Six sworn in as Kansas Attorney General

TOPEKA — Stephen N. Six was sworn in today as the 43rd Attorney General of the State of Kansas.

His father, former Supreme Court Justice Fred Six, administered the oath of office in the Senate Chambers in the Kansas State Capitol. The Honorable Robert Fairchild, Chief Judge in the Seventh Judicial District, introduced the new attorney general. He replaces Paul Morrison, who announced in December that he was resigning.

After recognizing his family and other role models, Six once again pledged to lead the Attorney General’s Office with integrity and independence.

“Over the years, I have been shaped by my relationships with people who set high standards, and through hard work achieved great things,” Six said. “As attorney general, I promise to serve with integrity and independence as I face the challenges ahead.”

Prior to being appointed by Gov. Kathleen Sebelius as the new attorney general, Six served as a District Court Judge in the Seventh Judicial District. He also has extensive experience in complex litigation and trial work.

After being sworn in, Six will greet the public at an open house in the Attorney General’s Office. He will then meet with Director Bob Blecha and agents of the Kansas Bureau of Investigation and tour their Topeka facilities. Finally, Six will meet with staff of the Attorney General’s Office and share his commitment to serve the people of Kansas with independence and integrity.

“It is critical that this office be an independent law enforcement office that conducts the state’s business with integrity and professionalism,” Six said. “I look forward to getting to work and continuing the progress made so far.”

Biography of Steve Six:
Steve Six was sworn in as the 43rd Attorney General of Kansas on Jan. 31, 2008, stepping down as a district court judge to serve the people of Kansas in a new role.

Six grew up in Lawrence. He received his undergraduate degree in Economics from Carleton College in Northfield, Minn. Following in the footsteps of his father, Steve went on to study law at the University of Kansas. Steve’s father, Justice Fred Six, served on the Kansas Supreme Court for more than 15 years before retiring in 2005.

In 1993, Steve Six graduated second in his class from the KU Law School. He immediately went to work as a clerk for the Honorable Deanell Tacha of the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit.

In 1994, Six joined the law firm of Shamberg, Johnson & Bergman in Kansas City, Mo. He specialized in complex litigation and trial work. In 2000, he was named partner in that firm.

After representing the interests of everyday Kansans for nearly 10 years, Six was appointed by Gov. Kathleen Sebelius as a District Court Judge in the Seventh Judicial District in 2005. During his time on the bench, he gained respect as a fair, independent legal mind while presiding over criminal, civil and domestic violence dockets.

Six has actively served on bar organizations, including the Bench-Bar Committee for the United States District Court for the District of Kansas. He also served on the Kansas Bar Association Board of Governors, as Chairman of the Mandatory Malpractice Disclosure Committee and as a member of the Kansas Bar Foundation Board of Trustees.

Six and his wife Betsy have four young children.
A tuition squeeze

From the Lawrence Journal-World

What a tremendous irony it would be if the Kansas Board of Regents decides to take such a hard line on university tuition increases that Kansas University students who were given the special “guaranteed tuition” deal actually end up paying more for their education.

It’s great news that the regents are concerned enough to at least offer some tough talk on repeated tuition increases.

Regent Gary Sherrer pointed out that tuition increases at state universities had exceeded both the consumer price index and the higher education price index in the last five years.

And, during that time, he noted, the per-capita income of those paying tuition had been largely unchanged.

This is not news to Kansas families who are stretching their budgets to cover university tuition.

Despite the squeeze tuition is putting on Kansas families, university leaders continue to defend the increases.

Kansas State University President Jon Wefald responded to the regents’ concerns this week by saying, “You can either pay for access to mediocrity or you can pay for access to excellence. We’re choosing excellence.”

That’s fine, but rising tuition puts that choice out of reach for many Kansas students. Many are having to bypass that university “excellence” and make less costly choices such as attending a community college or a vocational-technical school.

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If, however, regents put a cap on tuition increases, as they seemed to be suggesting this week they would do, students locked into a four-year payment plan that assumed ongoing increases might actually end up the losers ...

It’s certainly time to ask those questions and to take some action to get state university tuition increases under control.
Business and education

By John R. LaPlante
Wichita

At the Flint Hills Center for Public Policy, we think that we could all benefit from making K-12 schools act more like businesses in one important way—having to compete for students. Many people in the public school industry disagree, saying that business and learning are in conflict. Yet take a closer look and you’ll find that business and learning can go hand-in-hand.

Companies such as the Apollo Group and the Capella Education Company make money by educating students, offering both graduate and undergraduate degrees in multiple subjects. Apollo enrolls well over 300,000 adults in its University of Phoenix and other programs. Capella enrolls about 20,000 students.

Are these “real” universities? Certainly, their students think they are. Also, both are accredited by the same organization that accredits the University of Kansas.

The combination of profit and knowledge isn’t limited to colleges and universities. Tutoring has been around for thousands of years. In 2005, an estimated $4 billion in private funds was spent on tutoring services, and many of those services were offered by commercial enterprises. Under the federal law known as No Child Left Behind, $2 billion in public funds also is spent each year on tutoring.

Kumon Math & Reading Centers began 50 years ago in Japan by a father seeking to help his child learn. Today it operates in 43 countries. Kumon has 1,400 centers in North America, helping 135,000 students with math and reading. If you buy one of the company’s franchises, you can earn a living for yourself while educating children.

Educate Services, Inc. operates Sylvan Learning Centers, which has 1,100 locations in North America. Sylvan, founded in 1979, offers tutoring in homes, online, and at its own facilities. Students can get help in math, reading, writing and study skills. They can also prepare for the ACT and earn high school credit.

Huntington Learning Centers, also started in 1979, has 400 locations across the country. As with Sylvan and Kumon, it charges fees to willing families and sells franchises to would-be business owners.

Kumon, Sylvan and Huntington are just a few of the companies that offer tutoring. Together, they have multiple locations in the Kansas City metro area. They also operate in Hutchinson, Lawrence, Manhattan, Topeka and Wichita. The Education Industry Association, a trade group that includes tutoring companies, claims over 800 members.

Is Capella University for everyone? No more than KU is. Likewise, Sylvan Learning Centers are an appropriate tutoring option for some children, but other children will benefit from a program conducted by a different company, a non-profit community organization, or a school district.

At a fundamental level, people have the same needs, including food and shelter. In today’s world, you can add education to that list. Different people meet their needs for food and shelter in different ways. That’s also true in education, which means that business and learning can indeed be compatible — perhaps even mutually beneficial.

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Local students named to KU honor roll

More than 4,540 undergraduate students at the University of Kansas earned honor roll distinction for the fall 2007 semester. These students, from KU’s Lawrence campus and the schools of allied health and nursing in Kansas City, Kan., represent 96 of 105 Kansas counties, 43 other states and the District of Columbia and 39 other countries.

From Ellsworth County:
- Jenny Lynn Geide, daughter of Ray and Deanna Geide, liberal arts undergraduate, junior.
- Danielle Nichole Peters, daughter of Rick and Terri Peters, journalism undergraduate, senior.
- Anna Magdalena Slomka, daughter of Jerry and Lidia Slomka, business undergraduate, senior.
- Danielle S. Wright, daughter of Rhonda Wright, social welfare undergraduate, senior.
- Jordan Michael Robertson, son of Jerry Robertson and a graduate of Quivira Heights High School, liberal arts undergraduate, senior.
- Mauntell Renee Ford, daughter of Allison Ford of Wilson, liberal arts undergraduate, freshman.
- Amber L. Macek, daughter of Jerry Macek of Wilson, pharmacy professional.
Scholar-athlete

Tyrel Richard Reed of Burlington was one of 231 student athletes named to The University of Kansas Athletic Director’s Honor Roll for 2007. Students were honored Jan. 23 during the KU-Iowa State basketball game. Reed is a sophomore studying science and community health and a member of the KU men’s basketball team. He is the son of Stacy and Debbie Reed and a graduate of Burlington High School.
Kansas University has announced the list of fall 2007 honor roll students.

Those making the honor roll from this area are Sheila Miller, Frankfort, a senior in nursing, and Randal Gerstner, Vermillion, a senior in business.
Residents from Goodland, the surrounding area and representatives from the University of Kansas gathered Monday morning to mark a significant occasion in Goodland Regional Medical Center’s history as the hospital became a member of the Midwest Cancer Alliance.

The ceremony symbolized the beginning of a partnership that will benefit residents of our area for many years. With its membership in Midwest Cancer Alliance, Goodland Regional Medical Center has taken an important step in the fight against cancer.

Statistics from the American Cancer Society estimate that 1 in 2 men and 1 in 3 women will be diagnosed with some form of cancer in their lifetime. The cancer death rate in Kansas is only dropping at half the rate of the national average.

Cancer is a diagnosis that has touched nearly all of us at some point. Until now, finding and receiving cutting-edge cancer treatment meant traveling outside of Goodland for many. Today, through Midwest Cancer Alliance, Goodland Regional Medical Center can provide access to the latest cancer research and treatment to residents of the Tri-State area.

Midwest Cancer Alliance is a membership based organization that includes hospitals, physician groups, cancer support and advocacy organizations, industry and government. It serves as the University of Kansas Cancer Center’s outreach arm to Kansas and western Missouri. The purpose of Midwest Cancer Alliance is to provide strong support to community oncologists and cancer care professionals and enhance cancer care for patients.

As an Alliance community partner, Goodland’s hospital has access to second opinion services through the University of Kansas Cancer Center, detailed information on clinical trials, networking events and conferences and on-site outreach programs. For cancer patients this means comprehensive cancer treatment can be obtained locally and improves access to cancer screening and prevention for all of us.

Through our membership in the cancer alliance, we will offer cancer screenings on Saturday at the Sherman County Health Fair from 8 to 11 a.m. at the Goodland Activity Center. Normally, residents would have to travel to obtain this service, but now we are able to bring this to Goodland.

The opportunity to join the alliance would not have been possible without the dedicated effort made by the leaders of the University of Kansas Cancer Center who envisioned a mission to reduce the burden of cancer on the Heartland.

With more than 160 world-class researchers and clinicians, the University of Kansas Cancer Center is raising cancer research, drug discovery and development, prevention and survivorship to a higher standard.

Our membership in Midwest Cancer Alliance was made possible through a generous donation from the Northwest Kansas Regional Medical Foundation and the University of Kansas Endowment Association.

Goodland hospital’s membership in the alliance and association with the University of Kansas Cancer Center will give the citizens of northwest Kansas local access to the most up-to-date and proven treatments through the resources and expertise of a nationally recognized cancer center.

This collaborative effort is another example of how Goodland Regional Medical Center works with other providers so that access to quality healthcare is available for all rural citizens in the area.
Hospital joins cancer alliance

By Pat Schiefen

A group of about 50 people heard the announcement that the Goodland Regional Medical Center was a founding member of the Midwest Cancer Alliance at 8 a.m. on Monday morning at the family health clinic.

Chief Executive Officer Jay Jolly of Goodland Regional Medical Center said the idea started almost three years ago at a telemedicine conference in Denver where several people from Kansas University, including Ryan Spalding and Norbert Belz were on panels.

Telemedicine is a way for on-site patient consultations using telephone and video so patients do not have to travel to receive specialized care, said Jolly.

The next step was when S & T Communications started building the infrastructure to handle the technology. Jolly said. The first trial for telemedicine was in child psychiatry for the hospital. The hospital has a long history of bringing specialized medical care to patients with its out-patient specialists clinic which brings in doctors in the fields of dermatology, gynecology, urology and many other areas.

University of Kansas doctors were at the Flatlanders Festival in 2006 and ran a cancer screening clinic.

"I was in Goodland last year and was impressed by the infectious attitude of the medical center," said Medical Director Dr. Gary Doolittle of the Midwest Cancer Alliance.

"Traveling great distances for cancer care is just not right," said Dr. Roy Jensen, director of University of Kansas Cancer Center.

"Kansas rates of cancer cure are half of the rate nationally."

Dr. Jensen wants to have the University of Kansas Cancer Center designated as a Comprehensive Cancer Center by the National Cancer Institute. He said the mission of the alliance is to reduce and eliminate the burden of cancer in the midlands.

The alliance will allow the sharing of innovative ideas, treatments and education for doctors and nurses plus allowing patients to have appointments via telemedicine.

Jolly said Dr. Doolittle will make monthly site visits. Funds for the hospital to become part of the alliance came from Kansas University Foundation and the Northwest Kansas Area Medical Foundation.
Josh Vignery, graduate of Goodland High School in 2000 and son of Ron and Judi Vignery, was the location manager for the new ABC series “Eli Stone.” The series premiered on Thursday at 8 p.m. and will continue for several weeks at that time.

Vignery has been working as a free agent with the “Eli Stone” team for the last six months. He has been driving to different locations, asking permission for the use of the facilities and taking pictures of them for the director. The director can then decide where to film the scene.

The plot of the program is about a lawyer, he said, who receives an inspiring message from the singer, George Michael, that he needs to change his priorities and follow something else.

“The show is definitely worth watching. I really enjoyed my time on the set and I hope people enjoy watching the show.”

Vignery has lived in Los Angeles for the past three years after graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Theater and Film from Kansas University. He is trying to work his way up the acting ladder.

He said he is learning to appreciate what goes into TV shows and movies.

“I never realized how many people were involved until I was in the middle of it all,” Vignery said.

“You have to know people in L.A. to be successful in the film business, becoming a behind the scene guy helps directors know and realize that you want to be an actor. Who knows? Maybe if “Eli Stone” is successful and I get hired back on for the next season I will get a chance to be an extra.”
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Editorial by the Lawrence Journal-World