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.

Last week 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.
Studio 804 still hopes to locate building here by May

by Mark Anderson
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“Our recommendation is we want to support Studio 804 and their attempt to put a house here.” With those words Greensburg City Administrator Steve Hewitt began his brief explanation of the City’s current position toward the interest the University of Kansas’ 2008 school of architecture’s class has shown in building and erecting a 1,200 to 1,500 square foot modular structure in town by May 4, the first anniversary of the killer tornado that leveled the berg.

“However,” Hewitt continued, “the City can’t make a financial commitment today. It’s not in our budget. So we’re just not in a financial position to do it.” Hewitt made the comments at last Wednesday’s City Work Session.

Boyd Johnson, Studio 804 class member who served as primary spokesman for the group at the December 3 city council meeting, followed Hewitt’s comments last week by indicating Studio 804 would continue to seek a way to continue with the project for Greensburg this year. Hewitt had told The Signal the day before, however, that the class might have to proceed with its 2008 project with a site in Kansas City—where it has erected several buildings in years past—delaying its Greensburg project until 2009.

“We’re just having a hard time finding a suitable site for them,” Hewitt had said at that time. Both the City and Studio 804 have agreed they prefer the structure be located either in or near the downtown area. Because of the building’s use of passive solar heating, a clear-cut southern exposure needs to be a condition of its location.

Mayor John Janssen said he’d like to see the structure erected “some place where it’s readily visible, near downtown if possible.”

With Studio 804’s structures using a high percentage of recycled materials and employing energy efficient elements wherever possible, Johnson pointed out, “the more attention that can be drawn to these kinds of buildings the more the public can understand what sustainable construction is.”

“We would like to help Greensburg in some way, this spring,” Johnson told those at the meeting. “Funding is an issue right now. We need to secure that so that we can take care of Studio 804 for future students in coming years.”

Johnson continued by stressing the ability of the class to deliver a useable building by May 4 as a “distinct advantage to the town. We would welcome a continuing conversation with Greensburg on this matter.

“We will continue to move forward on this and continue to look for possible sites and sources of funding. I’m just hoping we can work something out in the near future.”

Hewitt followed Johnson’s comment by noting, “We’ve tried to help them (Studio 804) find some property but haven’t been very successful in
Johnson then referred to the long-range recovery plan developed over the summer through interaction between FEMA coordinators and the public, reminding the council his class had developed its idea for a Greensburg project with the aims of the published plan in mind.

Noting the long-range plan called for a "sustainable resource center," Johnson said such a facility "is something we can do."

He later said the building could "start out as a gathering place for City and County meetings and then change to something like an art gallery, or less formal meeting place when Greensburg begins to come back and grow as a town."

With Studio 804 structures typically built, located and then sold on the market as residential housing, Johnson reminded those present the structure his class hopes to bring to Greensburg would be complete with "a kitchen area, small meeting area and storage space. It would work great for different groups in town to gather and hold meetings, especially if refreshments or a meal were included."

As for the odds of Studio 804 being able to deliver the building to Greensburg this coming May, rather than a year later, neither Johnson nor Hewitt could say with any certainty.

"Right now, we can go ahead and develop this project and say we understand Greensburg can't help us (financially) with this project," Johnson said. "We'll continue to look for funding, and for a site here and hope we find one in time to place the building here this spring."

"But in the meantime we have to go ahead and start building this. We can't put that off any longer. "We'll consult with BNIM (architectural firm currently developing Greensburg's master plan), because we want to make sure this building fits in with the structure of the new Greensburg. I just hope we can put it here sooner rather than later. I really do."
Local student initiated into honor society

LAWRENCE — The University of Kansas chapter of Phi Kappa Phi honor society recently initiated 188 student members.

At KU, only the top 10 percent of seniors, top 7.5 percent of second-semester juniors with more than 72 credit hours and top 10 percent of graduate students are asked to join. Phi Kappa Phi's primary objectives are to promote the pursuit of excellence in all fields of higher education and to recognize outstanding achievement by students, faculty and others by election to membership and through various awards for distinguished achievement.

Beilei Wang, a KU senior, is the daughter of Chris and Cui Hong Fink of Garnett, and is majoring in Finance and Information Systems. She is a graduate of Anderson County High School.
The University of Kansas chapter of Phi Kappa Phi honor society recently initiated 188 student members.

Inducted were: Amanda Kay Steinle, Phi Kappa Phi, National Honor Society, strategic communications, BSJ, senior; and
Rachel Lea Trible, Phi Kappa Phi, National Honor Society, nursing, BSN, senior.
KU awards scholarships

University of Kansas 2007-08 scholarships:

Cimarron — Chad Alan Blackwelder, Reginald R. Strait Physical Education Scholarship; Alex Joseph Ketzner, Evelyn, Richard & Blanche Thompson Fund.

Dighton — Jenna Marie Timken, Maude Landis Scholarship in Nursing; Nick Jerome Weiser, Chester L. Mize Memorial, Carl Adolf Preyer and Presser scholarships, David & Gunda Hiebert Piano Fund.

Garden City — Whitney N. Blau, Lora C. and Sam R. Woods Scholarship; Whitney Page Clarke, Anschutz Scholarship; Kristen Marie Doering, Betty Hamilton Boyle, Mary O. Pearing Piano, Muriel C. Marshall Piano and targeted scholarships; Kari Elizabeth Hamlin, Kready Family Scholarship; Kala Ilene Hillery, Online Nursing Education Scholarship; Sonny Thanh Hong, Anschutz Scholarship; Taylor James Johnson, KU scholarships; Megan Rhea Kinney, Edith E. Hague Memorial; Brian Christopher Larkin, John Calvin Selis, Madison A. and Lila Self Engineering Leadership, Presson Scott Shane Memorial and KU freshmen scholarships; Cam Yen Le, targeted scholarships; Tu Cam Le, Arthur S. & Leora J. Peck Loan/Scholarship; Tung Thi Le, Chester L. Mize Memorial, Chris & Marilyn Anderson, Larry D. & Donna Manning Homer, Miller/Tanaka Multicultural Education, Ruth M. Anderson Memorial and School of Education National Advisory scholarships; Kiley Suzanne Luckett, School of Social Welfare Multicultural Scholars Program; Jessica Thuy Vi Luong, Betsy Dunlap/Chi Omega Memorial and William & Winifred Hoffman scholarships; Alexander C. Melin, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences scholarships; Thuy Anh Nguyen, Edwin Emery Slosson Scholarship; Jennifer Mae Nyberg, Vee Flinn Scholarship; Ashlea Ann Orrell, Edward L. Meyen and Grace M. Phinney scholarships; Ankit H. Patel, Osee Hughes Dewey Scholarship; Aaron G. Payne, Charles and Patricia Marshall Business and Wayne Moody scholarships; Adam D. Powell, Anschutz, Muchnic Foundation and Wallace M. James Memorial scholarships; Lara Elizabeth Pracht, Lucy Y. Riggs, May F. Riggs and Kate L. Riggs Memorial, Edna Maude Smith and Presson Scott Shane Memorial scholarships; Daniel Reyes, Dr. Theodore C. Alford Scholarship; Karson K. Thompson, John and Mona Power Foundation Scholarship; Anh Thu Tran, John Dalke Memorial Scholarship; Kristen K. Wehkamp, Mary A. Grant Scholarship for Women.

Holcomb — Sherri Lee Magner, June D. Hull Sherrid Scholarship; Matthew R. Cook, Garmin Electrical and Computer Engineering and Paul & Virginia Bassett Miller Endowed scholarships; Jessica J. Kilwein, Nancy Miller Martin Memorial Scholarship; Jeremiah James Specht, James Schull Combs and Catherine C. Combs Memorial Scholarship.

Hugoton — Chelsie Dawn Harper, M. Pearl Munden Brier Scholarship; Trista M. Nordyke, Lora C. and Sam R. Woods Scholarship; Allison Nicole Owens, KU scholarships.

Johnson City — Cortney Suzanne Baker, KU scholarships; Connor Blayne Stanton, Chester L. Mize Memorial Scholarship and Christina M. Hixon Opportunity Award.


Leoti — Tyson Wade Mullen, School of Pharmacy scholarships; Alejand3o Rodriguez, KU Scholars Hall, William and Winifred Hoffman and targeted scholarships.

Montezuma — Amy Winsor, Jack and Laven Broussoue Scholars Fund.

Satanta — Benjamin Fuentes, Hispanic, Madison A. and Lila Self Engineering Leadership and School of Engineering scholarships.

Scott City — Aaron Michael Steele, School of Pharmacy Scholarship; Ross Dale Strube, Frank J. Black Petroleum Engineering Student Scholarship; Zachary Allen Winter, McGill Educational Fund.

Syracuse — Whitney Leigh Plunkett, Ella Kennedy Memorial Scholarship; James Patrick Tracy, Deforest F. Piazzeke Scholarship; Emily J. Young, C.L. Burt Geographic Scholarship.

Tribune — Bradford Lee Cardonell, Robert Earl Pringle Scholarship; Brandon Cole Lytle, Joel Orin Gurnells Sr., Muchnic Foundation and Robert Earl Pringle scholarships.

Ulysses — Katelyn Noel Deckert, Ella Kennedy Memorial and Neil D. Weaver scholarships; Melissa Galaviz, Megan E. Taylor Memorial Scholarship.
More than 5,400 students at the University of Kansas will receive $26 million in privately funded scholarship support during the 2007-08 academic year.

Cimarron students receiving scholarships were Chad Blackwelder, son of Rod and Ruth Blackwelder. The junior received the Reginald R. Strait physical education scholarship. He is majoring in health and physical education.

Alex Ketzner, son of Clyde and Mary Ketzner, is majoring in juris doctor. He received the Evelyn, Richard and Blanche Thompson fund.