KU Hillel students served more than 100 falafel at Falafel on the Beach in the heart of KU's campus on Aug. 29. Students who purchased falafel from KU Hillel learned about KU Hillel's Leadership Mission to Israel, birthright Israel, and on-campus Israel opportunities as well. The event was organized by Rachel Goldberg, a sophomore from St. Louis.
Firm ready to expand

ELYNN JONES
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Michael Litscher ran into a snag recently when he attempted to demonstrate an electronic medical device in KC BioMediX's offices in De Soto.

The problem was quickly fixed when his partner Dave Stalling gave him the security code needed to log onto the device's software.

"We're at the point we're ready to take it to hospitals for trials so we're putting in security," Stalling said.

The impending trials are a positive sign for the start-up company's goal to start marketing the device in early 2009 to the 1,100 neo-natal intensive care units in the United States.

To help in that goal, the Kansas Bioscience Authority recently announced it was awarding $150,000 to KC BioMediX for further research and development of the device.

Near the start of the year, research models of the device will be sent for field testing to neonatal units at Overland Park Regional Medical Center and a North Carolina hospital, Litscher said. Feedback from day-to-day use at those two sites will be used to further refine the device for production, he said.

The device doesn't look overly complex as hospital equipment goes. Its flat computer screen rests on what looks like a fax machine that in turn rests on a wheeled pedestal. Its only attachment is a long cable with a pacifier at its end.

The pacifier gets to the heart of the device's function, which is to measure the ability of premature babies to suck and to train those without the ability to feed.

When the device is in assessment mode, sensors in the pacifier will measure the baby's sucking activity or lack of it. Normal babies will produce sharp spikes and valleys on an on-screen graph while those who randomly probe the pacifier will produce only small bumps, Litscher said.

When in therapy mode, the pacifier's rhythmic expansion and contraction mimicking normal infant sucking stimulates the pattern control generator in the baby's brain, Litscher said. The idea is the baby's brain learns the behavior with the repetition of the therapy four times a day, he said.

The device is based on research carried out by Kansas University professor Steven Barlow and Dan Finan of the University of Colorado with the help of a National Institute of Health grant.

Barlow developed prototypes of what are now the assessment and therapy modes of the KC BioMediX device for testing at Stormont-Vail HealthCare in Topeka. Premature babies receiving the stimulation therapy

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Biofirm looks to future

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left the hospital seven days earlier than those who didn’t get the therapy and with fewer complications requiring more intensive parent care, Litscher said.

That’s very meaningful when neonatal intensive care stays can cost $1,000 per day, Stalling said.

There could be further benefits down the road, the partners said. The brain’s sucking control function is closely associated with other skills, including speech and language, they said.

Although the idea and initial research behind it wasn’t theirs, the partners feel confident they can move both to commercial applications.

Litscher and Stalling forged careers in the life sciences and were active on various task forces exploring the potential of bioscience economic development in the Kansas City metropolitan area. After meeting, they agreed to explore those possibilities on a personal level.

“We were both looking around for something to do without much luck,” Stalling said. “We decided we’d create jobs rather than find them.”

While looking around for a project, they met with James Baxendale, KU’s director of technology transfer and intellectual property. That meeting led to their introduction to Barlow and his research. In November, KC BioMediX entered into a licensing agreement with Barlow and KU for the rights to market the devices Barlow developed.

Of the royalties KU receives, a third goes to the inventors, a third to the department and a third to KU’s technology transfer and intellectual property office, Baxendale told the Lawrence Journal-World last November. Another portion of the department’s cut goes back to the inventor to support research.

The company’s De Soto location is a result of Shawnee landlord Shannan Nelson and probably temporary, Litscher said. Although the partners originally looked at Nelson’s the Commons office complex in De Soto as KC BioMediX’s permanent home, they will probably move to another Nelson building near the end of year in the Shawnee Mission area when it is completed.

“It’s closer to where we live and will allow us to bring the other people in,” Litscher said.

They also are looking for a facility “in the Kansas City area” to manufacture the device, which will be priced at somewhere near $125,000, Litscher said. The prospect of manufacturing a device to aid in the development of premature babies and spare their parents stress and money is exciting, the partners said. But they understand where their immediate focus needs to be.

“Various people who come in and see it get very excited about it and say, ‘Why didn’t anybody think of this before,’” Litscher said. “That’s a big confidence boost that we can make a difference in the life of premature babies, but we have a lot of day-to-day research and development to get this ready for hospital standards.”
Central High School students to be honored by University of Kansas

LAWRENCE — Students from seven Kansas high schools will be honored Wednesday, Sept. 26, by the University of Kansas Alumni Association and KU Endowment.

A total of 52 seniors from high schools in Chautauqua and Cowley counties will be recognized for their academic achievements and named Kansas Honor Scholars at a 6:30 p.m. dinner program in the Wright Room of the Cowley College Brown Center, 125 S. Second St., Arkansas City.

The Kansas Honors Program began in 1971 and has honored more than 100,000 students. 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 David Ochoa, coordinator for member relations for the KU Alumni Association.

Kevin Corbett, president of the KU Alumni Association, will speak to the students, their 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 $12.50 each.

Community volunteers collect reservations, coordinate details and serve as local contacts for the event. Lucy Herlocker Freeman, Winfield, will be the site coordinator and county coordinator for Cowley County. Tim Hills of Sedan will be county coordinator for Chautauqua County.

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

Those students from the area are Dana Burdette, Cedar Vale High School; Amber Smart, Cedar Vale High School; Megan Haunschild, Central High School; Amber Osborn, Central High School; Justina Ross, Central High School; Shawnell Shepherd, Central High School; Matthew Beason, Sedan High School; Theresa Jackson, Sedan High School; and Melanie Wolfe, Sedan High School.
Kansas Honor Scholars named at Sedan High

Students from seven Kansas high schools, including Sedan High School, will be honored next Wednesday, Sept. 26, by the University of Kansas Alumni Association and KU Endowment.

A total of 52 seniors from high schools in Chautauqua and Cowley counties will be recognized for their academic achievements and named Kansas Honor Scholars at a 6:30 p.m. dinner program in the Wright Room of the Cowley College Brown Center, 125 S. Second St., Arkansas City.

The Kansas Honors Program began in 1971 and has honored more than 100,000 students. 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 at www.news.ku.edu/2007/september/12/khparkansascity.shtml.

During the ceremony, each student will receive an American Heritage Dictionary in hardback and CD versions.

The scholars from Sedan High School to be honored at the event are Mattew Beason, Teresa Jackson and Melanie Wolfe.

Seniors from Arkansas City, Cedar Vale, Central-Burden, Dexter, Udall and Winfield high schools will also be salute.
Kansans can be proud of Williams

At a time when newspaper sports pages are filled with stories of athletes and coaches engaged in crimes, arrests, foul language, violent tempers, cheating, drugs and other such actions, it is refreshing to know there are coaches such as former Kansas University basketball coach Roy Williams, recently inducted into the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame.

During his acceptance remarks, Williams, who left KU after 15 highly successful years to become coach at North Carolina, emphasized how much his years at KU meant to him. He said they were “the happiest 15 years of my life.”

Williams is well aware of the double talk by many at KU and among a number of KU alumni who are quick to criticize Williams behind his back. ...

Nevertheless, Williams continues to express his affection for KU, even though he is well aware of the fickle fans and others who talk out of both sides of their mouths and who continue to be critical of the coach. ...

One of the truly distinguishing aspects of the Hall of Fame induction was that so many former KU players made the effort to attend. Some observers said they could not remember any former inductee having so many of his players present.

Williams is a winner, not only on the basketball court but also as a person. Collegiate sports needs more coaches such as Williams, men and women who set an example for others to try to match.

He could be bitter about the way some at KU conducted themselves at the time he was considering a move to North Carolina, and what some continue to say behind his back.

But he is a bigger man than those who want to tear him down. Again, more individuals like Williams are needed in college sports. — The Lawrence Journal World
Dear Editor,

While more than 30 bands participated in the University of Kansas' 60th annual Band Day last weekend, (Sept. 8), one band stood out as an inspiration to everyone who took part: the band from Greensburg High School.

Marching with their fellow musicians from Bucklin, the students from Greensburg displayed the resilience and determination that has become a hallmark of their community. They also demonstrated another Kansas value — gratitude — as they marched behind a banner thanking the people of our state for the assistance they’ve provided as Greensburg rebuilds.

Crowds along the Band Day parade route and in Memorial Stadium rewarded them with the loudest cheers of the day, and KU was honored to have them be a part of this great tradition.

Sincerely,
Robert E. Hemenway,
KU Chancellor
KU Professor Studies Benefits Of Nutrients

By JONATHAN KEALING

LAWRENCE (AP) -- For one Kansas University professor, the key to defeating infectious diseases may be something as simple as diet.

No, not chicken soup for the malaria-ridden soul. But perhaps less iron for the man with tuberculosis. Or maybe a diet with reduced carbohydrates for a woman suffering from salmonella poisoning.

"I suspect there must be thousands of nutrients out there that show a role in health, particularly when it comes to infectious diseases," said Val Smith, a professor in the department of ecology and evolutionary biology.

Smith has published several papers documenting results that changing the balance of nutrients, in the proper settings, can actually control diseases.

Recently, he published a paper that showed, in mice at least, that salmonella will be less deadly if it has access to few carbohydrates. He also shows that a version of malaria functions less effectively if exposed to little protein.

Essentially, Smith said, the body and the disease-containing microbes are competing for the same nutrients to survive. He compares the idea to a car. Without tires, a car won't go. Without nutrients, a microbe won't grow.
Making Movies in the Rain

Kansas weather slows down production at Chase County ranch

BY BRANDY NANCE
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CHASE COUNTY

The crew for a movie being shot in Chase County went from hearing “Quiet on the set!” to “Cover and move all electrical equipment ... we got rain coming!” all within a few minutes Tuesday morning.

Those were the words that have been echoing through the valley of Lauer Ranch, owned by Kay Lauer, in Chase County the past couple of weeks as a movie, “The Only Good Indian” is being shot. The movie is scheduled to be released in 2008, according to imdb.com, where the movie is listed as being in production.

Tuesday morning, the crew on the set, which was outdoors when the prairie brought everything from 30 mile per hour wind to pouring rain, which sent the crew scrambling to retrieve and cover all electrical equipment. But, as soon as the rain stopped, the crew sprung back into action and moved the set to another location where the next scene was to be filmed.

“The Only Good Indian” was written by Thomas L. Carmody and directed by Kevin Willmott, who is an assistant professor of film at The University of Kansas. Among the main characters in the film who were working on a scene Tuesday morning were Sam Franklin, who is played by Wes Studi, and Charlie, played by Winterfox Frank. Studi played in movies such as “Last of the Mohicans.”

The movie is set in 1905 and is a fictional account of the removal of Indian children from their homes.

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A crew member of “The Only Good Indian” holds an umbrella as rain hits the set at the Lauer Ranch in Chase County.
Actor Winterfox Frank, 17, of Redding, Calif., does his calculus homework while shooting is delayed because of rain. He portrays the main character, Charlie, in the film “The Only Good Indian.”

Director Kevin Willmott, right, speaks with producer Rick Cown while on set of “The Only Good Indian.”

PHOTOS BY CARLY PEARSON
Members of the crew of “The Only Good Indian” rake up an area of Lauer Ranch that will be used for filming.
University mailings investigated

On the records:
Mailings pose breach of student privacy.

TOPEKA (AP) — Records discarded at the University of Kansas were mailed anonymously to three newspapers, prompting a campus investigation Wednesday. It was the second report in two months of such a breach of students' privacy.

The records included what appeared to be graded exams, job applications, change-of-grade forms, class rosters, seating charts and copies of health insurance cards and immigration forms, according to editors at the newspapers. Some of the documents contained credit card numbers, Social Security numbers and student identification numbers, they said.

The records were mailed in manila envelopes, with a letter in each packet. Each letter said the papers had come from the university's math department or its recycling center. The letter's writers claimed to be former math teaching assistants or current employees of the recycling center, and they were critical of how the math department handled its records.

"Our No. 1 concern is protecting these individuals from any compounded exposure and launching an investigation," university spokeswoman Lynn Bretz said.
Arthritis Foundation to hold Arthritis Walk fundraiser at Brit Spaugh Park Sunday

The Arthritis Foundation is calling for people to take action against arthritis by participating in the 2007 Arthritis Walk. The annual community event is held in conjunction with walks all across America that raise funds, awareness and hope to fight arthritis, the nation’s leading cause of disability.

The Great Bend Arthritis Walk will take place on Sunday, Sept. 23, at Brit Spaugh Park and Zoo. To get involved or form a walk team, visit www.arthritis.org, keyword “Kansas” or call (800) 362-1108.

Arthritis or chronic joint diseases are more widespread than imagined, affecting 66 million Americans, or one out of three adults, and approximately 300,000 children. In Kansas arthritis affects more than 546,000 people.

“The Arthritis Foundation helps people with arthritis take a more-active role in managing their disease,” said Kathy Kaiser, of Great Bend, a member of the local organizing committee. “Participation in an Arthritis Walk can be the first step toward a healthier lifestyle that can prevent or control arthritis.”

She explained that pets get arthritis, too. There will be special prizes for dog owners who participate in the Great Bend walk. All dogs must be leashed.

Each year there are more than 400 local Arthritis Walks. Most feature a three-mile and a one-mile course. Participants can walk for a friend or a family member with arthritis, while people with arthritis are given blue hats to wear signifying they are walking to take control of their own arthritis.

Local sponsors include Hills Pet Nutrition, Home Medical Services, Bristol Myers-Squibb and Cox Communications.

In 2006, more than 75,000 walkers participated nationally and helped raise money to fund arthritis research, health education and government advocacy efforts to improve the lives of those living with arthritis.

Funds raised locally will help support Arthritis Foundation aquatics programs, exercise and Tai Chi classes, self-help courses and programs for families of children with juvenile forms of arthritis. The event will also support arthritis research.

This year, the Arthritis Foundation is funding two arthritis investigators at the University of Kansas.

The Arthritis Foundation is the only nationwide, not-for-profit health organization helping people take greater control of arthritis. By leading efforts to prevent, control and cure arthritis and related diseases, the Arthritis Foundation hopes to arrest arthritis — the nation’s number-one cause of disability.

For more information on arthritis, to volunteer or to form an Arthritis Walk team, visit www.arthritis.org, keyword “Kansas,” or call (800) 362-1108.