Hoskinson participates in veteran vigil

LAWRENCE — More than 90 student members of Army, Marine, Navy and Air Force ROTC units at The University of Kansas participated in Veterans Day events Nov. 9 through 11, including the traditional 24-hour vigils at the campus Korean and Vietnam war memorials and "A Tribute to Veterans" at the Dole Institute of Politics.

Among the local and area ROTC students participating was Veronica Louise Hoskinson of Burron, Air Force ROTC.
Preparing our students for tomorrow’s working world

By: Governor Kathleen Sebelius

As the Kansas economy becomes increasingly global and highly competitive, we must prepare the children of Kansas with the training they need for the economy of the future.

Key to Kansas’ ability to succeed in the new technology-driven marketplace will be workers who excel in math, science, technology and engineering; and right now, our students are underperforming compared to their peers around the world. Encouraging more students to focus on these fields and continue their education in math and science will help to ensure that we have the workforce for a prosperous future.

Quality teachers are essential to the success of our students; however, Kansas faces a shortage of math and science teachers. The Kansas State Department of Education recently reported that next year Kansas schools are likely to have over 680 vacancies for math and science teachers, but only 228 new math and science teachers are expected to graduate from Kansas schools.

Teachers have always had significant impact on the lives of their students, but now more so than ever, teachers dictate the future success of our economy as well.

Given the importance of these educators, it is essential the state produce not just more math and science teachers, but more effective math and science teachers. We can do this by encouraging math and science majors to enter the teaching profession and by supporting the development of highly qualified teachers in math and science fields. A new program at the University of Kansas will accomplish those goals.

UKanTeach is an innovative new program that allows students to earn degrees in math or science as well as a teaching license. The program, a collaboration between the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the School of Education, aims to double the number of math and science teachers graduating from KU each year, resulting in an additional 50 new teachers in Kansas classrooms.

Recently the University of Kansas was one of 12 universities nationwide to receive a National Math and Science Initiative grant. The $2.4 million grant funded by the ExxonMobil Corporation will be used to fund the UKanTeach program. We know it works, because this program has been in place at the University of Texas and the results are encouraging.

We are pleased that KU was able to secure one of these competitive grants, and I am confident the UKanTeach program will produce more of the teachers our state needs to help our students thrive in the subjects of math and science. With programs like this and a continued focus on math and science, success in the classroom will no doubt extend to economic success in the future.
How did this idea come about?
First off, Bayer has a history of developing talent pools to meet business needs in the future. And Bayer has always been in the science business. For us, that very much involved on-the-job training. My boss sort of planted a seed with me. This occurred at the same time that we were all discovering the Animal Health Corridor. All of a sudden, it became: “How could we have missed this?” We all recognize that we need a talent pool, a good group of people with a high degree of scientific literacy who also understand business.

How many people applied?
We had 40 inquiries. We did e-mails with everybody and developed FAQ materials. We conducted telephone screens and then, from that, brought in four candidates. Two were selected.

Did anything surprise you about the people who expressed interest?
No. I was delighted. It was a very, very broad range of people. It reinforced for us that our notion was right, that there is a clear market of people out there that’s fairly broad that are hungry and interested in this. I expect that trend to continue. The sad part is that we only had two spots. I think as more corridor companies get involved in this, we’re going to have more people than, collectively, we can take.

What are the key components of the program?
One of the things that KU very quickly did is they came back to us and had made an investment and done homework and said, “Here is a menu of the types of courses we think would be of value in helping someone to enter your industry. Tell us what you think.”

They solicited feedback from us. As other animal health corridor companies have gotten involved with this, they have done the same process with them.

They are developing from scratch a significant number of courses specifically tailored to support this specialty area.

What were some of the biggest challenges to putting this together?
We worked very hard against the clock, and that was really the biggest challenge. The thing that has been amazing for us, once we got this going, is when we went to the University of Kansas, when we went to the Animal Health Corridor, when we went to companies who we compete head to head with in the marketplace, everyone has responded and said, “My gosh, this is a significant win-win opportunity for everyone.”

And then everyone sort of picked up their share of the load, which is why we have been so successful. Last February, this was an idea, and in September, out of a fair number of people, Bayer brought four people in, and now we’re starting in January. It’s sort of unbelievable.

What do you expect to be the biggest benefit of the program?
I think that this is just something that is going to catapult people in their careers. When I think about hiring people, to have people who already have this sort of background and understanding is just going to be wonderful.

As far as the competitive dimension goes, it just increases the size of the talent pool, which is good for everybody.

There’s a very clear payback to me. I think that this is an example of one piece of infrastructure that is critical in helping to build a substantial labor market.

What’s been the most fun or rewarding part of the process for you?
It was wonderful to me, after reading papers and applications, to bring in four people who were very bright, all in very good careers, all doctors of veterinary medicine, very different backgrounds.

To have four really bright, really talented people sitting in our of-
office spending a week with us in Kansas City who were saying, “Yes, this is something that I'm incredibly excited about.” Personally, that was the most gratifying for me, to see that this meets a very real need in the marketplace.

What has been the biggest lesson you've learned through the process?

Part of the requirement for admission into the University of Kansas is to take the GMAT (Graduate Management Admission Test). I think because veterinarians are doctors and they've been through a lot of school and rigorous selection process, they saw the GMAT and said, “Oh my! I want to spend six months preparing for it,” which was something that was completely off of my radar.

Chuck Kriter is the head of the MBA program, and he warned me. He said, “We find that, for students with pre-existing degrees, this is something they get anxious about.”

So in our telephone prescreening, we built that into our protocol. We discovered that it was a huge issue. We were able to, midship, tell people, “You need to take the test because it's an accreditation requirement for the University of Kansas, but this isn't something that you need to spend six months preparing for.”

I laugh, but all of the people who we brought in were filing away saying, “I'll spend the next six months preparing to take this test, and then I'm going to apply to the program.”

If we hadn't discovered that, I wouldn't be starting anybody in January.

It was a real land mine that was out there that I would have never thought about.

Jonna Lorenz
Tutoring makes a difference for students who need help

KRISTI HENDERSON
LHENDERSON@ENWORLD.COM

Sami Safadi had been getting tutored for two years. Then last year, he quit.
And then his homework wasn’t getting done.
This year, the Lawrence sixth-grader returned to a tutoring program and he’s seen an improvement in his grades, he said.
“Like it because it gives you a better understanding of it and you can actually get it done with help,” Sami said.
Sami is one of many students in area districts who benefit from various tutoring programs.
One of the largest resources for tutoring programs in the area is universities, such as Kansas University and Baker University. But districts that don’t have the benefit of a nearby university still have several resources available for students who need assistance.

In a smaller district such as Perry-Lecompton, where finding manpower to staff tutoring programs is difficult, software has been useful, said Superintendent Denis Yoder. The software, which is used at all grade levels, can assess a student’s strengths and needs, and then create individualized lessons, Yoder said. Students get time during the school day to use the software, Yoder said.

Another resource is students. In the De Soto and Eudora school districts, students help either their peers or younger students.

In De Soto, for instance, accelerated math students take time during the week to help students whose scores are lower, said Alvie Cater district spokesman.

“The students are able to explain it in a way that maybe an adult can’t explain it,” Cater said. “We use whatever we think can work.”

Eudora students tutor
In Eudora, high school students go to Nottingham Elementary during the day to provide tutoring assistance, said Don Grosdidier, assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction.
Both districts also rely on teachers to provide assistance to students. In Eudora, teachers are paid an extra stipend to staff an after-school tutoring program for at-risk middle school students, Grosdidier said.

The De Soto district is also able to offer a 21st Century Community Learning Center, funded by a state grant, at Starsee Elementary, Cater said. The program offers academic assistance as well as recreation activities.

Universities provide assistance
Many of the resources used in those districts are also used in Lawrence and Baldwin City. But the two districts also benefit from programs staffed by university students.

One such program is Youth Educational Services, or YES, which benefited Sami Safadi. The program, run by the University Career Center at KU, pays students to work as tutors in Lawrence public schools. For the fall semester, there were 28 tutors working in 18 schools, including Quail Run, where Sami attends classes, said Christina Kuhn, YES coordinator.
KU SENIOR Carly Tomlins, of Salina, Kan., right, tutors Quail Run Elementary sixth-grader Sami Safadi on Dec. 7 at the school. "The tutoring helps a lot," Sami said.
Tutoring helps at-risk students make the grade

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school district. Like YES, Boys and Girls Club gets a helping hand from KU students. There are about 350 to 500 people helping out with the Boys and Girls Club each year, and a majority of those involved are KU students, said Janet Murphy, executive director.

Murphy said Boys and Girls Club’s programming, which includes homework assistance along with recreation, leadership and other activities, reaches about 1,200 students on any given day.

On the WIN team

In Baldwin City, Baker University students play an important part in tutoring programming.

Students who are in the school of education’s classroom management class are given the task each fall of coordinating, planning and running Wednesday Instructional Night, or WIN. The program participants work on homework, read and take part in activities such as visiting the Baldwin City Public Library.

Michelle Swain, a Baker graduate whose fifth-grade son Dylan, has gone to WIN for several years, says the program helps her son focus on schoolwork.

“He’s more likely to do his homework on nights that he has WIN because it’s an academic setting,” Swain said. “The problem with homework is that it’s hard to get them into that school frame of mind when it’s at home. It has helped him a great deal.”

Her son has enjoyed the program so much, she said, that he’s disappointed he can’t come back next year. The program, which is offered only in the fall semester, just serves students in kindergarten through fifth grade.

Real-life experience

Young students aren’t the only ones who benefit from tutoring programs such WIN and YES. University students gain valuable experience, too.

Karla Wiscombe, a Baker education professor who created the WIN program, said the classroom experience is beneficial to her students.

“It’s the first time to really take charge and be in control,” Wiscombe said. “They just actually get to see what it’s like to work with students.”

KU students working with YES say they also benefit from working with children. Many of the YES tutors are education majors or they have plans to pursue careers in a school setting.

Even teachers whose students are tutored benefit. Quail Run sixth-grade teacher Nancy Dietze said her students are more prepared and more confident than before they were tutored.

“It makes a huge impact,” Dietze said. “They’re so much more involved because they’re not trying to hide.”
Penner to speak at Chamber Annual Dinner January 23

Author, public speaker and director of the Kansas Sampler Foundation, Marci Penner, will be addressing the Garnett Area Chamber of Commerce during the Annual Banquet on Wednesday, January 23, 2008, at the VFW. Marci encourages fellow Kansans to look at Kansas with new eyes through "Exploring Tourism". Her guest appearance is being sponsored by the newly formed Garnett Tourism Advisory Committee.

Marci Penner is the author of the Kansas Guidebook for Explorers, a 432-page book about what there is to see and do in Kansas. Marci spent two years going to every incorporated city in the state to research for the guidebook. In the early 1990s she co-authored three Kansas guidebooks with her father, Milferd Penner, and as a result of their journeys they founded the Kansas Sampler Foundation. The mission of the foundation is to preserve and sustain rural culture. Marci serves as the executive director.

Projects of the foundation include the annual Kansas Sampler Festival, the Kansas Explorers Club, the 8 Wonders of Kansas, and the We Kan! network and conference. Marci speaks throughout the state and region.

A graduate of Kansas University, Marci received her Master’s degree in Counseling and Guidance from the University of Wisconsin. She was the co-chair of the Governor’s Rural Life Task Force and was named the Distinguished Kansan of the Year by the Kansas Native Sons and Daughters in 2006. Mostly, she just prefers to be known as a rural culture activist!

Tickets for the GACC Annual Banquet are $12 and on sale now at the chamber office, City Hall, Attention to Detail, American Family Insurance and The Advocate. The ticket price includes a buffet meal. The event begins at the Garnett VFW with a social time at 6:30 pm, followed by dinner at 7 pm. The event is open to the public. Enjoy decorated table settings sponsored by various chamber member businesses and organizations with complimentary (free) drawings to be held for table centerpieces. The Board of Directors will highlight 2007 chamber accomplishments. Awards presentations, including honoring the Business of the Year and Volunteer of the Year will take place.

For more information about the Garnett Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet, or chamber membership, please contact the GACC Office, 419 S. Oak Street, (785) 448-6767.
KU announces candidates for degrees for fall 2007

LAWRENCE — The names of more than 1,600 candidates for degrees for the fall 2007 semester at the University of Kansas have been announced by the Office of Registrar.

Graduate and undergraduate degrees are conferred in December based on work completed during the fall semester. Because KU conducts only one formal commencement ceremony each year, many students graduating in the fall or summer terms will return for the traditional walk down the hill and into Memorial Stadium on Sunday, May 18, 2008.

Five of KU’s 13 colleges and schools conducted recognition programs or hooding ceremonies earlier this month to honor those planning to graduate at the end of the semester: the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the School of Business, the School of Engineering, the School of Law and the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications.

Graduates from the area include:
- Greeley: Marisa D. Kratzberg, daughter of Richard and Sheila Kratzberg, Bachelor of General Studies/Applied Behavioral Science, Anderson County High School.
- Lawrence: Amy Diane Quirin, daughter of Alan and Peggy Quirin, Garnett, Bachelor of Arts/Spanish, Anderson County High School.
- Ottawa: Hall A. Alexander, son of Darwin and Jolene Alexander (formerly of Garnett), Bachelor of Science in Business/Finance, Ottawa High School.
Medical student works with Dr. Taylor

Dr. Cathy M. Taylor, a Chanute obstetrician/gynecologist, is hosting Andrea Strathman, a medical student from the University of Kansas School of Medicine, for four weeks starting Jan. 2 as part of a community-based educational experience.

Taylor is a volunteer mentor, or preceptor, with KU School of Medicine’s Kansas Rural Preceptor Program. Since 1951, the program places all fourth-year medical students, around 175 annually, in communities across Kansas. The program helps introduce students to the practice of primary care in non-urban areas, to increase their awareness of professional opportunities in rural areas, and to give them the opportunity to use their diagnostic and clinical skills in real-life scenarios under the guidance of their preceptor mentors.

“These students gain valuable knowledge and skill in the field that they wouldn’t receive without this program — a program made possible by partnerships with doctors across Kansas,” said Dr. Barbara Atkinson, executive vice chancellor of the University of Kansas Medical Center and executive dean of the KU School of Medicine.
Longtime KU fan gets degree at age 85

LAWRENCE (AP) — Bob Nelson’s 85-year-old body may be slowing, but his handshake is as strong as a vise.

It is a grip that reveals the passion of a man widely considered to be one of the greatest sports fans in Kansas University history.

"Arguably, there’s never been a better Jayhawk fan," men’s basketball coach Bill Self said.

It’s a little-known fact that the man simultaneously referred to as "Nelly," Kansas Superfan and The Old Jayhawk never received the diploma he worked toward in the 1940s. Nelson recently received his certificate of a general studies diploma from the institution where he spent his life working and cheering.

Coaches, players and friends gathered for the party.

"This is the thing that he would cherish more than anything else — to have a degree from the University of Kansas," said Don Fambrough, a former KU football coach who planned to attend the festivities.

Nelson lives in an assisted-living facility in a room filled with photographs of memorable KU sports moments. Several KU caps hang from a hook. One sits on his head. The television is perpetually tuned to ESPN.

A stroke in 1998 affected Nelson’s speech. He is unable to vocalize all he feels about receiving the diploma. Instead, his eyes well with tears.

"It’s going to be pretty special for him," his wife, Eleanor, said.

Nelson was raised in the Coffeyville area. The eldest son of an oil gauger, he grew up in a strict household where dancing and other pleasures were restricted, Eleanor said. But the young Nelson found he could sneak off to watch a baseball game and come back clean, and his parents wouldn’t notice.

"It was kind of forbidden fruit when he was younger," Eleanor said.

In adulthood, Nelson followed his passion in the open. He studied journalism at KU. At 5-foot-8, he wasn’t collegiate-athlete material. He became a big fan instead.

He spent more than 30 years working at KU as a program coordinator in continuing education. A bachelor until he married Eleanor in 1991, Nelson devoted his time to sports and KU.

Over those years, he cemented himself in the KU community, his fun-loving spirit and zeal winning him a wide circle of friends.

All have a story about Nelly.

"If he wasn’t around, then something was wrong," Fambrough said. "The head coach could have been missing and we wouldn’t have missed him as much as we would Bob Nelson."

Howard Mossberg, retired dean of KU’s School of Pharmacy, recalled trips across the state with Nelson in the 1960s and 1970s. Mossberg and others would play tricks, like stuffing Nelly’s hat with tissue so it wouldn’t fit on his head.

"He was always jovial," Mossberg said. "He never met a person that he didn’t like. He never met a person that he couldn’t talk to. As soon as he was in the room, he just made people comfortable."

Nelly was a mainstay at KU sports practices and games. He went to too many games to count.

"When people asked him about how many games he went to, he said: 'I went to almost as many as Max Falkenstein, except I had to buy tickets and he got in for free,'" Eleanor said.

Even if Nelly didn’t have a game ticket, he could finagle his way in.

Fambrough said he once asked Nelson how he got into the bowl games, and Nelson revealed one of his secrets. He would bring a piece of equipment to the ticket booth and say that he had to get the equipment to the radio people pronto. Once inside, Fambrough recalled, Nelly would wait for someone to page a doctor for assistance.

"He said doctors were the best ones, because when they called: 'Dr. So-and-So, report to gate four,' most of the time it would be an emergency, and the doctor would never come back," he said. "Nelly would see him leave ... then he’d go up to his seat and watch the game on the 50-yard line."

Nelson also brought the game to others.

John Novotny, former Williams Fund director, recalled how Nelly managed to persuade the athletics program to share the game footage with a club comprised mainly of faculty.

"He was unfussy," Novotny said. "He was just unbelievable, and that’s why we called him Mr. Jayhawk."

Dave Robisch, an All-American who led KU to the Final Four in 1971, said he formed a bond with the Nelsons as a student-athlete, and now he considers them part of his family.

"He was the ultimate fan," Robisch said. "He was just always at the fieldhouse. He was always there to greet a team or to make you feel good about a game."

One Spanish course stood between Nelson and a degree. Eleanor said. This year, Eleanor set out to give her husband a special Christmas gift. She contacted the chancellor to see what the possibilities were, and it was determined that Nelson met the requirements for a diploma in general studies.

Nelson wore many hats at KU. He formed friendships with faculty, players and coaches. He worked as a spotter at basketball games and assisted in other ways.

"He spotted for every radio announcer, practically, that has worked for KU except for Bob Davis," Eleanor said.

Nelson also wore a hat that many recall — a blue cap. It was part of a uniform that included tan slacks, a blue Oxford shirt, blue blazer and Jayhawk tie. Eleanor still has the outfit at
home, including that cap.
“It’s worn through,” she said.
Andersen recognized by KU Center for Service Learning

LAWRENCE — A University of Kansas student from Circleville is among 50 students in 19 disciplines recognized for completing certification in service learning during the fall 2007 semester, according to KU’s Center for Service Learning.

Rae Ann Andersen, a 2006 graduate of Jackson Heights High School and the daughter of David and Sara Andersen, completed the certification process this fall, according to KU officials. Andersen is currently a junior at KU, majoring in psychology.

Students who completed the certification process this fall receive a designation on their transcripts and will be recognized in a ceremony in spring 2008. The notation will inform future employers and graduate and professional schools that the students have dedicated significant time to classes and activities that foster civic engagement, community involvement and leadership.

KU’s Center for Service Learning allows students to apply classroom knowledge in real-world settings, gain experience and serve their community. The certification process consists of four components: completion of a service learning course; an independent service project; a set of directed civic engagement and leadership readings; and a reflection. All undergraduate and graduate students are eligible for certification.

During the fall 2007 semester, KU students participated in more than 60 service learning courses in departments as diverse as anthropology, business, music therapy, architecture and political science. Projects within these courses ranged from performing surveys for local community organizations in a sociology class to teaching English to native Spanish speakers in a Latin literature course.

For their independent projects, many of the students volunteered with local service groups such as Headquarters, Up ‘Til Dawn, Habitat for Humanity, Boys and Girls Club and Lawrence Memorial Hospital.

The Center for Service Learning was established in 2005 to create meaningful learning opportunities for students. Since then, more than 360 students in 30 majors and four graduate programs have been certified in service learning, aiding more than 42 community-based organizations and partnering with them for more than 5,725 service hours.

Students who participate in the certification program say service learning provides a chance to make their course content more meaningful but also guides their future academic and career interests.
Porter excels at KU

Dylan G. Porter, son of Frank and Robyn Porter of Iola and a senior majoring in elementary education at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, was one of 68 KU students from 25 departments completing the Global Awareness Program and receiving a GAP certification during the summer and fall 2007 semesters.

Students completing the program earn recognition on their transcripts for studying abroad, taking courses with an international focus, learning foreign languages and being involved in international co-curricular activities.