about her play, Heart’s Desire.

In general, Albee encouraged the students to read all sorts of plays. “If you read only masterpieces, you’ll be discouraged,” he said. “Read the not-so-good works, too, so you’ll see you can do better than that.”

Albee is the third in a string of distinguished playwrights and producers who have worked with MU students in recent years. Sir Jonathan Miller and Tony Kushner appeared earlier.

DRUM ROLL, PLEASE

HOW CREATIVE ARE THE GRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT’S CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAM?

Michael Kardos won the 2004 PRISM international grand prize in short fiction. His winning piece, “Mr. Marotta’s Ashes Have the Personality of a Grouchy Old Man,” appeared in the summer 2004 issue of PRISM international, the oldest literary magazine in Western Canada. The story centers on a janitor who works in a bowling alley and creates a pseudo-family of an abandoned baby, a talking rabbit and the remains of his music teacher. It gets stranger when the fairy tales the janitor makes up start to come true.

Kardos, a weekend drummer, spent his $2,000 award on a set of drums.
Scott Kaukonen’s short story, “Punnett’s Squares,” won the Chicago Tribune’s Nelson Algren Award, which included $5,000 and publication in the Oct. 27, 2004, Books Section of the newspaper.


MU students also took two awards in the William Wisdom Poetry Contest sponsored by The Pirate’s Alley Faulkner Society. Steve Gehrke’s poem “The Burning of Parliament, 1834,” won first prize and Nadine Meyer’s “Dancing at the Moulin Rouge” was first runner-up.

MU BRIDGE TO LONDON

Playwriting student Sabina Alam jetted to London to watch a June performance of her original script in a staged reading at The Theatre Royal Stratford East. That performance sparked two workshop readings in December 2004 at the Kali Theatre, which opened the door to an eventual full production.

Her script caught the attention of director Janet Steele after Alam mailed a copy of Chess for Asian Punks, Greek Losers and Dorks to the Kali Theater. “I figured I’d send in Chess, thinking I had no chance,” Alam says.

The Kali Theatre has a reputation in the West End for doing productions about and by Asian women in Britain. Alam, who is of East Indian and British descent, has a keen interest in working in theater and film in the areas of costume design, writing and directing.

She speculates that her play appealed to the director because of its story about women, immigrants and minorities. A Web site statement about the Kali Theatre, where she undertook such tasks as browsing shops in search of antique props.

Alam calls Chess an angry rant about her frustrations, dreams, hopes and fears. She wrote the script during winter break 2002 in St. Louis when she locked herself in her room after a fight with her par-
no sense of direction in their lives. Yas-
mine Ali, a British Asian immigrant from
England, and Mariette, a Greek American
teen, play chess throughout the play as
they bemoan politics, capitalism, white
people, movies, music and racism.

It’s not a play Alam expected her
parents to attend. “My mum gets horri-
fied whenever I say a simple rude word,”
she says, “and my dad falls asleep during
movies, concerts and plays.”

Neither the subject matter nor Alam’s
writing style — described by her peers as
colorful, humorous and R-rated — sur-
prises Alam’s fellow students or her
professors.

Alam polished the rhythmic dialogue
of her script in Associate Professor David
Crespy’s Advanced Playwriting course
and watched performances of the play
without hearing a single word. She has
been deaf since she was 2 years old.

Alam says the combination of her deaf-
ness, her East Indian heritage and her
Muslim beliefs isolate her and make her
“different from everyone else.”

But Crespy has a different theory. He
says her deafness may give her a hyper-
sensitivity to words that helps make her
writing unique.

Among Alam’s repertoire are 24 scripts
in progress. She’s concentrating on three
of the new works, including the full-
length Battle of Britain: Or, the New
English, which is strongly influenced by
old British comedies and the ‘80s post-
punk political scene.

CABLE VISIONARY

For years, Carol Rothwell, BA ‘64 Ger-
am, has been a good
spor. At work in Kansas City,
Mo., Rothwell has endured the good-na-
tured teasing of some Tim e Warner Cable
co-workers who wear the colors of the
University of Kansas.

Basketball and football seasons are
especially spirited in an office where
Mizzou graduates are outnumbered four
to one, she says. But in her own subdued,
black-and-gold manner, the vice president
of public affairs at Time Warner found a
unique way to support Mizzou, other than
wearing her self-described “obnoxious”
musical Mizzou sweater. (It plays “Hold
That Tiger.”)

Rothwell encouraged MU to take
advantage of free public service time that
cable channels are often able to offer non-
profit organizations. She suggested that
Mizzou create 30-second announcements
for airing on Time Warner Cable channels
in the large Kansas City area.

MU’s University Affairs quickly pro-
duced the public service announcements.
By August 2004, Kansas City area tele-
vision viewers were learning about making
dreams come true through higher educa-
tion, “...brought to you by the University
of Missouri-Columbia.” Time Warner
cable channels blanket the area, so the
spots reach more than 304,000 homes.

But Rothwell envisioned an even
greater saturation for Mizzou. Her con-
tacts with and knowledge of the Missouri Cable Television Association helped MU acquire PSA airtime with Cable TV franchises throughout Missouri. She expects the total value of the donated airtime to reach thousands of dollars every month.

“MU provides so many services to our state, beyond degree programs, that we are glad to help get the word out,” Rothwell says.

Now citizens in all corners of the state, including St. Louis and Springfield, can enjoy announcements from Mizzou. All because of a little border-war activity in a Kansas City office.

ART AS HANDS ACROSS THE SEA

East met West last August in Guangzhou, China, when visitors at the Guangdong Museum experienced the works of the MU art department faculty in an unusual show. It was the first time that MU’s art faculty exhibited together internationally.

Seventeen full-time faculty members, including some emeriti faculty, packed crates of their original pieces for shipping to China. The variety of art included such works as pastel drawings, charcoal on paper, etchings, oil on canvas, fibers, watercolor paintings, ceramics and mixed media.

The exhibit was the brainchild of Assistant Professor Lampo Leong, who arranged the show and located funding to cover shipping expenses. At the opening festivities, Leong presented a lecture on the art and the techniques that MU faculty employ.

The show offered an opportunity to enhance the University’s historic link with China through an exchange of ideas. In a reciprocal gesture planned for this year, the Guangdong Museum will send an exhibit by Chinese artists for display at the Bingham Gallery in the School of Fine Arts.

“The best thing I can do is create bridges between the countries and the cultures,” says Leong, whose bachelor’s degree of fine arts in painting is from the Guangzhou Fine Arts Institute.

Before the museum approved the all-MU exhibit, curators from the museum and representatives of the government had to approve the quality of the artwork. Leong says the process of making arrangements and securing approval took two years.
Growing up in China, Leong felt the effects of Mao’s Cultural Revolution. His paintings entered in the Guangzhou show are abstract images that display powerful energy in the brush strokes. Typically, his artwork spans two cultures, Western and Chinese, and often incorporates Chinese calligraphy into the abstract compositions. He takes inspiration from nature’s own abstract images, such as supernovas in outer space and microscopic cells.

Faculty members who exhibited in China are Jerry Berneche, Jean Brueggenjohann, Robert Bussabarger, James Calvin, Brooke Cameron, Bede Clarke, David East, William Hawk, Adrienne Hoard, Deborah Huelbersgen, Larry Kantner, Mark Langeneckert, Eric Landes, Lampo Leong, Frank Stack, Josephine Stealey and Vaughn Wascovich.

Hobby Goes 9 to 5

If you could parlay your hobby into a career, would you do it? Stuart Spengler, BA ’03 art, did, and for him it’s a dream job. Spengler works in Baltimore as a graphic designer for the monthly White Dwarf magazine and other publications of Games Workshop U.S., an American branch of the Games Workshop Group, based in Nottingham, England.

The company produces miniature figurines based on fantasy, including the Lord of the Rings movies, and makes rules for playing war games. Spengler says this is his first 9-to-5 job and the hours fly by.

Getting to Know Hugh

A gold mine of information is what history professor Steve Watts has found in the Los Angeles Playboy Mansion.

Watts signed a book contract with a publisher to write a biography of Hugh Hefner and has conducted several interviews in Hefner’s mansion home. Hefner not only agreed to the interviews, he opened his voluminous papers and records to Watts for research on the writing of Mr. Playboy: Hugh Hefner and the Fantasy Life of Modern America.

Hefner’s obsession with his own life is making the research easier. Since he was 16, Hefner has kept a scrapbook autobiography, which consists of some 1,600 volumes. Two full-time employees keep those scrapbook entries up to date.

Watts is also checking newspaper articles and editorials, magazine pieces, essays in journals of opinion, political speeches and even sermons to learn how others reacted to him.

Watts is trying to ascertain how Hefner, known for his Playboy magazine, shaped American culture. Watts will examine his impact on complex issues such as sexual values and behavior, attitudes toward women, family values and consumerism. The well-published historian describes his subject as articulate and quite candid.

“I’m sure the Hefner volume is going to toss me in the middle of no small amount of controversy,” Watts says. “He is very proud of his role in loosening the grip of what he calls ‘Puritanism’ on American views of sexuality and living ‘the good life.’”

Already Watts reports that he has discovered a little-known fact — that Hefner had a significant role in the civil rights movement. Hefner hired unknown African-American comedians such as Dick Gregory and insisted on having integrated entertainment and guests on his first television show in the late 1950s, even though many Southern stations refused to run it. He also pioneered color-blind hiring policies for his company in Chicago in the mid-1950s.

Watts describes Hefner’s basic personality trait as orderly to the extreme. He eats the same simple foods on the same days of the week and has each day’s activities plotted on a regular schedule. For example, he interacts with old friends on Monday nights, has family night on Tuesdays, plays cards on Wednesday nights and watches first-run movies on Sundays.

“Barring nuclear war, the schedule never changes,” Watts says.


Finding Mark Twain in the Ozarks

Mark Twain would love this: a Missouri writer winning a national writing award named after Twain himself.

David White, a doctoral student in theatre, took second place in competition for the 2004 Mark Twain Comic Playwriting Award sponsored by the Kennedy Center. White’s play Ain’t Nothin’ Quick ‘n Easy won him a check for $1,500 and an expenses-paid fellowship at the Kennedy Center for workshops and master classes.

White isn’t shy. While attending those...
activities, he made valuable connections with playwrights and directors by handing out copies of his script and résumé.

Two weeks later, the artistic director of the Eugene O’Neill Theatre Center hired White as script coordinator for the prestigious center in Waterford, Conn., which is known for developing new plays. White has since been promoted to literary manager for work on dramaturgy, which is a fancy way of saying he works with playwrights on their scripts.

_Ain’t Nothin’ Quick ‘n Easy_ is White’s second play in a trilogy about the Ozarks, and it previously played at Greenbriar Valley Theatre in Lewisburg, W.V. The play is a darkly humorous portrayal of the effects of Wal-Mart and other corporations on small-town life, as reflected in the plight of a struggling country store and its owner. White’s first play in the series, _Trash_, was selected for performance in Mizzou on Broadway 2002 at the York Theatre in New York.

As a playwright, White writes about what he knows best — his childhood stomping grounds in the Ozarks of Missouri, which he calls a colorful, beautiful and enigmatic place. His inspiration comes from the region and its people.

“I spent many of my formative years running amok in the hills of southwest Missouri, exploring the hills and interacting with the people who populated this region,” White wrote of his interest in that area. “I find myself thinking about how the Ozarks is so inherently theatrical.”

Meanwhile his professors are thinking aloud about how Mizzou’s Writing for Performance program is gaining steam.

“We are all so proud of David’s accomplishments,” says Assistant Professor Heather Carver. “His getting this job is excellent for the department and our Writing for Performance graduate program. It is exactly what we wanted to accomplish through the program and with our writers featured at Mizzou on Broadway.”

_Mizzou on Broadway_ is the only collegiate literary-theatre showcase in New York. MU partners with the York Theatre to produce its students’ best scripts. Faculty select the scripts and send them to be reviewed by a committee that includes alumni and professionals such as actors Chris Cooper, BGS ’76, and Campbell Scott.
Mind Blogging

Who'd ever believe that deep thinking would come to the Web? A new blog out of the philosophy department is making the subject of epistemology something to chat about.

Certain Doubts: A Blog Devoted to Matters Epistemic has been drawing thousands of hits a month since its entry into the Web world on June 9. The site attracted 9,000 hits in July, jumped to 17,989 in August and shows every indication of future growth.

Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that studies knowledge. Department Chair Jon Kvanvig developed and directs this trek into blogdom as a forum for epistemologists to discuss ideas, either for teaching or for publication. He's pleased with the amazingly high level of discussion.

Although some messages offer news of upcoming seminars and workshops, the majority are intellectual ideas that draw extended discussion. In its first two months of existence, the blog's most-read entry was “Three most important developments in epistemology over the last quarter century,” which attracted 2,277 hits. Other well-read entries were “Evidence and propositions you’ve never considered” and “Ethical Internalism in epistemology.”

Visitors to Certain Doubts represent more than 35 countries. Kvanvig says that demonstrates the scope of interest in contemporary epistemology and the value of the site both nationally and internationally.

He expects the blog to help increase the visibility of the dramatic changes that have occurred in the department during the past several years. “We are already known as one of the top places in the country for studying epistemology,” he says, “and the blog will enhance this reputation.”

Off-campus philosophers are taking note of the project. Brian Leiter, editor of The Philosophical Gourmet Report, considered the top ranking report on the quality of doctoral programs in philosophy, has affirmed the quality of Certain Doubts. Leiter wrote that the three most important developments in epistemology during the past 25 years are being discussed on the site.

“Since it appears just about every major epistemologist in the English-speaking world is now a contributor to this site, the answers should be interesting and (need I add?) reliable,” he wrote.

Kvanvig plans to make the blog a “one-stop shop” for anyone interested in the theory of knowledge. The site will post pre-publication links to works in progress to allow people interested in the discipline to stay on top of new developments. His goal is to give “real-time” access to what epistemologists are working on and thinking about.

To log on to the site, go to missouri.edu/~philwww/ and click on Certain Doubts.

A Lot To Love

Do you know which respected publication printed these previously unpublished treasures? A Dead Sea Scroll, the only known Native American diary of the Trail of Tears, works by noted authors such as Mark Twain and William Faulkner.

If you guessed MU’s The Missouri Review, you’re dead on. In the words of the new managing editor, Richard Sowienski, “With wonderful short stories, engaging poetry and thought-provoking essays, there’s a lot to love in The Missouri Review.”

Before coming to Missouri, Sowienski worked for the Meredith Corp. for 20 years. Among the positions he held was parenting and education editor of Better Homes and Gardens, senior editor of
The Missouri Review has a new managing editor who is using design changes to attract more readers.

transcends the situation and touches the reader,” Sowienski says.

This job couldn’t be more perfect for Sowienski, a graduate of the University of Iowa’s nonfiction writing program. At the Review, he enjoys the challenge of a multifaceted job that draws on his advertising, marketing and editorial experience, uses his literary skills and even allows him to teach.

Already Sowienski is using his marketing experience to develop new ways to increase the journal’s circulation. Look for some changes in design as well — more color, more photos and interesting typographic treatments.

An Invitation for membership from the Arts & Science Alumni Organization and the MU Alumni Association

- Individual, Annual $40
- Individual, 65 or older $30
- Mr. and Mrs., Annual $60
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123 Reynolds Alumni Center
Columbia, MO 65211
A&S Awards 2004

Honorary Alumni
- Richard Wallace led the MU campus as chancellor for eight years before stepping down in 2004. Hired in 1966 as assistant professor of economics and community health and medical practices, he quickly rose to the top management and gathered supporters with his leadership style. Wallace often says that his role as interim dean of A&S was his favorite MU position.

Distinguished Service
- James Morgan is artistic director of the York Theatre in New York, which partners with MU’s Department of Theatre to produce the annual Mizzou on Broadway showcase. The showcase allows MU to feature the finest original scripts of its students on stage in the theater capital of the world.
- Lucille Salerno, PhD ’92 psychology, uses her skills as a grant writer to attract financial help for numerous arts activities. A volunteer whose service has been internationally recognized, she hosts two radio programs, produces an annual ragtime/early jazz festival and attracts renowned artists to Columbia.

Distinguished Alumni
- James H. Amos Jr., BA ’68 political science, retired as president and chief executive officer of Mail Boxes Etc. in 2002 and now serves as chairman emeritus. Before joining MBE, he was CEO of the Brice Group in Dallas. Through his service as chair of the International Franchise Association, he has been a leader in the franchising industry.
- Ty Christian, BA ’77 speech and dramatic art, is president and managing partner of YPB&R/Christian, a communications firm with national and international offices. The company provides services to clients in travel, tourism, publishing, sports, entertainment and communication industries.
- Earl Coleman, BS Ed ’70 music, MM ’76 vocal performance, MM ’81 violin performance, says his greatest joy is teaching and sharing his love of music with students, which he has been doing for 33 years. He is the William and Isabelle Curry Eminent Professor of Voice at Columbus State University in Georgia.
- Flake L. McHaney, BA ’42 economics, is proud of being one of five brothers to graduate from the University of Missouri. He practiced law in Kennett, Mo., and retired from the bench as circuit judge but maintains his interest in law and agribusiness. He serves on the boards of six agribusiness corporations.
- Donald Packwood, PhD ’71 physics, holds several patents in silicon chip manufacturing and technology as the result of his research in semiconductors, infrared detectors and silicon devices. He retired from Hewlett-Packard in 1997 as an engineering manager.
- Naoma Powell, BA, BS Ed ’47, MA ’51 art, has woven a love of art into a selfless career that improves the lives of many. Since 1983, she has been director and pottery instructor for Columbia’s Access Arts School of Service. For 21 years, she taught art in eastern Kentucky’s impoverished mountain area and developed a weaving program for a Shaker village that is now a nationally recognized crafts center.
- Andrew R. Sackin is first vice president of investments and part of the Portfolio Management Program at the headquarters of UBS Financial Services in New York. He formed SRO Productions with two partners in 1992 and serves as managing partner. The company’s mission is to introduce new dramatic and musical works.
Join something, hug someone, solve a problem, do something for nothing! Every year, our students and faculty members leave legacies of public service.
Oscar Has a Mizzou Friend

There’s no pay for this volunteer work, just plenty of payback. By Nancy Moen

Oscar’s mom works three jobs from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. to support her seven children.

Her nighttime restaurant job prevents her from helping 9-year-old Oscar with his reading and mathematics. But even with more time, Oscar’s mom would struggle to assist her children with their education because she speaks no English.

Oscar is fortunate to have a friend in Morgan Kukal, an MU senior from Springfield, Mo., who is majoring in Spanish. The two get together twice a week after school for homework sessions through a volunteer project that pairs MU students with Hispanic children who face academic or language challenges.

With several other children and their tutors, Oscar and Kukal meet in Morgan Kukal, an MU senior from Springfield, Mo., who is majoring in Spanish. The two get together twice a week after school for homework sessions through a volunteer project that pairs MU students with Hispanic children who face academic or language challenges.

With several other children and their tutors, Oscar and Kukal meet in the Centro Latino in Columbia’s Parkade Center. Each child works individually with a volunteer tutor, who contacts the student’s parents and teachers weekly. To communicate with Oscar’s mom, Kukal writes notes in Spanish.

Because Oscar’s mom, a single parent, is unable to meet frequently with his teacher, Kukal serves as his link to school. It’s she who discusses his needs with his fourth-grade teacher.

As a mentor, Kukal assesses Oscar’s academic strengths and weaknesses: He’s quiet but not shy. His spoken English is on track, and he’s good in science. Soccer is his favorite sport. He does well in classes in English as a Second Language. He loves physical education.

All Boy

While Oscar works on language skills and finishing homework assignments, Kukal has been learning as well. The experience has expanded her knowledge of how to interact with little boys, especially this quiet little boy who talks only when it matters.

She’s learned that holding a boy’s attention is different from holding a girl’s, and she continues to develop some strategies. In spelling, for example, she looks first for words that interest him. “Focusing on some of those silly, gross, boy-type words help,” she says with a smile.

Kukal and Oscar begin their afternoon at the Centro with the usual group of 13 boys and two girls. Oscar is good at spelling, reading and comprehending what he reads, but he has some trouble reading aloud, so today they are reading from a fantasy-mystery chapter book, Oscar’s favorite reading material.

When he finishes reading, Kukal asks Oscar to write five or six sentences as a summary, and he goes about the chore.

“He’s a good kid,” she says as a proud older sister might say. “One day he was a student of the month at school. He’s everybody’s friend and is protective of other students.”

With the homework and snacks finished, Kukal loads Oscar and his younger brother into her car to drive them home. She watches as they go into the house that shelters the extended family of 11.

An observer might note that Kukal’s volunteer activities are good preparation for her goal of working as a Spanish interpreter. But that would be missing the point. Kukal and her fellow tutors display a lot of heart in donating their personal time. The reality is that they genuinely enjoy being with the children.

Kukal didn’t have to treat Oscar to the MU Homecoming activities. She didn’t have to take him to an MU basketball game or on a shopping trip for supplies to make Valentines. Carving Halloween pumpkins with Oscar and one of his brothers wasn’t on the program schedule either. They were just nice things to do.

Of course there’s no pay, but that’s not to say that the tutoring sessions themselves are all work. At the end of each semester, the students and tutors go swimming as a group. Once a month, they visit the library. In the summer, they go to Columbia’s recreation center, the park and the movies.

There’s plenty of feedback as well for the tutors on their mentoring. Kukal heard directly from the Centro director that Oscar likes working with her, and Oscar’s teacher is supportive. His sisters say their mom appreciates the activities and knows Oscar needs another responsible person in his life. Still, Kukal thinks she’s the lucky one to have drawn him as her student.

For his part, Oscar thanked Kukal in the best way a child could. His fourth-grade report card showed that in the first two semesters of working with Kukal, his reading skills advanced five levels — from first grade to sixth grade.
Bones to Pick

An MU employee with a passion for fossils finds a rare specimen.

As a public service about a dozen times a year, Lee Lyman responds to citizen requests for identification of fossil finds. No bones about it, this anthropology professor enjoys inspecting the antique bones and fossils that people tote to his office in little red wagons, buckets or bags.

Often these “finds” turn out to be horse or cow teeth or even oddly shaped rocks. Occasionally, however, an interesting specimen surfaces.

That was the case with Kenny Bassett’s discovery from the banks of the Missouri River near Jefferson City. A pipe fitter for MU Campus Facilities, Bassett spends his free time combing waterways and other areas for ancient specimens.

A few years ago in the middle of winter, Bassett hit pay dirt when he went exploring after some flood waters receded. In an area where he had found some flint artifacts, he checked a newly exposed sandbar and found an interesting piece that looked like an oxen skull.

A visit to Lyman, who checked the angle and 31-inch spread of the horns, confirmed that the find was the skull of an ancient female bison. Bassett was thrilled. He placed the massive forehead on his mantle at home and enjoyed it as a piece of art and history. But eventually curiosity overcame him, so he asked Lyman to facilitate a carbon dating of the specimen.

The expensive test — a real stretch for Bassett’s budget — proved that his bison had lived in this area about 13,700 years ago. Bassett had found a *bison antiquus*, an ancient type of bison larger than the modern bison.

During the ice age 14,000 years ago, when the Missouri River was frozen and the glaciers were receding, the massive, hairy bison were moving in. But *bison antiquus* went extinct in North America nearly 10,000 years ago.

“There are so few specimens,” Lyman says. “Kenny’s is outstanding.” Bassett worries about the possibility of the old bone exfoliating because it is not fossilized. Stored in his home, however, the piece is somewhat protected from such dangers as rapid temperature changes.

Lyman appreciates Bassett’s concerns and his correct procedures as an artifact hunter. “Fossils and artifacts are interest-
Citizens such as Bassett aid the search for fossils when they locate buried treasure after digging in the garden, plowing fields or searching riverbanks and ditches, but the discoveries don’t all work out. One woman, for example, brought in a five-gallon bucket of rocks for Lyman to peruse. She thought she had a collection of fossils and dinosaur eggs. On inspection, sleuth Lyman determined they were just rocks in interesting shapes.

As for Bassett, he will keep searching because for him the thrill of discovery is a religious experience. “I get chills,” he says of finding fossils.

Lyman, too, will always take a look. “We could find something unique, and if people don’t bring things in, we lose the potential to learn about the past.”

Lyman and Bassett have submitted a paper for publication on this important find to an anthropology journal, *Current Research in the Pleistocene*.

**Great Grades, Big Hearts**

**NATIONAL SCHOLARS SET STANDARDS FOR SELFLESSNESS.**

Students intuitively know that receiving an e-mail from MU’s chancellor is a good sign.

Dylan Sullivan of Bowling Green, Ky., had to read and reread his message from then Chancellor Richard Wallace before the good news would sink in that he had won a national Harry S. Truman Scholarship. It’s an honor he shares with an elite group of only 70 other college juniors in the nation.

Now a senior majoring in environmental geology and political science, Sullivan received a $30,000 scholarship for his final year at Mizzou and for graduate school. The federally funded scholarship rewards high grades and a commitment to a career in public service. Sullivan underwent a rigorous application process and many grueling interviews.

The scholarship committee members liked what they saw in Sullivan, an advocate for economic justice for the world’s coffee farmers. He worked with Oxfam — a global social-justice charity — and the director of MU’s Campus Dining Services to pressure coffee producer Procter & Gamble to market coffee certified as fair trade. The intervention occurred at just the right time, and this past fall, P&G introduced a fair-trade coffee under its Millstone brand.

“It was a small step,” Sullivan says, “but it secured the livelihoods of a few thousand Mexican coffee farmers.”

Sullivan is being modest. Basically, it was a victory for the entire fair-trade community.

Also outstanding was his work as a city management intern last year in Ashland, Mo. Sullivan researched, wrote and defended a draft of that community’s new ordinance on the control of storm water and erosion.

Sullivan plans to use
his leadership skills in a career in urban planning. He wants to work as a city planner for a large American city before he enters municipal politics.

Trash Mountain

Without getting himself in trouble, Jared Cole once brought in a mountain of campus trash and had it piled in front of Memorial Union.

The processed bales of paper, smashed plastic jugs and cans made an impressive environmental statement. Cole led a committee that coordinated the display through MU Campus Facilities to show students the importance of recycling campus trash.

A 2004 Morris K. Udall Scholar, Cole is a junior from Leawood, Kan., who’s majoring in sociology and environmental studies. The Udall Scholarship honors his academic performance, environmental activism, well-rounded interests and government involvement. After graduate school, Cole wants to work in the nonprofit sector or do public service for the government.

He is the lead author of “Recycle Mizzou,” a report on waste and resources at MU, which made a case for improving the campus-recycling plan and creating a recycling coordinator position. Shortly after publication of that document, MU agreed to hire a recycling coordinator.

Cole is an environmental activist whose interest is in spreading a positive agenda to engage people voluntarily rather than to force them to accept Earth-friendly behavior. “I want to work for people through the environment,” he says.

When he took over the presidency of MU’s student chapter of the Sierra Club, the group had seven members. Under his leadership, the students disassociated from that umbrella organization and reorganized as Sustain Mizzou, which regularly involves 30 to 50 participants in monthly campus promotions and projects. Members undertake such activities as coordinating recycling at large student events and sponsoring weekly collections of discarded paper, batteries and ink cartridges.

For fun, Cole loves cycling on city streets and playing with Frisbees — made from recycled plastic, of course.

Infectious Involvement

Research on novel drug treatments to prevent the onset of Type 1 diabetes helped Scott Schoenleber of Columbia to win a 2004 national Barry Goldwater Scholarship. One of just 310 scholarships awarded nationally by the Goldwater foundation, the scholarship covers the cost of student fees, books, and room and board.

Goldwater Scholars must meet high academic qualifications and seek a career in science, mathematics or engineering. Schoenleber, a major in biological sciences and Spanish, plans to enroll in medical school and eventually work in infectious diseases and international public health.

His undergraduate research is so impressive that he was selected, with chemistry student Stephanie Lane (see story on Page 29), to represent MU in presenting a poster project to legislators and elected officials on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

The drug treatments that Schoenleber investigates act like vaccines that prevent the insulin-producing beta cells of the pancreas from being destroyed. “The drug is promising because for the first time, researchers are able to use drugs to turn off a single cell type that causes diabetes, so the side effects of the therapy are minimal,” Schoenleber says.

He has combined the study of biology with his interest in Spanish to start a diabetes awareness program at Columbia’s Centro Latino, a Hispanic help and advo-
Because Latinos are at high risk for diabetes, the program includes testing for that disease.

Schoenleber also directs volunteers from MU’s Centro del Campus, a group of MU students who speak Spanish and use their language skills to tutor children at Centro Latino (see story on Page 17). He recruits students, raises funds, organizes the campus volunteers and then rolls up his sleeves to join in the tutoring of elementary school students.

“We help with homework, serve as mentors and try to turn the kids on to education,” he says. “Improving their reading skills is the most important at this point. We check assignments for the day, try to let them do the work and then help if they get stuck.”

The plan is to interest these children in going to high school and on to college or vocational training so they, too, can contribute to society.

Take Action

National scholars, from left, Jared Cole, Dylan Sullivan and Scott Schoenleber serve their community through rewarding projects that improve the lives of many people.
Rachel Popelka came to Mizzou to study because there’s no other place in the nation where she could do her research.
To dig up clues about past cultures, Rachel Popelka produces chemical fingerprinting of archaeological specimens to determine their source.

The doctoral student in chemistry uses the Archaeometry Lab at the University of Missouri Research Reactor (MURR) to unravel archaeological problems. She analyzes the chemical composition of artifacts to gather information that is unavailable through traditional archaeological methods.

“The Archaeometry Lab is unique and is one of the few places in the world where this kind of research is done,” Popelka says. “One of the special things about MURR is that, as a student, I can learn and work on such specialized and powerful lab equipment.”

Given this unique toolbox of nuclear methods, Popelka moves beyond the traditional archaeological techniques she acquired as an undergraduate student and beyond her experience at excavations in Italy, Jordan and Greece. She uses the technologies on human-made materials such as ceramics, glass, pigments and metals.

By learning the chemical basis of sources of artifacts, Popelka gains insight into ancient cultures and ancient technology as well as answers to such mysteries as the sources of ancient glass beads and the paths of ancient trade routes.

Two processes — laser ablation inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry (LA-ICP-MS) and neutron activation analysis (NAA) — provide the clues she needs.

Through LA-ICP-MS, Popelka uses a laser to analyze tiny amounts of an artifact for the composition of trace elements. The technique is especially useful on small artifacts because it does minimal damage. NAA gives data on trace elements by bombarding a sample with neutrons and causing various nuclear reactions. As the products decay, they emit gamma rays that identify which elements are present.

When she understands the patterns of trace elements, Popelka possesses a sort of fingerprint that helps identify artifacts and the sources of raw materials in them. The analysis can distinguish among visually similar ceramics that are produced in geographically different locations.

Professor Dave Robertson works with Popelka as her adviser in chemistry and is clearly impressed with the quality of his only student in such an unusual research area. Popelka not only uses the analytical methods that are available; she creates new ones, too.

“She knows what she’s interested in, and she’s good at it,” Robertson says. “When MU can attract a student of Rachel’s quality, everyone should feel good.”

Popelka recently won a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, which recognizes her superior scholarship and great promise as a future researcher and teacher.

ANALYZING ANTIQUITIES

In a current project, Popelka is conducting tests on more than 1,000 ancient glass beads collected from sites throughout Africa.

From her anthropological research, she knows that glass beads dating to two to three millennia ago have been found at numerous archaeological sites in sub-Saharan Africa. People of that time valued the beads of various colors, shapes and sizes both as artistic expression and as currency.

Anthropologists have long assumed that African beads dating before European contact were manufactured in India and brought to Africa by maritime trade. Because many of the beads look similar, attempts to identify their source of manufacture through color and shape alone have been inconclusive.

That’s where archaeometry comes in. Through nuclear analysis, Popelka can determine whether the chemical composition contains alkali (soda) from potash through potassium-rich plants such as trees and ferns; alkali derived from sodium, mineral deposits commonly found in marine areas; or alkali from trona, which originates from the ashes of desert or marsh plants.

With more than 500 samples tested, she and her collaborators have found trends in the color chemistry and association of elements and have identified two major types of ancient glass. Ultimately, that information will help determine the origin of the beads and possibly some trade patterns of the past between Africa and India.
Archaeometry Lab Is a “National Treasure”

The Archaeometry Lab at the University of Missouri Research Reactor Center has provided analysis for more than 72,000 archaeological specimens and gained a national and international reputation since its founding in 1988. Its scientists have collaborated on hundreds of research projects with archaeologists from MU and other academic institutions worldwide.

Senior Research Scientist Michael Glascock founded and leads the facility that anonymous reviewers for the National Science Foundation (NSF) call a “national treasure.” The NSF directs between 20 percent and 25 percent of its entire archaeology budget to research in the lab.

The lab supports faculty and graduate student research projects from MU units in anthropology, art history and archaeology, chemistry, geography and geological sciences. Undergraduate students gain experience by helping to prepare the samples for analysis.
“If all students were like Rachel …” Words fail chemistry Professor Dave Robertson when he tries to describe Rachel Popelka as a student. Her two mentors, Robertson and Professor Michael Glascock, consider her a consummate scholar, one who seeks enlightenment, not just a degree. Popelka herself admits that she craves knowledge. All knowledge. Because she’s interested in chemical analysis of ceramics, she took pottery classes. To better understand ancient glass, she studied glass blowing. Even her vacations revolve around archaeological opportunities.

Popelka’s road to enlightenment took a serious turn when she was a high school student in St. Louis. The summer after her sophomore year, she enrolled in a Washington University archaeology class that included excavation of the 1904 World’s Fair “trash dump.” While combing the site for broken glass, ceramics and plaster building decorations from the restaurants and exhibits, she became fascinated by the ceramics’ backmarks — designs or names that indicate origin. Further study of backmarks led her to an article by Glascock that described a nuclear process to analyze ceramics at MU’s Research Reactor, so she contacted him.

“Even though I was a high school student, he allowed me to come to the Research Reactor twice to prepare samples and to explain to me how to analyze the data,” she says.

That summer class turned into a two-year project for Popelka and won her a Monsanto/St. Louis Post-Dispatch Science Fair award and a trip to the 1995 International Science Fair in Ontario, Canada.

When the time was right, Glascock encouraged Popelka to come to Mizou for graduate work, where she now pursues her unusual research.
THE SUPERPROF OF POP CULTURE

Look! Up in those headlines! Assistant professor by day turns media source by night

When Mr. Potato Head celebrated its anniversary, Brad Prager was invited to the party, figuratively speaking. The Indianapolis Star used Prager as its expert for a story on toys in pop culture. When some A-list Hollywood actresses took movie roles that required nude scenes, a writer for USA Today phoned Prager to ask why they do that. As Bart Simpson entertained and offended American audiences, the Los Angeles Times contacted Prager for an explanation of the TV character’s popularity.

Prager is an assistant professor of German in the Department of German and Russian Studies and also teaches film studies. So how did he become the go-to guy for everything from Spider-Man to Easy-Bake Ovens?

Although Prager’s expertise developed later through academic interests, his interest in pop culture started with a childhood collection of comic books that included his favorite superheroes, the Teen Titans.

“People may look at a comic book and say nothing is there, but often the crudest material expresses culture,” he says. For example, after Sept. 11, Prager noted a change in the roles of superheroes, who have morphed into ideals of civil servants.

Among the interesting issues he follows through comic books is how the heroes navigate their secret identities and whether private life is more banal than public life is. Prager speculates that perhaps that’s why readers empathize with the superheroes but feel sorry for the Clark Kents of society.

That diversity of Prager’s interests and studies is what the MU News Bureau loves about him as someone who can offer his expertise to the media on numerous subjects. “Brad can talk on basically anything,” says Information Specialist Jeff Neu.

IT’S A SMALL WORLD

Prager wants his students to become adept at critical thinking, and he uses pop culture as a teaching tool. In class, he helps students look at what film and television express about a culture. One of his favorite courses to teach, History of German Film, gives an overview of how German history plays out.

“In the 1970s, the Germans were fascinated with their own terrorists,” he says. “I can make those films very relevant today.”

As Germans tend to do, Prager presents pop culture in terms of larger cultural trends. “Each work of art is an expression of the larger culture,” he says.

Prager notes the “art” as well as the capitalism in society’s fascination with icons such as Batman, Barbie dolls, Lincoln Logs and Disneyland. In graduate school, he won a grant to travel to Disneyland to view the family fun spot from the perspective of a cultural theorist.

He discovered that it’s a small world after all. Visitors to Disneyland were experiencing American culture presented to them as a wonderful thing and as affirmation of their sameness. Then Prager examined why Disney was having trouble exporting that popular culture to Europe through the sluggish Euro Disney.

He learned that Europeans consider the theme park concept lowbrow entertainment, but he also determined that it was possible to change their opinion through exposure to marketing. In fact, Euro Disney has become more successful in recent years. Marketing helped alter Disney’s theme park image to highbrow entertainment, which appealed to the French.

Prager says there’s a book on pop culture in his future after he finishes his book on German romantic art and literature, which is currently under consideration at a publishing company.

For better or worse, pop culture is the language students speak, and the multilingual Prager understands how to use it to reach them.

Don’t Have a Cow

Pop culture has given consumers some entertainment that Brad Prager considers terrific. “Buffy the Vampire Slayer was ingeniously written,” he says, “and it does good things in getting us to think critically. The Simpsons isn’t consistently good, but it has its moments.”

Brad Prager’s knowledge of pop culture puts him in the role of superhero when the media seek explanations about society’s strange but interesting trends.
NERDS IN TRAINING
How a child’s chemistry set and some sibling rivalry helped to shape Stephanie Lane’s future

The gift of a chemistry set went to Stephanie Lane’s brother when they were growing up in Springfield, Mo. She had to swipe it from him to play with it. Now, a master’s student in chemistry, Lane’s goal is to turn other little girls into chemistry nerds. “Like me,” she says.

For three years as an undergraduate, Lane volunteered with the Magic of Chemistry workshop, which is designed to interest girls in science. Sheryl Tucker, associate professor of chemistry, developed the hands-on program that has earned commendations from the American Chemical Society and Girl Scouts of the USA.

Lane was one of several MU student volunteers in March for the fifth annual event, with nearly 200 Girl Scouts participating. Collaborating in teams, 11- and 12-year-old girls gave Lane high-fives when their experiments worked and they understood the concepts.

Occasionally Lane offered guidance, but for the most part the girls conducted the experiments on polymer products and observed the reactions on their own.

They mixed Elmer’s Glue with Epsom salt and watched the concoction turn to slime; then they mixed it with borax and played with the hardened bouncy balls that resulted.

“I love chemistry; it’s so much fun,” Lane says. “Girls have to learn that it’s not scary.”

Starting Mizzou as an undergraduate biology major, Lane switched to chemistry and developed a love for research. Her “eureka” moment occurred in her junior year when she began a project through MU’s nationally recognized Undergraduate Research Mentor Program.

Lane works with Professor Silvia Jurisson in radiopharmaceutical research. They are interested in designing radioactive drugs that will target cancer cells for destruction or diagnostic imaging.

Lane’s project involves the metal rhenium, which is chemically similar to technetium — the most widely used diagnostic agent. Two radioisotopes of rhenium show potential use for radiotherapeutic applications. Because rhenium has no natural affinity for cancer, the researchers are trying to design a molecule that has an affinity for cancer cells and can link to and carry a radioactive rhenium atom to the site of the disease.

Lane is making the molecular cage that holds the radioactive metal to be delivered to the cancer cells. Her project is part of a larger effort to develop radiotherapeutics that target melanoma, breast cancer and prostate cancer.

“It has been a joy to watch Stephanie develop as an enthusiastic student and scientist,” Jurisson says of her student researcher. “I have no doubt that she will go far.”

Lane is an avid spokesperson for undergraduate research, which she calls the culmination of her undergraduate experience. As an undergraduate, Lane taught other MU students how to conduct simple reactions in the labs, and she visited high schools to talk about the advantages of doing research as a student.

In 2004, with Scott Schoenleber (see related story on page 20) she earned a trip to Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., to present her research as one of 60 students selected nationally for the honor. Lane and Schoenleber had presented their research projects earlier to legislators at the Missouri State Capitol in Jefferson City.

“The bottom line is that I like knowing I may find a cure to help someone someday,” Lane says. “I know I will make a difference.” More chemistry research and a doctoral degree are in her future.

And Lane’s brother? The lucky recipient of that childhood chemistry set chose a different path. He’s a computer programmer.
HERE’S STILL NO CURE for AIDS, but Associate Professor Tony Sun is working on one. Sun’s specialty is statistical models of survival.

A light in his office during the summer intercession indicated Sun’s level of focus. He was preparing for fall semester 2004 at the nation’s No. 1 spot for AIDS research — Harvard University — with his research being funded by a grant from the National Institutes of Health.

Sun creates complex formulas that deal efficiently with the myriad of information collected for analysis in medical research such as that on AIDS. The models also work with studies of other diseases.

Through his work in survival analysis, Sun handles a complex variety of information and partial information. As one might imagine, research that is conducted in clinical settings presents unusual problems. Sun must find methods of including data on people who enter the study at different times into the progression of their disease — three weeks, five weeks, six weeks or longer. He must also account for the time between a patient’s exposure to a disease and contraction of it.

Sun’s statistical model must take into consideration that patients die at different times and that some just leave the study and are lost to follow-up. The model must include developments on patients who, in follow-up exams, present with recurrences of the disease. Likewise, it must allow for time frames with partial information, such as times when patients had the disease and when they didn’t, and times when they showed up for their appointments or when they didn’t.

Competing risks add still another layer of complexity. Sun’s model must be able to distinguish among different occurrences that might affect patients, as when someone contracts a different illness from the one being studied or suffers an injury in addition to the disease being studied. The model must help determine how to apportion what data is related to the disease being investigated.

As a teacher, Sun is able to involve his graduate students in invaluable training through his AIDS research. Doctoral students Zhigang Zhang, Qiang Zhao and Do-Hwan Park have worked with him on the project. In addition, Sun conducts a weekly seminar for students on survival analysis.

“He’s a wonderful mentor,” says Nancy Flournoy, statistics department chair. Flournoy says the NIH grant that supports Sun’s work is his second award from that agency. With a newly acquired doctoral degree, Sun distinguished himself in 1998 by winning an NIH First Award, a highly competitive five-year grant for emerging researchers.

Sun’s connection with Harvard began during his postdoctoral work there as a fellow in biostatistics when he worked with AIDS models that predicted infection rates for the disease. His current research will provide procedures for comparing medications that treat AIDS and for determining which factors are important determinants of the life spans of infected people — all while accounting for the various data complexities. Analysis using these tools will suggest new interventions for further prolonging the lives of AIDS-infected people.

“Lots of progress has been made,” Sun says of efforts to prevent the spread of the disease and to find a cure. “There are over 20 different medications that can prolong life.”

Sun says the United States has done a good job of spreading the message about how to avoid AIDS but that knowledge of prevention measures alone won’t solve the problem. “We need to continue to improve treatments,” he says. “I’m really glad I’m in the field. I want to continue to do something worthwhile.”

PHOTO BY JUSTIN KELLEY

This Sun Shines in Statistics

Tony Sun serves as a mentoring professor to many students of statistics. His focus area is survival analysis, including the design of statistical models for diseases such as AIDS.
Heartbreaking Work with Heartwarming Results

‘I was going to crack houses to find parents. Parents were selling their kids for drug money.’
— Maureen Allwood

When they lived in Kingston, Jamaica, Maureen Allwood’s mom worked in a factory and as a domestic; her dad labored on the wharf. To give the children a better life, the family immigrated to Michigan.

Allwood’s parents only finished the equivalent of a fifth-grade education, but they instilled in their children the value of working for a dream. In a few short years, Allwood became the first in her family to receive a college degree. Two master’s degrees later, she’s completing her research for a doctorate in psychological sciences.

Allwood still chokes up when she thinks of her parents’ long hours of work on Detroit’s automotive assembly lines. No wonder she screamed with joy when she read the letter naming her a 2003-04 Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellow, an honor only 35 doctoral students receive each year.

The Ford Fellowships provide research funding to minority students who are seeking doctoral degrees and who aspire to a teaching and research career at the college or university level. The fellowship and its financial assistance feel like an affirmation to Allwood that her research is worthwhile.

“It shows that my research has potential for making an impact on treatment and policy,” Allwood says.

Making an impact is her goal. Allwood researches the responses of youths to trauma in their lives. In a study of a north Kansas City school district, she’s gathering data on children’s exposure to violence and the relationship of the violence to their aggressive behavior. She will compare the youngsters’ symptoms of trauma, disengagement and attention problems to their academic performance.

Identifying serious problems in children’s lives is nothing new to Allwood, who has worked with young victims of trauma and violence. As a caseworker, she assisted displaced children — kids moving from foster home to foster home and homeless teens. It’s heartbreaking work.

“I was going to crack houses to find parents,” she says. “Parents were selling their kids for drug money. We were putting kids in temporary placement homes, but it was not a solution to the problem.”

Many of Allwood’s workdays revolved around a full caseload and the formulation of treatment plans in medical, mental health and education services for abused and neglected children and their families. She used her evenings to complete a master’s degree in clinical psychology and care for her own children.

Allwood wrote her first master’s thesis on the behavior of children exposed to cocaine in utero. In her position as a behavioral psychologist, she worked with children who were exhibiting behavioral problems caused by post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injuries. Many of the patients in that setting were victims of gunshot wounds, beatings and other forms of violence. “Children can survive unbearable circumstances,” she says.

The lure of a rare data set at MU’s International Center for Psychosocial Trauma drew Allwood to Mizzou in 1997. That data, on children traumatized through the Bosnian war, formed the basis for her second master’s study.

Allwood’s doctoral adviser is Associate Professor Debora Bell, who helped recruit Allwood to Mizzou because of her intellectual curiosity, clinical skills and drive to succeed. “She is a gifted researcher, teacher and clinician,” Bell says.

Allwood has taught child psychology and health psychology courses at MU and served as assistant director for the Psychological Services Clinic, a community clinic staffed by faculty and students of the department.

Now in Boston on an internship, she suspects her future lies in a large city, probably in the inner city where children too frequently experience the trauma of violence through domestic abuse and crime.

As her parents did for her, Allwood hopes to improve the lives of children.
A Ford Fellowship rewards Maureen Allwood’s research and her work on behalf of young victims of trauma and violence.
HATS OFF TO A CLEVER STUDENT

BECAUSE THIS STUDENT IS THE GUY IN A BANK-ROBBERY PREVENTION POSTER, HE KEEPS A LOW PROFILE IN BANKS AND CHECK-CASHING AREAS.
A dam Ziles worries that he may be mistaken for a bank robber someday, so he’s a bit edgy when he enters a bank.

A few months ago, an FBI agent, who asked to remain nameless, contacted Associate Professor of art Deborah Huelsbergen about having a graphic design student create a poster. The FBI wanted to stop a recent spate of bank robberies committed by people who were “defeating the video surveillance.” (Translation: They were wearing hoods, hats or sunglasses.)

Agent X thought posters might be useful to discourage the public from wearing such apparel in Missouri’s banks and credit unions. His assignment was to help the banking industry get a grip on robberies that were generally committed by local people wearing simple disguises.

“These are not the type of robbers who use a gun or go to the next violent level,” Agent X says. “They just want the easy money.”

After an initial meeting with Huelsbergen and some general sessions with a group of graphic design students, Agent X and Ziles, a senior from St. Charles, Mo., became a team. They worked with the Missouri Bankers Association (MBA) and the Missouri Credit Union Association.

Several brainstorming sessions with MBA and the credit union group generated ideas for the images. “The design changed a lot,” Ziles says. “Each organization saw something different, so we had to keep compromising.”

As Ziles produced the various drafts, his major focus was to please his customers while putting himself in the project as an artist.

Once he had the green light for his proposed images, Ziles needed a generic head to dress in a hat, hood and sunglasses. The head he chose was a ceramic likeness of himself that he had made in a sculpture class. For the photo image of a robber, Agent X dressed Ziles as a bank robber, and they shot photos in a Columbia bank.

The entire project, which resulted in posters, static stickers and table-tent flyers, took two months from start to finish.

Agent X is pleased with the process and the products. “It was a learning process for both of us and typical of what Adam’s going to experience with corporate clients,” he says. “Now when people enter a bank or credit union and ignore the sign, the tellers take note. And that’s not what a would-be robber wants.”

The FBI, banks and credit unions are pleased with the outcome. FBI statistics show that after using the posters for one year, Missouri has experienced a 36 percent reduction in bank robberies, from 117 to 75. “We can attribute quite a bit of that to the poster,” Agent X says.

The project’s success in Missouri has helped spread use of Ziles’ poster to other states. Agent X and Bill Ratliff, senior vice president of MBA, report that Florida, Wisconsin, North Carolina, Georgia and Oklahoma now use Missouri’s signage.

Since completing the No Hats, No Hoods, No Sunglasses project, Ziles has taken on other challenges. An internship with the St. Louis office of Momentum, an international promotion agency, gave him design experience on such accounts as Coca-Cola, Lowe’s and Anheuser-Busch. This past fall, Momentum’s Los Angeles crew flew Ziles to Las Vegas to work on a Wheaties promotion with Jay Leno.

Ziles graduated in December with a BFA degree and took a job with Momentum in Los Angeles.

Agent X, who wrapped up the poster project by sending a check to MU’s art department as a thank-you, received an award from the MBA.

Ratliff and the MBA continue to promote the poster to institutions in other states.

And Huelsbergen enjoys a memento of her clever student each time she walks by the check-cashing area in her grocery store.

Deborah Huelsbergen’s honors graphic design class is an art department course for advanced students. The class accepts projects for private and University clients. Huelsbergen can be reached by e-mail at huelsbergend@missouri.edu
The religious and political tone that permeates American society today is too shrill for religious studies Professor Steve Friesen. To help clear the air, Friesen started a weekly radio show, Religion Matters.

In politics, publishing and pop culture, the use of religion threatens peaceful coexistence. “We have experienced a polarization in society through use of the media by right-wing extremists,” Friesen says. “Now the left wing is trying to counter that by doing the same thing from a different point of view. I don’t like that method and don’t think it’s the way to deal with serious issues.”

Friesen views frank discussions, conversations and listening — not shouting matches — as a better approach. He wants his radio show to help cool down the divisive religious rhetoric. He hopes that some of the shows will be disturbing to listeners as they absorb new information. “Religion is a cause of a lot of good in the world and a lot of destruction,” he says. “If we don’t recognize that, we’re shortchanging ourselves and creating a dangerous situation.”

As host, Friesen has used a variety of formats. He prefers interactive sessions such as Q-and-A and call-in shows, but he also makes use of visiting experts through taped interviews. His goal is to spread information and share comparative views of religion that can help promote understanding.

Faculty members in the Department of Religious Studies serve as advisers and occasional experts for the show, and Friesen draws on a plentiful variety of speakers who visit the department as Paine Lecturers. He also uses the resources of the law school’s Center for the Study of Dispute Resolution and MU’s Center for Religion, the Professions and the Public.

One of every five people in the world is Muslim, and Friesen is concerned about the treatment of American Muslims, particularly in small towns where it’s difficult for minority groups to raise issues.

To make a statement, he initiated his broadcasts with an interview of Islamic specialist Ahmet Karamustafa, who is director of Jewish, Islamic and Near Eastern Studies at Washington University in St. Louis. Karamustafa urged non-Muslim listeners to look beyond the generalizations of Islam and to encourage interactions with non-Muslims, who might be too intimidated to speak.

Yet the shows aren’t confined to experts who study religion. The voices of Religion Matters represent religious practitioners and non-practitioners alike: Hindus, Bahais, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, neo-pagans, atheists and agnostics. Topics have touched on religion in politics, violence in the name of religion, views of war and peace, religious music, prayer, spiritual care for people nearing death, mega-churches, religion in prisons, converts, new religious movements, religious publishing and religion in sports.

One of Friesen’s favorite shows was a discussion of a joint Bible study between a Christian church and a synagogue. He considers it a fascinating example of how religious groups build bridges and work at peace making.

But Friesen is not afraid to confront the dark sides of religion. “A lot of people accept certain kinds of religious violence,” he says. “For example, some religious groups tend to overlook abuse. In certain groups, the attitude toward authority sometimes leads to them condoning domestic violence.”

In one of his first broadcasts, Friesen summarized his own belief: “How can we live together in a just society if we haven’t talked?”

Professor Steve Friesen’s radio show on religion displays his desire to promote understanding through serious discussions of diverse views.

Religion Matters airs every Thursday at 5 to 6 p.m. on Columbia’s community radio station, KOPN at 89.5 FM. With the help of that station, Friesen is investigating the potential for syndication. An interactive Web site at religionmatters.missouri.edu lists upcoming shows, asks the public to suggest topics for discussion and offers access to archived shows.
Cutkosky’s Compelling Search for Answers

Imagine being considered one of the best people in your field — in the world. By Nancy Moen

‘Cutkosky is one of the great algebraic geometers in this country today, and a leader in the field.’ — Professor Joe Harris, Harvard University

Only a few people in Columbia know who Dale Cutkosky is. On campus, because of his title Curators' Professor, he’s a bit of an academic celebrity. But in the world of mathematics, his name resonates.

Cutkosky’s claim to fame is that he solves old, deep, intractable problems — conjectures that the big brains in math try to solve but can’t. Mathematicians regard solutions to conjectures as the ultimate test of their skills, and Cutkosky’s solutions elicit sweet praise from the experts. He is considered an extraordinary talent.

Cutkosky works in one of the most difficult and important areas of mathematics, algebraic geometry, an area with origins in the ancient world. His advancements in valuation theory have helped establish the area as a major research interest.

In 1999, Cutkosky proved a 40-year-old conjecture that for 20 years saw little progress. He gave the solution in characteristic zero of the Abhyankar Conjecture on the factorization of birational maps. The proof, later printed as a book, was in all dimensions; he solved the three-dimensional version in 1997.

Mathematicians considered the
Abhyankar Conjecture one of the most difficult problems in math. Department Chair Mark Ashbaugh explains that the solution was considered to be far beyond available tools with no hope of resolution in the foreseeable future.

Cutkosky’s solution came as a complete surprise to the whole mathematical community. Reviewers called it a tour de force and used superlatives such as “remarkable,” “extraordinary,” and “astounding” to describe the accomplishment.

“A mathematical discussion with Dale is an experience of another order,” Ashbaugh says. “You quickly realize, as the reviewers put it: ‘This is a very powerful intellect.’ ‘A prominent world scholar.’ And these are statements from mathematicians who themselves are first-rate.”

The average length of a math paper is about 20 pages, and a 60-page paper is considered a major achievement. Cutkosky’s proof filled 200 pages. There’s little mystery why it consumed large chunks of his life since 1983, when he was a graduate student.

“You can’t think about a problem around the clock for years,” Cutkosky says. “However, there are periods when I have an idea on it and work constantly. Sometimes it’s easy to sacrifice other parts of your life, but one can’t do that for 10 years at a stretch.”

Cutkosky sets time priorities. He dedicates two hours most days to working problems and apportions the remaining hours among teaching-related duties and family life. That doesn’t include time to help his children with math homework. He reports, with an approving smile, that 10-year-old daughter Maya and 13-year-old son Ashok consistently reject his offers of help.

**BEST OF HIS GENERATION**

In 2003, Cutkosky performed his magic again on a problem that originated about 100 years ago. The toroidalization problem that he solved didn’t have a formal name, and mathematicians around the globe just figured it would never be solved in their lifetimes. They couldn’t do it, and they couldn’t imagine anyone else doing it, says Professor Peter Casazza.

The toroidalization conjecture states that algebraic maps of three-dimensional spaces are products of blowups of points and curves and a monomial mapping.

What may be most impressive about Cutkosky’s solution is that he had to create the mathematics tools before he could solve the problem. Such a feat is so impressive that *Advances in Mathematics* devoted an entire issue of the journal to Cutkosky’s solution.

The completion of his first proof produced absolute euphoria for Cutkosky. “When you learn math, all the nice answers are presented to you,” he says. “In working on your own, things appear to be chaos, so finding the structure is beautiful, especially when it is a nice answer. In the process, one enters a whole world of elaborate mental construction.”

Cutkosky’s excitement with successive solutions has mellowed now to happiness. He explains that some of the excitement fades with experience, and that he no longer becomes so emotional when an idea doesn’t work.

While gathering letters in support of Cutkosky’s nomination for the Curators’ Professorship, Casazza contacted 12 of the most famous mathematicians in the world in Cutkosky’s area to write on his behalf. He discovered that they view him as the best of his generation and one of the people who will replace them at the top when they retire.

**‘MUST-HAVE’ SPEAKER**

MU’s math department boasts a strong group of algebraists who form one of the three main research concentrations in the department. Cutkosky provides valuable contributions to the department that go beyond his extraordinary research talent.

“His leadership role in the department has been critical to our bid to become one of the premier math departments in the world,” Ashbaugh says.

Cutkosky’s efforts in organizing major mathematics conferences have brought renown to MU. Students and faculty alike enjoy the personal appearances of math stars such as Jurgen Herzog, who has solved several difficult problems.

Yet Cutkosky himself is in demand as a speaker around the globe. David Eisenbud of the University of California-Berkeley lists him as a “must-have” speaker at a math meeting for it to be a success.

Cutkosky’s research has been supported by multiple grants from the National Science Foundation. He has written three books and served as editor of the *Illinois Journal of Mathematics*.

Recently, the University of Missouri System honored him with one of its highest accolades, the 2004 Presidential Award for Research and Creativity. The award carries a $15,000 prize, which Cutkosky will most likely use to remodel the family’s kitchen. He likes to cook.

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**Note the Harmony in Math**

Math and music are linked through their structure, and music is a tangible incarnation of numbers. Does it follow that an adept mathematician would have musical abilities? Although he doesn’t play an instrument, Dale Cutkosky collaborates with his wife, math Professor Hema Srinivasan, in creating arrangements of carnatic music, a classical South Indian genre. They develop harmonies that are natural for the pieces and fit with the general feel of the music. Blending art and science, Srinivasan plays the original compositions on a vina — an instrument similar to a sitar — with son Ashok on piano and daughter Maya as singer.
At opposite sides of the state, the Saint Louis Art Museum and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City curate the two most extensive art collections in Missouri. So which museum has the third largest holdings?

If you guessed MU’s Museum of Art and Archaeology, you’re correct. The museum’s extensive collection far exceeds the facility’s ability to display the works in Pickard Hall. Although the museum’s curators rotate items for display from the extensive collection, they are able to exhibit only 3 percent of the collection. The majority of the holdings remain in storage.

The Museum of Art and Archaeology falls under the umbrella of the College of Arts and Science, and soon, thanks to technology, visitors will be able to enjoy some of the items that are out of view. The new Gallery of Art and Technology will offer virtual access to the stored art through computers that display the works using a surprisingly realistic method.

At the touch of a computer screen, visitors will select the items to be viewed, rotate the artwork 360 degrees and zoom in on details, such as the intricate, hand-painted design on the rim of a ceramic pitcher.

Among the treasures in traditional displays at the museum is a glass sculpture by artist Dale Chihuly, an internationally known glass blower who learned the technique in Murano, Italy. Critics praise Chihuly’s works for their vibrant color, fluid shapes and fragility of form.


Lime Persian resembles a green and gold lily pad bent at the middle. Its scalloped edges are accented by dark ripples that flow toward a hollow bulb at the center.