PAOLAN graduates from KU's LeaderShape Institute

LAWRENCE — Adam Martin Collins of Paola is among 56 graduates of the University of Kansas 2007 LeaderShape Institute.

A graduate of Paola High School, he is the son of Bruce Collins and is a senior studying for a bachelor of arts degree in psychology.

The institute is sponsored and coordinated by KU's Student Involvement and Leadership Center.

The six-day intensive program to develop leadership abilities took place Jan. 10 through 15 during KU's winter break at the Tall Oaks Conference Center near Linwood.

During training, KU students work in groups to create ideas for projects, then refine goals, plans and implementation strategies to accomplish those ideas within their own organization, living group, community or workplace. They learn about leadership styles and work through simulations of situations they could face.

For more information about the LeaderShape Institute, visit the Web site at www.silc.ku.edu/?Esilc/Leadershape/home.shtml.
Franklin County parents will have an opportunity to get their children a free check-up and other health-related information this weekend.

The 12th annual Children's Health and Safety Fair will be from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. Saturday at Ransom Memorial Hospital, 1301 S. Main St., Ottawa.

"It ultimately helps us take care of Franklin County kids," Tod Scott, one of the primary organizers of Spring Fling, said about the health fair.

Children will be able to receive free vision and dental screenings, height and weight checks and obtain information about nutrition, poison control and more. The Franklin County ambulance service will perform car seat safety checks in the parking lot and the Lifestar helicopter will give children an inside look at an air ambulance 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

The screenings help the health department obtain better numbers for Franklin County and get help to children who need it, Kim Jordan, hospital spokesperson, said.

Attendance has numbered about 600 the last couple of years, Jordan said.

The fair will feature 35 booths and activities. The health fair starts Spring Fling, a week's worth of activities primarily organized by the Franklin County Children's Coalition to keep children of all ages occupied during Spring Break.

New to the fair this year is "Dance, Dance Revolution" which is an exercise and entertainment group from the University of Kansas. Also Children's Mercy Family Partners will have Healthwave insurance information, Jordan said.

Giveaways at the fair include jump ropes at the wellness booth, smoke detectors from the fire department and therapeutic hot and cold pack teddy bears. A lunch of a lean hamburger, baked chips, fresh fruit and milk or water will be served from 10:30 a.m. to noon for $1.

For more information on the fair call (785) 229-8311.
Five area student athletes were named to the University of Kansas Athletic Director's Honor Roll for 2006. They were honored during halftime of the KU-COLORADO men's basketball game Jan. 27 at Allen Fieldhouse.

Student athletes who achieved a semester grade-point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale during the spring or fall 2006 semester are eligible for the honor. Honored students include:

- Lisa Marie Morrisey, Ottawa, is a junior member of the women's track and field team. She majors in communication studies. She graduated from Ottawa High School. She is the daughter of Mark and Cynthia Morrisey.
- Jack Thomas Sachse, Ottawa, is a sophomore member of the men's track and field team. He graduated from Ottawa High School. He is the son of Thomas and Susan Sachse.
- Katherine Marcella Beall, Baldwin City, is a sophomore member of the rowing team. She majors in political science. She graduated from Baldwin High School. She is the daughter of Cynthia and Raymond Beall.
- Emily Nicole Brown, Baldwin City, is a senior member of the volleyball team. She majors in secondary pre-education. She graduated from Baldwin High School. She is the daughter of Dan and Jill Brown.
- Hugh Robert Murphy, Baldwin City, is a senior member of the men's track and field team. He majors in sociology. He graduated from Baldwin High School. He is the son of Jack Murphy.
Confucius Institute brings distant culture to the heartland

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

OVERLAND PARK — Less than one year after it opened, the University of Kansas Confucius Institute has proven to be a big draw with Midwesterners eager to learn Chinese culture and language.

The institute, based at the university's Edwards Campus in Overland Park, is one of 120 around the world, with just four located in the United States.

A joint project of the University of Kansas, the Chinese Ministry of Education and Huazhong Normal University, the institute has attracted 275 students since last May to its classes in Mandarin Chinese.

Many are schoolchildren, but the course is also popular with professionals and other business people for whom a working knowledge of China's most widely spoken dialect would be an advantage.

Jack Nagle, an engineer with Overland Park-based Black & Veatch, is one such student. Although his Chinese co-workers find his mispronunciations amusing, his attempts to speak their language have sealed a bond between him and those he manages at the engineering and construction firm.

"It has really bridged a gap and has helped us work together," said Nagle, who hopes to visit China someday. "I think they appreciate me trying to learn their language. That's probably the best benefit."

So high is the interest among Black & Veatch workers in learning Chinese language and culture that, at the company's request, the institute holds classes twice a week at the firm's offices. Nearly 50 employees have participated so far.

Black & Veatch employees communicate often via teleconference and videoconference with their counterparts in the company's Beijing office.

"I think that people understand that Chinese is economically and politically relevant," said Sheree Willis, associate director for institute programs.

According to the Kansas Department of Commerce, China purchased more than $300 million in Kansas goods and services in 2005, making it the third leading buyer of Kansas products.

"A lot of companies like Black & Veatch are very forward-looking in understanding that in order to be effective, international companies need to be very well-versed not only in other languages but in other cultures," Willis said.

That is why the Confucius Institute is so attractive to area businesses, said John Watson, director of trade development for the Kansas Department of Commerce.

"I believe that the more business executives and the more students take advantage of the opportunity to learn the language, the more opportunities created for business between Kansas and China," Watson said.

Employees from Harrah's Casino, Sprint and many small firms have taken the classes.

Saturday morning classes have attracted whole families, some of whom plan to visit the country and others who are just curious about the language and the culture.

"The classes have been really popular at Black & Veatch," said David Swift, who coordinates global professional training for the company. "We did one class last fall, and when we announced that we had room in it for 20 people, it was full in less than five minutes."

Last month, chief engineers got a crash course in Mandarin to prepare for a corporate board meeting in Beijing this spring.

"Chinese is very difficult to learn," Nagle said. "It's not a
Romance language. You could have one word pronounced many different ways, and each pronunciation means something different.

“We plan to add more companies starting in the fall,” he said. “We have also agreed to do an orientation for the Kansas Special Olympics staff and athletes going to the Special Olympics World Games in Shanghai in October.”

The institute also is partnering with the Kansas Department of Education to bring more Chinese teachers from China to public schools in Kansas. The institute is involved in recruiting and training the teachers.
Ten undergraduates at the University of Kansas are going to Washington, D.C., to meet policy makers and learn about international organizations.

Diana Carlin, dean of the Graduate School and International Programs, and Jane Irungu, director of KU’s Global Awareness Program, will accompany the students on the trip, which takes place March 18-21.

The students, all Global Awareness Program participants, applied for the spring break trip and were selected by a group of faculty members. The goal of the trip is to expose students to a variety of organizations that work internationally so they have a clear understanding of the preparation needed and opportunities available for international careers.

Among the students participating in the program is Tyra Blew, a Wamego High School graduate and a senior in economics, international studies and political science. She is daughter of Kenneth and Cynthia Blew, Wamego.

“KU alumni have distinguished themselves and impacted the world through a diverse array of international careers, and the current generation of KU students has potential to do the same,” said Carlin. “The Washington trip will provide a first step toward realization of our students’ goals. We are fortunate to have alumni committed to making the Global Awareness Program a life-changing experience for our students.”

The students will visit the U.S. Agency for International Development, Embassy of Poland, Organization of American States, Brookings Institution, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and U.S. Department of State. They are scheduled to meet with Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kan., and KU alumni at a reception and attend a musical performance at the Kennedy Center.

Ambassador Kenton Keith, a KU alumnus and KU Alumni Association Distinguished Service Citation recipient, arranged the group’s itinerary and will host a KU alumni reception during the group’s visit.
Citizen journalists wanted

World Company, journalism school offer class again

BY DENNIS ANDERSON
THEWORLD.CO.INFO

Ever consider being a journalist? Well, here's your opportunity.

The World Company and the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications at Kansas University are seeking candidates for the second Citizen Journalism Academy. CJA fellows will learn from educators and practicing journalists about the processes and standards that help translate community activities and events into "news."

"We were so impressed with the interest and quality of our first group of Citizen journalists last fall that we decided to hold another session," said Ann Brill, dean of the KU journalism school.

"As journalists, we say that the public has a need to know," Brill said. "As citizens, we say the public has a right to know. In this era of online media, the distinctions between citizens and journalists are blurred. While that can have positive results, it also creates a demand for more communication between journalists and citizens. CJA is our attempt to facilitate that communication."

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Interested in being part of the second class of the Citizen Journalism Academy? Apply online or send an application to Cody Howard, 6News news director, 645 N.H., Lawrence 66044.

In your application, tell us about yourself and why you want to be part of the Citizen Journalism Academy.

The deadline to apply is March 30.

"Class members will get an introduction to a number of different aspects of journalism — from a professional and academic setting," said Cody Howard, news director for 6News.

"By the end of the sessions, Fellows should have a clear understanding of how to gather news and tell a story effectively in different and cutting-edge media."

Fellows also will learn how news decisions are made, the ethics of storytelling, how to ask the right questions and a number of other key topics.

Classes will be on five consecutive Monday evenings, beginning April 23. There is no charge for the class.
During the inaugural Citizen Journalism Academy in the fall, two Baldwin City residents were among the students. Diane Wagner, left, and Robin Bayer were listening as Channel 6 News Director Cody Howard gave one of the presentations. The academy is put on by the World Company and the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications at Kansas University. Deadline to apply for the academy is March 30.
The West Wyandotte Library in Kansas City, Kansas, will feature speaker Dr. Tamara Falicov of the University of Kansas, Lawrence, in honor of Women's History Month. Falicov, of the KU Department of Theater and Film, will lead a discussion titled "Latinas on the Silver Screen: Contemporary Representations on Film," which will examine the important roles Latinas have played in movies. The discussion will begin at 7 p.m. on Monday, March 26. It is free and open to the public. Call 913-596-5800 for more information.
Crews scoop up dangerous waste at oasis

STEVE VOCKRODT
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Fire, emergency and hazardous materials crews from as far away as Topeka responded last week to a Kansas Turnpike service center in southern Leavenworth County to collect several pounds of a dangerous powder.

Three Kansas Turnpike Authority employees found the white substance, wrapped in plastic, before noon Friday in a trash can at the service area about five miles east of Lawrence on Interstate 70.

They saw that the substance was burning through the plastic, called authorities and then went to be checked by doctors.

“They’re fine,” said Lisa Callahan, KTA spokeswoman.

Callahan said experts suspect the substance could be sodium hydroxide, a cleaning agent.

Joseph Heppert, professor and chairman of the University of Kansas chemistry department, said sodium hydroxide is a strong base — opposite of acid but equally as dangerous.

“In essence, it’s a lot like lye,” Heppert said, adding that the chemical is dangerous when it comes in contact with skin or eyes.

Mike Lingenfelser, Leavenworth assistant fire chief, said the powder reacted with water and produced heat. He said he didn’t know how the powder ended up at the turnpike service center.

Response teams closed the westbound entrance to the center when they arrived. They reopened it about four hours later.

Leavenworth, Leavenworth County Fire District No. 1, Tonganoxie, Reno Township and Topeka crews responded to the call.

Hazardous materials workers removed 30 to 40 pounds of the powder into steel drums and then cleaned up the scene.

Callahan described the incident as small and isolated and said there were no injuries. For these reasons, she said, the incident wouldn’t be investigated further.
Winter die-off stings bee industry

‘Colony collapse disorder,’ other issues threaten honey producers

Erin Castaneda
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A disease suspected in the death of millions of honeybee colonies across the country doesn’t fly right with Chip Taylor, Kansas University biology professor.

There are too many possibilities, making it difficult to predict what’s causing the disappearance of bee colonies, he said.

“It’s not clear that there is a real issue here involving a disease,” Taylor said. “A lot of this is portrayed as a disease, and what it looks like to me is that there are probably six or seven causes.”

“This situation is very reminiscent of the disappearing disease 30 years ago,” in which many bees left their hives and never returned.

The current crisis, tentatively named the colony collapse disorder, or CCD, has threatened the pollination industry and commercial honey production, with some commercial migratory beekeepers losing up to 90 percent of their colonies.

But in Kansas, the bees aren’t disappearing, they’re just dying.

Tony Schwager, who owns and runs Anthony’s Bee Farm, southeast of Lawrence, said he has lost more bees to starvation than disease.

“This winter was a lot worse as far as death loss,” he said. “We’re going to have to go to work this spring and buy some bees, which will cost about $3,000 in replacing the bees we lost.”

He said when the mystery of the colony collapse disorder is solved, he suspects people will find the deaths and disappearances are due to problems such as weather conditions or overuse of chemicals.

Maryann Frazier, entomologist at Pennsylvania State University, who is part of the newly formed CCD Working Group, said there are new characteristics that prompted her and researchers at six other universities and laboratories to examine the disorder more closely. She said beekeepers think this is the same old thing and the industry won’t survive such severe conditions.

But Taylor said he’s optimistic the bee industry will recover. He’s already seen an increase in the local wild bee population. He said beekeepers who lose 20 percent to 30 percent of their hives can make it up in April, but those who lose more will face financial hardship.

“It’s not a precise science,” he said. “You’re trying to match wits with weather. I make mistakes every year, it’s just the nature of working with bees and the nature of dealing with an insect we don’t understand.”
Alumni group for KU forming

LAWRENCE— The KU Alumni Association is proud to announce the formation of a South Kansas Chapter to serve KU graduates and University friends in Butler, Greenwood, Elk, Sumner, Cowley and Chautauqua counties. Alumni association chapters are officially recognized organizations of association members designed to coordinate the efforts of KU alumni, provide information about the University, recruit potential students and advocate for state funding of higher education.

Bob Bourdette, a Winfield resident and 1976 graduate of the university, will lead the chapter as president.

Future chapter events include a June 11 golf tournament at the Winfield Country Club with university and athletics guests, a July 12 Jayhawk Generations Welcome Picnic with a free meal for freshmen and transfer students attending KU in the fall of 2007, and a Nov. 10 bus trip to the KU vs. OSU football game with tailgate included.

Visit www.kualumni.org/southkansasjayhawks for more information about these events.

To join the South Kansas Chapter, become a member of the KU Alumni Association by calling (800) 584-2957 or visit www.kualumni.org.

Membership is open to all graduates, former faculty and university friends. Annual membership is $50 single, $60 joint.