KU to honor 53 area seniors

SPECIAL TO THE HAYS DAILY NEWS

LAWRENCE — Students from 15 Kansas high schools will be honored April 4 by the University of Kansas Alumni Association and KU Endowment.

A total of 53 seniors from high schools in Cheyenne, Decatur, Gove, Logan, Rawlins, Sheridan, Sherman, Thomas and Wallace counties will be recognized for their academic achievements and named Kansas Honor Scholars at a 6:30 p.m. dinner program at The Gateway, Oberlin.

The Kansas Honors Program began in 1971 and honored its 100,000th student this year. Scholars rank in the top 10 percent of their high school senior classes and are selected regardless of curricula, majors, occupational plans or higher-education goals.

During the ceremony, each student will receive an American Heritage Dictionary in hardback and CD versions, presented by Sarah Blaney, Kansas Honors Program coordinator for the KU Alumni Association.

Stuart Bell, dean of the School of Engineering, will speak to the students, parents and guests.

Honored students will be guests of the alumni association and KU Endowment; parents and area alumni are welcome to attend at a cost of $10 each.

Community volunteers collect reservations, coordinate details and serve as local contacts for the event. Kurt Vollertsen, Oberlin, will be the site coordinator as well as county coordinator for Decatur County. Other county coordinators are Mike and Brenda Day, St. Francis, for Cheyenne County; Wade Park, Oakley, for Gove, Logan and Sheridan counties; Charles and Connie Peckham, Atwood, for Rawlins County; Jeff and Noni Mason, Goodland, for Sherman County; and Sharon Steele, Colby, for Thomas and Wallace counties.

The Kansas Honors Program is made possible through KU Endowment and proceeds from the Jayhawk License Plate program.

Students who will be honored are listed by high school:

- **Brewster High School**
  - Audrey Hoyt

- **Cheylin High School, Bird City**
  - Josh Johnson, Aubrey Keib lake

- **Colby High School**
  - Ashley Barnes, Kristin Cox, Elizabeth Erickson, Steven Juenemann, Rishonna Martin, Trevor Siebert, Raushan Wilson

- **Decatur Community High School, Oberlin**
  - Karli Fredrickson, Andrew Gilliam, Aaron Helm, Nolan May, Kurt Olson, Kimberly Wessel

- **Golden Plains High School, Rexford**
  - Megan Juenemann, Stephanie Juenemann

- **Goodland High School**
  - Sarah Borneman, Ashley Cebula, Nathan Linin, Jena McCall, Lea Shores, Michael Smith, Molly Witzel

- **Grinnell High School**
  - Allison Dohm

- **Hoxie High School**
  - Rebecca Farber, Tiffany Goetz, Benjamin Mense

- **Oakley High School**
  - Brittany Brenner, Lindsey Hubert, Nathan Jurey, Paul Kuhlman, Holly Poe, Jackie Zerr

- **Quinter High School**
  - Jocelyn Anderson, Todd Cooksey, Brice Kesler

- **Rawlins County Junior/Senior High School, Atwood**
  - Jason Aragbright, Simone Cahoj, Matthew Michielbrink, Valerie Sia, Kendra Solko

- **Saint Francis Community High School**
  - Russell Rogers, Lauren Ross, Addie Swidart, Alecia Zimbelman

- **Wallace County High School**
  - Bracey Fischer, Kyler Knobbe

- **Wea ksn High School**
  - Jade Sexton, Preston Smith

- **Wheatland High School, Grainfield**
  - Jill Kennedy, Katie Waldman
Groundwater levels dropping

LAWRENCE, Kan. (AP) — Farmers continue pumping more water from the state’s aquifers than can be replenished through rain and snow, the Kansas Geological Survey said Wednesday.

The Geological Survey, based at the University of Kansas, measured more than 1,100 wells in central and western Kansas as part of its annual review.

The measurements are taken in January after the irrigation season has ended and water levels have stabilized, but winter storms left geologists unable to reach about 305 wells this year:

"The weather delay and missed wells may have some influence on the water level comparisons between 2005 and 2006, so we’re going out again in early April to try to fill in the holes within our coverage area," said Brownie Wilson, water data manager at the agency.

From January 2006 to January 2007, preliminary data shows the water level declined 0.94 feet in western Kansas, 2.17 feet in the Equus Beds area north of Wichita, 1.29 feet in the Big Bend region of central Kansas, about 0.21 feet in northwestern Kansas, 0.42 feet in west-central Kansas, and 2.18 feet in southwestern Kansas.
Elementary students learn how to ‘play with their food’

By Jan Blaes
THE CAPITAL-JOURNAL

LAWRENCE — Tyler Bloom, a 9-year-old student from Jackson Heights Elementary School, listened intently Monday morning as Teresa MacDonald set up an experiment in the Natural History Museum at The University of Kansas.

MacDonald, director of education at the museum, placed a tin pie pan on top of a beaker filled with water, a cardboard toilet tissue tube on top of the pie pan and an egg on top of the tissue tube.

Then she took a broom handle and gave the pie pan a swift whack.

“Oooooo!” said Tyler and the other youngsters as the pie pan and tissue tube shot outward and the egg dropped down into the water.

MacDonald explained the pie pan moved farthest because it received the most force from the broom handle and the egg fell into the beaker because of gravity.

Tyler was among the youngsters and adults on Monday who made their way through Playing With Your Food, an interactive exhibit that uses everyday food items to explain scientific principles.

The exhibit is open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. through Saturday. There is no admission charge.
Food: Activity stations set up

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3,000 visitors.
By 11 a.m. Monday, 90 people had taken in the exhibit.
About a dozen activity stations are set up in the museum’s panorama gallery space.
Visitors move through the stations at their own pace.
Every 30 minutes, MacDonald and an assistant stuck electrodes into the ends of a dill pickle, turned on the electricity and made the pickle glow in an orange-yellow hue.
The glow was caused by the salt in the vinegar solution used to pickle the cucumber, she explained.
Salt is a metal, and when electricity passes through metal it creates light, MacDonald said.
"If it were another metal, it would be another color," she said, explaining how copper would create a green glow.
Other demonstrations at the various stations involved launching a marshmallow missile from tubing by stomping on a 2-liter plastic bottle; creating a fireball from cornstarch; rescuing a packet of duck sauce from the bottom of a plastic bottle filled with water by squeezing on the bottle; and popping a plastic baggie open by filling it with water, vinegar and baking soda and then shaking it.
Tyler said science is one of his favorite subjects in school.
So will he be re-creating some of the experiments he saw Monday at home?
"Not with eggs," his mother, Susan Bloom, interjected. "I don’t think we’ll do the electric pickle or the cornstarch explosion."

Jan Biles can be reached at (785) 295-1292 or jan.biles@cjonline.com.
The University of Kansas Hospital announced Monday that Irene Cumming will be leaving her position as president and chief executive officer of the hospital to become president and CEO of the University HealthSystem Consortium, one of the leading academic medical organizations in the country, with 97 academic medical centers and 153 of their affiliated hospitals. The consortium is headquartered near Chicago.

"Irene Cumming led a turnaround at The University of Kansas Hospital that has become a model for academic medical centers across the nation," said George Farha, MD, chair of the University of Kansas Hospital Authority Board. "It is a shame that her talents will be lost to us and to the community.

Farha said a successor will be named well in advance of Cumming's departure.

Cumming said her mission won't change; it will just be on a different stage.

"During my 11 years, we’ve accomplished a lot, but I take the most pride in improving the University of Kansas Hospital’s level of patient care," said Cumming. "Quality patient care always has been my top priority as a hospital administrator, and in my new position, I will advocate for that to be firmly established as a priority of academic medical centers nationwide, alongside research and education. Academic medical centers cannot provide the best in education or research unless their hospitals continue to make the highest quality patient care their most important priority."

The quality and safety of patient care in the 508-bed hospital (there were only 275 staffed beds when Cumming began) has gained national recognition over her time in office. In 2006, the hospital ranked No. 11 among the nation's 81 academic medical centers in overall safety and quality rankings.

"I am proud that, working alongside the physicians, nurses and other leaders at the University of Kansas Hospital, we changed an obsolete hospital culture into one that puts patient care at the forefront," said Cumming. "We’ve proven that quality patient care and academic medicine do not have to be mutually exclusive, as they were in our hospital before the Authority was established in 1998. The results have been reflected in low mortality rates, improved out-
Cumming
Continued from PAGE 1

comes, dramatically increased patient satisfaction, record patient volumes and financial stability.

The hospital recently earned Magnet designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center of the American Nurses Association, the first designation for a Kansas-based hospital. Magnet designation recognizes a hospital for meeting standards of high quality patient care. Only 3.5 percent of the nation’s healthcare organizations are Magnet hospitals.

In addition to improving overall patient care, Cumming was instrumental in resurrecting the hospital’s image. When Cumming began her tenure as CEO in April 1996, The University of Kansas Hospital was a ward of the state and its financial outlook was grim. The hospital was losing one-third of its staff annually, and its patient numbers and revenues were sliding sharply.

But since 1998, the hospital’s patient volume has grown by 50 percent to nearly 20,000 patients. Financial health has improved steadily every year, with revenue climbing 185 percent since the Authority was established to more than half a billion dollars. This success allowed a 340 percent growth in support the hospital provided for the university, with $31 million this year alone.

In the last five years under university control, the hospital was permitted only $33 million in capital investment. In the eight years under the Authority, capital investment totaled nearly $450 million.

Under Cumming, the hospital has undergone other major improvements, including:

• The purchase of the outpatient cancer program from a for-profit corporation, to which the university had transferred it to in the 1990s, beginning $75 million of cancer program investment, including the largest outpatient cancer center in the region, opening this summer on the hospital’s Westwood campus.

• The region’s only Nationally Accredited Level I trauma center.

• Eight intensive care units.

• The revitalization of the heart program at the hospital culminating in the 2006 opening of the $77 million Center for Advanced Heart Care.

Cumming pledged to stay through the end of June to ensure that current negotiations on the University’s plan to extend affiliations will continue uninterrupted.

“The interest of the hospital, its medical staff and its patients must continue to be pressed as these talks enter a new phase,” she said. “I will work with the rest of the leadership team to ensure that any affiliation agreement allows the hospital to continue its commitment to our patients.”

“I do not regret fighting for our patients and high quality care,” Cumming said. “I do not regret fighting to demand respect for the University of Kansas Hospital among those who resent our leadership role in health care. I do not regret responding honestly and directly when asked about our views. I do deeply regret that many vital issues were minimized because our efforts were characterized as a clash of personalities. It is my hope now, that the future of both entities on our shared campus will be determined by honestly examining critical issues and not personal ones.

“There is more than one way to achieve a vision, more than one path to greatness. We have proven that breaking with old mindsets can bring great success. Our entire hospital organization is proud that it has been the University of Kansas Hospital that challenged the status quo of health care for a community and an entire state.”

Cumming is the only area healthcare leader serving on the governing body of the Association of American Medical Colleges and is currently chair of that organizations’ Council of Teaching Hospitals. Cumming is no stranger to the University Health System Consortium, having served as chair of its board of directors.

In addition to her role at the hospital, Cumming was also recently elected as chair of the Kansas City, Kan, Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.
KU to honor top seniors March 28

LAWRENCE — Students from nine Kansas high schools will be honored Wednesday, March 28, by the University of Kansas Alumni Association and KU Endowment.

A total of 35 seniors from high schools in Barber, Harper, Kingman and Pratt counties will be recognized for their academic achievements and named Kansas Honor Scholars at a 6:30 p.m. dinner program at Kingman High School, 260 Kansas Ave.

The Kansas Honors Program began in 1971 and honored its 100,000th student this year. Scholars rank in the top 10 percent of their high school senior classes and are selected regardless of curricula, majors, occupational plans or higher-education goals. Honorees’ names are listed online at www.news.ku.edu/2007/march/12/khpkingman.shtml.

During the ceremony, each student will receive an American Heritage Dictionary in hardback and CD versions, presented by Heath Peterson, director of Kansas programs for the KU Alumni Association.

William Crowe, librarian at the Spencer Research Library, will speak to the students, parents and guests. Honored students will be guests of the alumni association and KU Endowment; parents and area alumni are welcome to attend at a cost of $11 each.

Community volunteers collect reservations, coordinate details and serve as local contacts for the event. Debra Meisenheimer, Kingman, will be the site coordinator and county coordinator for Kingman County. Other county coordinators are Bob Slinkard, Medicine Lodge, for Barber County; Ron Giesen, Anthony, for Harper County; Charles Holcomb, Cunningham, for Kingman County; and Cindy Keller and Marcia Suiter, Pratt, for Pratt County.

The Kansas Honors Program is made possible through KU Endowment and proceeds from the Jayhawk License Plate program.

Student Names are listed in the following order:

Cunningham
Vickie Renner 67035

Kingman
Bret Bean 67068
Janet Giefer 67142

Norwich
Lauren Hewitt 67118
Norwich High School Eric Mark 67142

Kingman High School

Brett Bean 67068
Janet Giefer 67142

Kingman High School

Kristin Lacio 67068
Kelsie Langley 67068

Kingman High School

Andrea Voran 67142

Kingman High School

Debra Meisenheimer, Kingman, will be the site coordinator and county coordinator for Kingman County. Other county coordinators are Bob Slinkard, Medicine Lodge, for Barber County; Ron Giesen, Anthony, for Harper County; Charles Holcomb, Cunningham, for Kingman County; and Cindy Keller and Marcia Suiter, Pratt, for Pratt County.
Fake online diplomas a real worry for colleges

BY STEVE ROCK
Kansas City Star

Need a college degree to get ahead? Don't want to attend classes to get it? Well, hop on the Internet and buy a fake transcript and diploma.

Phony diplomas are proliferating on the Web, leading to fears of academic fraud and a constant legal battle by universities to protect their good names.

Officials at Kansas State University, for example, recently instructed their trademark-licensing agent to send a cease-and-desist letter to a Web site that offered a fake K-State diploma and transcript for $249.99. On any given day, the same thing could be happening at many other universities, including the University of Kansas and the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Various Web sites advertise the documents as "replacement" or "novelty" diplomas.
Disclaimers on some sites say the diplomas should not be used in place of authentic sheepskins. But education officials fear that the documents can lead to people pretending to have degrees or grades they did not earn.

"Diploma fraud is an enormous problem," said Barmak Nassirian, an associate executive director of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers in Washington, D.C. "Stuff is coming at us so fast that we can't even gain awareness, let alone do anything about it."

The Kansas City Star found at least 12 Web sites that claim to offer diplomas from legitimate U.S. institutions. One site brazenly boasts "10 years in the underground of counterfeiting documents."

**Whack-a-gopher**

When universities learn of the sites — as K-State officials learned from the Star — they act to keep the phony diplomas out of circulation.

The site to which K-State officials sent the letter shut down recently, but former FBI agent Allen Ezell said it is only a matter of time before another site takes its place. Ezell, who spent more than a decade investigating fake colleges and fraudulent degrees, said the industry is worth millions of dollars and is growing.

"It's whack-a-gopher," Ezell said. "One goes down, another one comes up."

At Wichita State University, "we would certainly be concerned about any attempt at unauthorized reproduction of official WSU documents and take appropriate steps to protect the integrity of the educational enterprise," said Gary Miller, vice president for academic affairs and research.

WSU uses traditional safeguards for its documents, such as printing transcripts on special paper. And WSU's seal and other symbols are trademarked.

Agent Jeff Lanza, spokesman for the Kansas City office of the FBI, said federal officials are aware of take diploma services, but such white-collar crimes "are not the highest of priorities."

"We don't have any cases in this area," Lanza said.

Officials at K-State, KU and MU said they could not cite specific examples of people using phony degrees, but they know that diploma and academic fraud is a problem.

That is clear at Web sites such as DiplomasUnlimited.com, which before shutting down sold degrees from K-State and other institutions. The site offered what it called the "finest quality replica diplomas in the world."

The design templates, ink and paper were "custom created according to the college or university you select," the Web site said.

Officials with the company could not be reached for comment.

**College licensing**

MU, KU and K-State are clients of the Collegiate Licensing Co., a Georgia-based trademark-licensing firm that represents more than 150 colleges and universities. Jim Aronowitz, the associate general counsel at Collegiate Licensing, said his firm sends cease-and-desist letters to various businesses "multiple times a day."

Aronowitz said that most of those businesses have nothing to do with fake degrees, and ones that sell phony diplomas typically remove Collegiate Licensing clients from their lists of available schools after the firm sends a threatening letter.

Said Todd Cohen, a spokesman at KU: "We don't spend our days surfing the Web looking for these sites, but as soon as we find out about them, we immediately react."

PhonyDiploma.com has WSU and KU on its "won't do" list, but it will create products for more than 200 other colleges and universities. The site says its diplomas include "actual designs" from schools as varied as Kansas' Ottawa University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Prices for replica college diplomas start at $184.95. Other products include high school diplomas and General Educational Development diplomas.

According to its Web site, PhonyDiploma is based in Richmond, Va. A person who answered the phone at the company declined to answer questions but suggested corresponding by e-mail. Officials with the Web site did not reply to several e-mails.

**Disclaimers**

Elsewhere on the site is this disclaimer: "PhonyDiplomas and transcripts may only be used for entertainment purposes, for your records, or for replacement of a lost or damaged document. They are not real documents and cannot be used as real diplomas. PhonyDiplomas are not meant to be used for unlawful purposes or any other illegal uses. This means that they cannot be used to pass as real diplomas under any circumstance."

Comparable disclaimers are found on other such Web sites, but some sites also offer an array of transcripts.

The transcripts available at BackAlleyPress.com, the site says, use the same kind of security paper that most colleges use. The transcripts also come with embossed seals, a registrar's signature, or both. The price: $50 per semester.

Responding to a written query from the Star, an official with Back Alley Press said in an e-mail: "We sell a lot of diplomas to people who have either lost their credential or want a second copy for their home and do not want to go through the long and hard efforts put forth by schools to replace them. The only thing our service provides is an easier way for them to get this."

To Nassirian, of the registrars association, the suggestion that these products are designed solely for novelty purposes or to replace lost diplomas is laughable.

"Don't tell me they don't know how people are using this stuff," he said.

Besides, school officials say, alumni who lose their diplomas can get legitimate replacements directly from the institution. At MU, alumni can get replacements through the registrar's office for $30. The process usually takes only a few weeks.

**Contributing:** Iosses Fernandez of The Eagle
LAWRENCE — Area students earned honor roll distinction for the fall 2006 semester at the University of Kansas.

Arkansas City — Ryan Christopher Cramer, Mitchell David Ross.

Atlanta — Tyler Brett Martin Burden — Heather Dawn Redenius, Ruth Leann Seeliger.


Sedan — Libby Ann Allen, Kathryn Elisabeth Presley, Carol Jean Shaffer.

Winfield — Jaden Dean Bailey, Erin Aili Birney, Zachary S. Coble, Travis Dale Lindeman, Autumn R McPherson, Alyssa Lane Steffen, Nicole D Winegarner.
Former Senate majority leader to receive Dole Leadership Prize

LAWRENCE (AP) — Former Senate Majority Leader Howard H. Baker Jr. will receive the Dole Leadership Prize from the Dole Institute of Politics at the University of Kansas.

Baker will receive the award and take part in a moderated discussion on April 22.

He served three terms in the Senate and was Minority Leader from 1977 to 1981 and Majority Leader from 1981 to 1985.

He also was President Reagan's chief of staff from 1987 to 1988 and served as ambassador to Japan from 2001 to 2005.

He is married to former Republican Sen. Nancy Kassebaum Baker of Kansas.
Kansas University held an Honors Program at Axtell on Tuesday, March 6th. The program recognizes the top ten percent of the graduating class. Students from Frankfort High School are pictured above, along with their counselor, Tom Schroeder.
Tidwell will speak at Carlson Library

Noted speaker, John Edgar Tidwell, associate professor of English at the University of Kansas, will present the program at the Frank Carlson Library on Monday, March 19, at 7 p.m., in the Carlson Room.

Tidwell's topic for the evening will be Gordon Parks, The Learning Tree.

A native of Independence, he received his B.A. from Washburn University. His master's degree was awarded by Creighton University, Omaha, and his Ph.D. by the University of Minnesota.

Before joining the KU faculty in 1999, Professor Tidwell taught at a number of schools, including Miami University and the University of Kentucky. His research specialties are African American and American literatures. He has edited the memoirs and the collected poems of Kansas-born writer, Frank Marshall Davis, and has written more than 14 essays on the esteemed African American poet, Sterling A. Brown.

Tidwell's subject, Gordon Parks, native of Fort Scott, was a groundbreaking African American photographer, musician, artist, poet, novelist, activist, journalist, composer and film director. His first work of fiction was the Learning Tree as was his first film effort of the same title.

The state of Kansas, Kansas Reads, the Learning Tree, One State project began on Kansas Day and concludes at the Frank Carlson Library with the Tidwell program. The Learning Tree program is being brought to the library through a grant from the Kansas Humanities Council, a non-profit organization with 30 years of experience in conducting and supporting cultural programs in communities across Kansas.

KHC promotes understanding of the history, traditions and ideas that shape our lives and build community. The public is invited to attend the program. For questions, contact the Frank Carlson Library during regular business hours.