Having the drive

With KU grad at the wheel, automaker is turning the corner toward business growth

Inevitably, it will happen. Vehicles will get smaller and more fuel-efficient. Alan Mulally is betting on it.

The Lawrence native and University of Kansas graduate was in northeast Kansas earlier this week, where he was the guest speaker in the Anderson Chandler Lecture Series at KU. Mulally is the president of Ford Motor Co.

While he acknowledged pickups and sport utility vehicles have been the superstars of the Ford lineup for a decade, he predicts the gas-guzzling wheels that have dominated the American market will soon take a back seat to smaller, scaled-down models.

To position itself for the anticipated market shift, Ford is preparing to launch a new B-sized car, which is a super mini-sized vehicle, slightly bigger than the Smart Car, which is a popular vehicle in Europe and is now selling in North America.

It’s not a surprising strategy, really, considering that consumers are trending away from bigger vehicles.

And for good reason. With gas prices again approaching $3 a gallon, the family pocketbook gets lighter by the day.

And, also, we are all too aware of the United States’ dependence on foreign oil.

It’s somewhat surprising American car manufacturers have been as slow to react as they have. But the marketplace is talking now.

Ford has already paid a price for not moving fast enough, losing a record $12.7 billion in 2006.

Enter Mulally and Ford’s strategy to push its smaller Focus and Fusion instead of their bigger cousins.

Mulally said the reason he took the job with Ford last year was to help create a long-term viable company that makes contributions to society, provides high-tech jobs and retains U.S. competitiveness around the auto world.

“Progress on this is how Ford and I will be judged,” Mulally said.

Our guess is that all American automobile manufacturers will all move the same direction in the next few years.

Ultimately, the movement will save Americans money at the gas pump, reduce dependence on foreign oil and perhaps even reduce damages to a threatened environment.

Change does come, even if its slower than we sometimes expect — or is prudent for business.
The Ford Fusion is one of the company’s newer, more fuel-efficient models. Ford has an even smaller car that has proved popular in Europe and is gaining a market in the United States.

Alan Mulally
KU fraternity receives award

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The University of Kansas chapter of Delta Chi has received an Award of Distinction from the North American Interfraternity Conference.

The NIC presents the award for excellence and achievement in three categories: alumnus, chapter and undergraduate.

Of the 5,500 North American fraternities, Kansas Delta Chi, along with Alpha Tau Omega, of Baylor University, are the two chapters to win the NIC's Award of Distinction in the chapter category.

KU's Delta Chi is the first fraternity chapter to win the award at KU.
A bipartisan group of seven senators Friday urged Gov. Kathleen Sebelius to veto a measure requiring outside approval of any affiliation between The University of Kansas Medical Center and St. Luke's Hospital in Kansas City, Mo.

The St. Luke's system operates 11 hospitals, and the KU medical center includes its medical school. Some legislators worry the deal will siphon doctors out of Kansas and hurt The University of Kansas Hospital, a separate entity sharing the medical center's Kansas City, Kan., campus.

Senate Minority Leader Anthony Hensley, D-Topeka, and Sen. Vicki Schmidt, R-Topeka, joined three Republican and two Democratic senators in objecting to what they view as an "ill-advised and potentially harmful" directive requiring approval of an affiliation deal by the Kansas Board of Regents and the KU Hospital Authority.

The House and Senate inserted the proviso into a budget bill. Sebelius has until Monday to act or the measure becomes law.

"The Legislature has overstepped its bounds with this proviso dictat-
KU med: Regents also want item vetoed

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ing terms and conditions for ongoing negotiations by the KU medical center,” Hensley said.

The Board of Regents issued a statement Friday requesting Sebelius line-item veto the affiliation mandate. The statement said the board has “serious concerns about current efforts to engage the Legislature in medical education matters that are clearly among those issues best addressed by the Board of Regents, working together with the university and its medical center.”

The proviso was sought by legislators, including House Speaker Melvin Neufeld, R-Ingalls, who were concerned KU hospital could be damaged by research and teaching affiliations between the medical center and St. Luke’s.

Backers of the restrictions argue the Legislature has a duty to protect medical education and should provide oversight because the state poured millions of dollars into the Kansas hospital before separating it from the medical school in 1998. Hospital officials have worried that the affiliation would hurt the hospital financially and prevent it from providing charity care.

Rep. Lee Tafanelli, R-Ozawke, who pushed for restrictions, said backers simply want to make sure all interested parties have a voice in drafting the affiliation.

However, the bipartisan group of senators believes the proviso undercuts the medical center’s bargaining position and gives St. Luke’s an unfair advantage at the negotiating table.

“The Kansas Legislature has no business, and certainly no expertise, to micromanage this important process,” said Sen. John Vratil, R-Lenexa.

Other members in the group are Sens. Barbara Allen, R-Overland Park; Donald Betts, D-Wichita; David Wysong, R-Leawood; and Marci Francisco, D-Lawrence.

Betts said he believes enough senators oppose the proviso to defeat an attempt to override a veto by the governor.

In addition, Allen said affiliating the medical center with other hospitals and clinics would help the KU Cancer Center attain a National Cancer Institute designation.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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Developing diversity

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LAWRENCE — The National Jurist magazine has ranked The University of Kansas School of Law second in rate of increase in student diversity. The list appeared in the March issue.

KU’s law school recorded a 201 percent increase in enrollment of minority students between 2000 and 2005, while minority enrollment has declined by at least 5 percent at more than half of the nation’s law schools.

Gail Agrawal, dean of the law school, said the ranking is a reflection of the school’s long-standing commitment to increasing diversity.

“The KU School of Law was founded on principles of inclusiveness — a commitment to diversity is in the very bricks and mortar of this place,” Agrawal said.

*The Capital-Journal*
For the third year in a row, The Topeka Capital-Journal has won the Victor Murdock Award from the Kansas Press Association, this time for a series of articles on immigration.

In addition, special projects editor Jan Biles has won the Golden Wheat Award for an article titled "Home on the Range," about a longhorn cattle ranch near Bucklin. The Golden Wheat Award is sponsored by the Kansas Farm Bureau for excellence in agricultural writing.

The awards were announced Friday evening as part of the 115th annual Kansas Press Association Convention. The convention was at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Topeka this year.

The Victor Murdock Award honors the late editor of The Wichita Eagle. It recognizes outstanding journalistic standards as exhibited through a story or series of stories published in a Kansas newspaper.

The series that won the award for the newspaper this year also won the Burton W. Marvin Kansas News Enterprise Award in February. That award is presented by the William Allen White Foundation at The University of Kansas.

"The Capital-Journal is extremely proud of the reporters, photographers and editors who won these prestigious KPA awards. This is newspaper journalism at its finest," said Pete Goering, Topeka Capital-Journal executive editor. "We salute the reporting team of Tim Carpenter, Jan Biles, Barbara Hollingsworth, Thad Allton, Cooper Allton and managing editor Wayne Stewart who won the Victor Murdock Award for a riveting series on immigration. Likewise, Biles captured our Kansas heritage with the agricultural story that won the Golden Wheat Award."

For the immigration stories special projects reporter Carpenter, photo director Thad Allton and interpreter Cooper Allton and managing editor Wayne Stewart traveled to Mexico on a 47-hour bus trip to learn why people risk their lives to immigrate.

But most of the series focused on how Kansans are impacted by the issue.

"The issue, it seemed to us, was too important to abdicate coverage to the national media," Stewart said. "After all, immigration is viewed differently here than it is in Arizona, or Texas, or California, or New York. If we didn't tell the Kansas story, who would?"

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HONOREES — The KU Alumni hosted the Kansas Honors Program at Neodesha High School on April 11. NHS students who received the award were Anna Archibald, Paige Giger, Sara Gudde, Corban Thacher and Haley Wheeler. Those pictured include J.D. Cox, KU Alumni volunteer, Anna Archibald, Haley Wheeler, Paige Giger, Corban Thacher, Dennis Depew, KU Alumni master of ceremonies and Terence Wilson, NHS principal. Not pictured is Sara Gudde.

-Courtesy Photo
Two of Jefferson County were among 68 University of Kansas students who spent spring break on service-learning projects.

Claudia Alterman, daughter of Kerry and Lori Alterman, McLouth, spent time at Chicago Cares working in health-related programs. Molly Sailors, daughter of Paula Kellogg and Gordon Sailors, Perry, was at the South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind in Spartanburg. Both are freshmen.
Katrina Zagaruyka Cook, a senior in cognitive psychology at the University of Kansas, was recently one of 16 KU seniors who received awards for their presentations at the 10th annual Undergraduate Research Symposium.

Cook, who is the daughter of Bill Cook and Tess Zagaruyka and a graduate of McLouth High School, conducted her presentation on "The Influence of Reader's Goals and Organizational Skills on Text Recall." Award winners were selected from among 73 undergraduates who presented research projects on various topics.
Ottawa High School seniors honored by the University of Kansas Alumni Association and KU Endowment as 2006-2007 Kansas Honor Scholars include Katie Hawkins, front left, Nicole Lane, Stephanie Lillie, Stephanie Mars and Robert Proctor; Jordan Miller, back left, Jeffrey Thomason, Victor Ojeleye, Julianne George, Alyson Fuller, Tiffany Morrow and Cassandra Hopkins. Brittany Reeves and Carra Gorby are not pictured.
Graduates Of Law Enforcement

Kansas Bureau of Investigation Director Larry Welch congratulated 58 graduates of the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center at a March 30 ceremony at the 4-H Encampment Building on the Kansas State Fairgrounds.

The graduates, who began their training course December 18, represented 43 municipal, county and state law enforcement agencies from across Kansas. They were the 190th basic training class of graduates.

The training center is a unit of the University of Kansas Continuing Education. Established in 1968 as the central law enforcement training facility for the state, the center is near Yoder.

Graduates receive certificates of course completion and Kansas law enforcement certification from the Kansas Commission on Peace Officers Standards and Training, the state’s law enforcement licensing authority. The training course fulfills the state requirement for law enforcement training. Classroom lectures and hands-on applications help train officers to solve the increasingly complex problems they face in the line of duty.

About 350 officers enroll annually in the 14-week basic training program. The center offered continuing education and specialized training to more than 2,500 Kansas officers last year. Funding for the training center is generated from court docket fees from municipal and state courts. No funds from the state’s general revenue are used to operate the center.

Those from the area are: Thane Loring, Scandia, Natural Resource Officer/Park Ranger, for Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks and Andrew Bates, Superior, NE, Deputy Sheriff, for Republic County Sheriff’s Department.