County touts success of K-10 connector bus

JACK "MILES" VENTIMIGLIA
EDITOR

National, state, county and leaders from several cities celebrated quick success for The Jo's K-10 connector service.

The bus travels between the University of Kansas Edwards Campus and the Johnson County Community College in Overland Park to the University of Kansas in Lawrence. The bus uses Kansas Highway 10 primarily.

“We started it as a demonstration project,” Johnson County Transportation Director Alice Amrein said moments before the event at Edwards Campus on Monday.

Start-up funds came from a federal congestion-mitigation, air-quality grant and from a state grant, Amrein said.

“On the first day of service we had 114 people on the bus and we’re averaging about 250 rides a day. It was much higher than what we originally anticipated,” she said. “After the first day we were 20 percent of where we wanted to be and (now) we’re a little over half of what we want it to be.”

The plan is to draw 350 riders daily, Amrein said.

Gasoline costs play into the connector's success, she said. “We have a very competitive fare,” Amrein said.

The Jo charges riders $15 to make five round trips of about 70 miles each for a total of roughly 350 miles per week. Based on $3-per-gallon gas prices and a car getting 25 mpg, savings come to $27 per week, excluding automobile maintenance costs.

Some riders also prefer the safety of having someone else deal with the traffic on K-10, Amrein said.

During the formal presentation to a crowd of about 75 at Edwards Campus, County Chairwoman Annabeth Surbaugh said the idea for the commuter line surfaced in the 1990s and a 2004 Kansas Department of Transportation study supported the concept to reduce congestion.
K-10 connector service surpasses expectations

U.S. Department of Transportation Region 7 Administrator Mokhtee Ahmed said after the ceremony that the K-10 connector program fits into government plans to promote public transportation.

“What’s important is to make transit a mode of choice in this country ... and this is one way,” Ahmed said. “If you drive every day like I do from Topeka to Kansas City, it’s an hour and a half for me and the concentration just on driving is really fatiguing.”

Ahmed said he also dislikes paying for gas.

“There’s no public transit from Topeka to Kansas City and I wish there was because then I would take it,” Ahmed said.

KDOT Planning and Development Director Terry Heidner said implementing major transportation plans can take years, but the commuter line offered a low-cost way to address a need quickly.

“It’s been a raging success,” Heidner told the crowd “It has exceeded our expectations.”

Johnson County Transportation Authority Chairman Steve Kilka said after leaving Johnson County, the bus stops in Lawrence at the KU campus, 19th and Naismith, and Haskell University. He said the system could expand further.

“It’s time to celebrate,” Kilka said. “We have a good thing here, folks.”
HOLLY KRAMER  
STAFF WRITER

Amanda Shriwise, Overland Park, said she likes to keep moving.

The 21-year-old University of Kansas student received the 2007 Elizabeth Sherbon Award for excellence in dance. Shriwise accepted the $500 award at the University Dance Company performance on April 27 at the Lied Center in Lawrence.

"(Dancing) is a means of expression that I'd never want to live without," Shriwise said. "It's something I'll always enjoy. A creative outlet is important. I feel really lucky to have that in my life."

The Elizabeth Sherbon award is given annually to recognize outstanding dance achievements, KU dance professor Janet Hamburg said.

"Shriwise) is remarkable in every way, we were delighted to be able to recognize her outstanding achievements," Hamburg said.

Hamburg and six other professors from the dance department unanimously chose Shriwise for the honor.

Elizabeth Sherbon paved the way for the modern KU dance program. In 1930, she graduated with a physical education degree, specializing in dance. She returned to her alma mater to direct the dance program in 1961.

Shriwise has been dancing almost as long as she has been walking. Her mother, Susan Shriwise, Overland Park, enrolled Amanda in dance classes at age 3 and Amanda said she took off from there.

"I've been dancing for 18 years," Amanda said. "I've been studying ballet for about 15 years." Amanda said she loves dance's transient nature.

"Dance isn't something you can hold on to," she said. "Once dancers stop, it's over. I've learned about taking life one moment at a time and seizing the moment. You can apply that to your life, appreciate what it is and keep moving."

Amanda has performed with the University Dance Company since fall 2004. She is a member of the University Honors Program and is one of 20 students chosen among 5,000 sophomores for KU's University Scholars academic mentorship program. She performed at the 2005 and 2007 American College Dance festivals and at the 2006 Kansas Dance Festival.

Amanda serves as treasurer of the University Dance Company and a representative for the dance division on the School of Fine Arts Student Advisory Council.

Known for both her physical and academic feats, Amanda is majoring in dance and African Studies, with a minor in chemistry. She said she plans to pursue a medical degree and master's degree in public health.

"She's incredibly bright in so many ways," University Honors lecturer Mary Klayder said. "Organic chemistry seems easy to her. She's capable in such broad ways. She has great leadership abilities and the ability to communicate interests she has."

Klayder said she has no doubts Amanda will go far in life.

"She's remarkable." Klayder said. "(We'll) see more and more of her. She's one of the strongest undergraduates at KU, not just as a dancer."

Amanda traveled to Tanzania last summer to volunteer in a hospital and a school for disabled children.

"I knew I wanted to spend summer in a completely different place and go abroad," Amanda said. "I've always had an interest in African culture. Dance is infused in their culture."

She taught English to local children and acquired medical experience by shadowing doctors in the hospital. Amanda said she plans to return to Tanzania this summer.

"I've always been interested in doing service work," she said. "It's really rewarding and I tied in medical interest with service work."

Amanda said she has learned many life lessons from dancing.

"Dancing is about working hard and achieving a long-term goal," she said. "It's not just fun, not just easy. It's about investing and getting something in return."

"In a lot of ways, there's no better way to spend my time."
The Jewish community joins for an evening of prayer, study and celebration at the annual all-night Shavuot program at 8:15 p.m. Tuesday, May 22 at Kehilath Israel Synagogue, 10501 Conser, Overland Park.

The Kansas City Jewish community has celebrated this Shavuot tradition for 27 years.

Shavuot comes 50 days after the first day of Pesach or Passover. The holiday celebrates God giving the Torah to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai.

The celebration begins with two Mincha services including a traditional service led by Rabbi Herbert Mandl of Kehilath Israel, and a Learners service, facilitated by Cantor Paul Silbersher of Congregation Kol Ami, 75th Street and Belinder, Prairie Village.

The evening will include dinner, followed by a discussion facilitated by scholar and philosopher S. Daniel Breslauer, a professor emeritus of religious studies at the University of Kansas.

Breslauer will speak about “Creating Myths in Jewish Tradition from the Bible to Bialik.”

Learning is an integral part of Judaism and study will be a part of this event. Keeping with custom, the Book of Ruth will be read. This is the story of a woman who converts to Judaism.

Other customs include staying up on the first night of Shavuot to study Torah and saying morning prayers at sunrise.

Study sessions led by rabbis Mark Levin of Congregation Beth Torah, 6100 W. 127th St., Overland Park, and Rabbi Meir Wexler will facilitate youth programs during the event.

Snacks and coffee will be served throughout the night.

Student permission forms are required.

Two sunrise services are planned, a traditional Mechitza led by Mandl and an egalitarian service led by Rabbi Alan Cohen of Congregation Beth Shalom, 14200 Lamar Ave., Overland Park.

Breakfast ends the celebration.

People are invited to stay and engage in ruach, Hebrew for “breath of God,” and group study.

This program is co-sponsored by The Rabbinical Association of Greater KC, Jewish Federation of Greater Kansas City and Congregations Beth Shalom, Beth Israel Abraham Voliner, Beth Torah, B’nai Jehudah, Kehilath Israel, Kol Ami, Ohev Sholom and Or Hadash.

The catered dairy buffet dinner served at 9:10 p.m. costs $13 per adult and $11 per student age 21 and under. Advance reservations are required by today. Make checks payable to Rabbinical Association, 5801 W. 115th St., Suite 113, Overland Park, KS 66211.

There is no charge to attend the study programs only, which begin at 10:15.

For additional information, contact Annette Fish, administrator/program director for the Rabbinical Association, at afprogram@aol.com or 327-4622.
The names of more than 4,280 candidates for degrees at the University of Kansas this spring have been announced. KU’s Class of 2007 numbers more than 6,400, including 2,125 who completed degree work in summer and fall of 2006. Because KU conducts only one formal commencement ceremony each year, many of these candidates for degrees will return Sunday, May 20, for the university’s 135th commencement procession into Memorial Stadium. The procession along Memorial Drive begins at 2:30 p.m. with the program beginning at 3:30 p.m.

Local students graduating are Charles Forsyth, son of Jim and Becky Forsyth of Anthony, with a BS in strategic communications; Kelly McKee, daughter of Richard and Toni McKee of Anthony, with a Doctor of Pharmacy; Michael Nichols, son of Sandy Nichols of Anthony, with a Juris Doctor; and Megan Swingle, daughter of Chauncey and Junell Swingle of Zenda, with a Doctor of Pharmacy.
Area students to take part in Duke TIP ceremony

The University of Kansas will host a state recognition program for about 400 academically talented seventh-grade students selected for the Duke University Talent Identification Program.

The event will take place at 1:30 p.m. Sunday, June 3, at the Lied Center.

Selection to Duke TIP is based on college entrance-exam scores that the students take while still in middle school. The top five percent are chosen for the program. Students participate by taking either the SAT or ACT national achievement tests. Working with host academic institutions such as KU, Duke TIP sponsors 33 state ceremonies in its 16-state talent search region.

Each Duke TIP student receives a medallion. The state recognition ceremonies honor seventh graders who have earned scores above the average scores of college-bound high school seniors. About 900 students qualified in the Kansas region.

Duke TIP is a nonprofit educational organization that identifies and helps cultivate the talents of academically gifted youth. Since 1980, more than 1 million students have taken part in the program that is supported by student fees and donations from individuals, corporations and foundations.

Students from Augusta selected for the Duke TIP program are Reece W. Rogers, Adam J. Ronnebaum, and Kara Schnake.
Students graduate from KU

Derby News Report
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KU’s Class of 2007 numbers more than 6,400, including 2,125 who completed degree work in summer and fall 2006.

Those students, including many from Derby, graduated Sunday in the university’s 135th commencement procession into Memorial Stadium.

Derby students from Derby High School were: Jodi Buchanan, daughter of Bruce and Jere Buchanan, bachelor of general studies in English; Adam Cloud, son of Fern and Gayle Cloud, bachelor of general studies in political science, with a minor in history; Patricia Crawley, daughter of Dennis and Shirley Collins, Prof 1 doctor of medicine; Nicole Gordon Barker, Prof 3 Juris Doctor; Heather Hayes, daughter of Angie Hayes, bachelor of science in education in sport science; Ryan Lester, son of Joyce Lester, bachelor of science in environmental studies; Michael McCabe, son of William and Jana McCabe, bachelor of general studies in history; Kathryn Morrison, daughter of Ken and Carolyn Morrison, bachelor of general studies in history of art, with a minor in English; John Nichols, son of John Nichols, bachelor of fine arts in theatre design; Corinne Petrik, Prof 3 Juris Doctor; Kirbe Riedel, daughter of James and Valor Riedel, bachelor of general studies in communication studies; Tanner Rinke, son of Tracy Henseler, bachelor of science in mechanical engineering; Cindra Roots, daughter of Ronald and Chari Roots, master of occupational therapy; Ashlea Schwarz, daughter of Billy Landes, Prof 3 Juris Doctor; Morgan Smizer, daughter of David and Carla Smizer, bachelor of science in nursing; and Morgan Smizer, daughter of Steve Pitcher, bachelor of science in nursing.

Other Derby students were: Albert Chmielewski, son of Jarek Chmielewski, bachelor of arts in biology, Wichita Southeast; Riley Rothe, son of Ronald Rothe, bachelor of science in business/finance, Maize High School; and Michelle Tran, daughter of Chinh and Lan Tran, bachelor of arts in Slavic languages and literatures, with a minor in Russian and East European studies, Phillips Exeter Academy.

Wichita students who graduated from DHS, were: Quanita Crable, daughter of Benita Duckett, Prof 1 Doctor of Medicine, and Mae Young, daughter of Tuyet Young, bachelor of arts in English.
The University of Kansas will host a state recognition program for about 400 academically talented seventh-grade students selected for the Duke University Talent Identification Program at 1:30 p.m. June 3.

Marlesa Roney, vice provost for Student Success, will preside. Robert N. Sawyer, founding executive director of Duke TIP, will deliver the special address to the students and their families and guests.

Derby students being recognized are Charles Bradfield, Randall Durbin, Stephanie Ford, Matthew Galley, Hayley Hume, Bryant Keirns, Tyler Knight, Miranda Raevsky, Hannah Sharp, Olivia Smith, Chelsy Stegman, Bridget Walston, Courtney Wells and Colleen Zirkle.

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Each Duke TIP student receives a medallion. The state recognition ceremonies honor seventh graders who have earned scores above the average scores of college-bound high school seniors. About 900 students qualified in the Kansas region. About 400 are expected to attend the ceremony.

The program is in its 27th year, and this is the ninth year KU has hosted the Kansas state recognition program. In addition to Kansans, additional students taking part in the ceremony at KU are Missouri residents from the Kansas City metropolitan area or towns near the Kansas-Missouri state line.

Information tables to answer students’ and parents’ questions about KU programs and activities will be in the Lied Center lobby during the event.

Duke TIP is a nonprofit educational organization that identifies and helps cultivate the talents of academically gifted youth. Since 1980, more than 1 million students have taken part in the program that is supported by student fees and donations from individuals, corporations and foundations.
KU recognizes local scholars

Derby News Report
janderson@derbyreporter.com

The University of Kansas recognized more than 200 students, including two Derby students, as the Class of 2007's top scholars at commencement Sunday.

Michelle Tran received the Endowment Meritorious Scholar Award. She is the daughter of Chinh and Lan Tran and graduated from Phillips Exeter Academy.

Mason Tyler received the Solon E. Summerfield Scholar Award. He is the son of Michael and Michelle Tyler and is a graduate of Derby High School.

Endowment Meritorious scholarships provide $500 to $2,500 a year for four years to high-achieving students who enhance the diversity of the student body.

The Solon E. Summerfield scholarship provides $2,500 per year for four years to 100 Kansas high school graduates in recognition of their outstanding high school academic achievements and records of community service and leadership.

Summerfield scholarships for men are funded through an endowment established by Solon E. Summerfield, who was a Lawrence native and KU graduate.
Area students are selected for academic award

LAWRENCE — The University of Kansas will host a state recognition program for about 400 academically talented seventh-grade students selected for the Duke University Talent Identification Program. Three Kingman area students were among those who earned the award. They are Scott T. Meyer, Kingman and Kristen Powell, Pretty Prairie, both students at St. Patrick School and Justin Stackhouse, Cunningham. Their parents are Steve and Lori Meyer, Lloyd and Cindy Powell and Bob and Mary Stackhouse.

The event takes place at 1:30 p.m. Sunday, June 3, at the Lied Center. Marlesa Roney, vice provost for Student Success, will preside. Robert N. Sawyer, founding executive director of Duke TIP, will deliver the special address to the students and their families and guests.

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Maize students graduate from Univ. of Kansas

KU’s Class of 2007 numbers more than 6,400, including 2,125 who completed degree work in summer and fall 2006.

Graduates from Maize include;
  Nathan David Jones, son of Lyle and Lisa Jones, History minor and Bachelor of Science in Journalism;
  Emily Marie White, Bachelor of Social Work;
  Barbara Dianne Torgerson, Graduate Master of Social Work;
  Riley Dean Rothe, son of Ronald Rothe, Bachelor of Science in Business/Finance;
  Kristen Britney Jurgensen, daughter of Curt and Linda Jurgensen, Graduate Master of Arts/Speech-Language Pathology;
  Christina Jean King, daughter of Mr and Mrs Roskam Hlth, Graduate Master of Health Services Administration;
  Daniel Allen Rutherford, son of Dan and Karen Rutherford, Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering, Bachelor of Science in Business/Business Administ;
  Diana Kay Worley, daughter of Jan and Galen Worley, Bachelor of Social Work;
  Erin Nicole Vernon, daughter of Kirby Vernon, Bachelor of Arts/Psychology, Bachelor of Science in Journalism;
  Kathryn Elyse Radochonski, daughter of Alan Radochonski, Graduate Master of Arts/Speech-Language Pathology;
  Michael J Phillips, son of David and Donna Phillips, Bachelor of Science in Journalism &Religious Studies;
  Aaron James Messner-Schaack, son of Steve and Lana Messner Schaack, Bachelor of Arts/Psychology;
  Andrew J Smith, son of Timothy and Lynne Smith, Graduate Master of Accounting and Information Systems;
  David Warfield Melgren, son of Eric and Denise Melgren, African & Afr-Amer Std & Bachelor of General Studies/Latin American Studies&Bachelor of Arts/Spanish;
  Erin Nicole Vernon, daughter of Robyn Vernon, Bachelor of Arts/Psychology and Bachelor of Science in Journalism;
  Jacqueline R LaVoie, daughter of Craig and Debbie LaVoie, Bachelor of Arts/Spanish and Bachelor of Science in Journalism;
  Jennifer Ann Braley, daughter of Bill and Becky Braley, Bachelor of Science in Occupational;
  Kimberley Anne Lloyd, Bachelor of Science in Journalism and Bachelor of Science in Business/Marketing;
  Kimberley Anne Dickey, daughter of Terry and Roberta Dickey, Bachelor of Science in Occupational Studies;
  Kimberley Anne Dickey daughter of Roberta Dickey, Bachelor of Science in Occupational Studies;
  Meagan Jo Finger, daughter of Terry and Pat Finger, Bachelor of General Studies/Communication Studies&English & Leadership Studies;
  Michelle Leigh Morrison, daughter of Laura Morrison, Bachelor of Arts/Linguistics;
  Ryan Thomas Caplan, son of Maryann Mitchell, Bachelor of Science in Business/Business Administ;
  Samuel Dickenson Schirer, son of Dana and Karen Schirer, Bachelor of General Studies/English;
  James Willis Wiggins, son of Scott and Pamela Wiggins, Bachelor of General Studies/Psychology&Sociology.
USD 266 retirees and resignations include: (back row, left to right) Georgianna Baker, MSMS; Craig Elliott, CO; Joneen Hale, VPS/PWS; (front row) Dorothy Zellers, MMS; Sheila Bazil, MCE; Vickie Bolton, CO. Not pictured: Devona Downs, Transportation; Karen Fitzmier, MHS; Ann Koch, MHS; Jo Ridder, Transportation; Wyvonne Hill, MSMS.

KU 25 years in education certificate recipients: (back row, left to right) Doris Prater, MHS; Linda Hutchins, MHS; Robyn Vernon, VPS; Sheri Meyer, MES; (front row) Dave Pettay, MSMS; Paula Bette, MHS; Christine Newman, MCE; Jan Watson, PWS. Not pictured: Lori Heger, MMS; Suzan Patton, MHS; Joe Pfannenstiel, MHS.