Sarah Hemme, daughter of Susan Hemme, Perry, is among those receiving a scholarship through the William Allen White School of Journalism at the University of Kansas.
The Chabad Jewish Student Center at KU hosted a congratulations and welcome barbecue for graduating seniors from high schools in the Kansas City area. The barbecue served as an opportunity for the many incoming freshman to learn more about Jewish life in college and the many opportunities that exist for further involvement. Pictured are Scott Bratt, (from left) Jordan Marks, Shella Friedman and Gina Cohn. For more information on the programs and events at Chabad @ KU, visit www.jewishku.com or call (785) 832-8672.
Johnson County voters will get a chance to have their say Nov. 4 on a proposed eighth-cent sales tax that would help fund portions of the Johnson County Education and Research Triangle.

The Johnson County Commission voted 6-1 in favor of putting the tax on the ballot. Commissioner John Segale was in favor of the tax.

"Like the junior college, this is a sparkplug to the community and its economy," Segale said.

Commissioner Doug Wood echoed the sentiment of Commissioner Ed Eilert, who said the tax and the project supported disease research and solidified the relationship among Kansas State, the University of Kansas and the KU Medical Center.

"I not only support this motion, but I urge voters to vote in the polls and pass it," Wood said.

Commissioner John Toplikar voted against the tax, likening it to a no man's land for taxpayers' money.

"The name of this reminds me of the Bermuda Triangle, where maybe the public's money going in will never be seen again, although we can expect those who begin their projects with the public's money will surely be back for more," Toplikar said. "True economic development doesn't need a tax to support it."

If approved, the tax would help fund the project, which has been estimated to stimulate $1.4 billion in the economy. It would take effect in early 2009.

The project would connect the KU Cancer Center with the Edwards Campus and the K-State Olathe Innovation Campus, which will feature the National Food and Animal Health Institute.
More than 4,450 students were candidates for degrees at the University of Kansas this spring — representing 95 Kansas counties, 48 other states and the District of Columbia and 44 other countries. The Class of 2008 numbers more than 7,000, including 2,555 who completed degree work in summer and fall 2007. Because KU conducts only one formal commencement ceremony each year, many of these candidates for degrees returned May 18 for the university's 136th commencement procession into Memorial Stadium.

**Bucyrus:** Christina June Conrad, Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering; Kristin Gail Driskell, Bachelor of Arts in Spanish; Katherine Amanda Johnson, Bachelor of General Studies in Psychology; Candice Elizabeth Rose, Doctor of Medicine; Talia Kaelin San Roman, Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Cheryl Renee Scherf, Juris Doctor.

**Louisburg:** Richelle Dawn Beckman, Bachelor of Science in Health Information Management; Jessica Lynn Bergman, Bachelor of Arts in Political Science; Grant Michael Hash, Juris Doctor; Katie Gene Howells, Bachelor of Social Work; Molly Marie Manger, Bachelor of Social Work; Dana Michelle Noyes, Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Tammy Renee Rita, Bachelor of Social Work; Cara Patricia Roberts, Bachelor of General Studies in Communication; Jessica L. Sylvester, Bachelor of Social Work; Lucas James Thompson, Bachelor of Science in Business/Finance.

**Osawatomie:** Jason A. Elmquist, Bachelor of General Studies in Geography; John Aaron Marshall, Bachelor of Arts in East Asian Languages and Cultures; Morgan Suzanne Pritchett, Bachelor of Arts in Political Science; Elizabeth Susan Suso, Doctor of Physical Therapy.

**Paola:** Ali Khaleel Agha, Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology; Andy L. Anderson, Doctor of Medicine; Sarah L. Byrne, Bachelor of Science in Business/Finance; Evan James Fowl, Bachelor of Science in Molecular Biosciences; Hillary Jane Frost, Bachelor of Science in Journalism; Darleen Yvonne Glaspie, Master of Social Work; Lindsey Marie Hall, Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Amanda J. Hanf, Bachelor of Science in Education; Stanley William McClurg, Doctor of Medicine; Paul Scott McKenzie, Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Bachelor of Arts in English; Brook Kaye Rentz, Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering; Leighanne Rhodes, Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Jonelle B. Yannotta, Bachelor of Science in Education; Gretchen Bernice Wieland, Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Bachelor of Science in Journalism.

**Spring Hill:** Rachel Lea Ebenstein, Master of Arts in Speech-Language Pathology.
Three area students were among more than 110 who completed the Global Awareness Program at the University of Kansas this spring.

The program recognizes students for studying abroad, taking courses with an international focus, learning foreign languages and being involved in international co-curricular activities. All undergraduates are eligible to participate. To receive certification, students are required to complete two of three requirements. This semester, 10 students completed all three requirements.

Those students from this area completing the program include Katherine Elaine Holloman, daughter of Melvin and Penny Holloman of Centerville, bachelor of arts in political science senior, graduate of Prairie View High School; Sara Beth Schlagel, daughter of Jill Schlagel, presocial welfare senior, graduate of Spring Hill High School; and Sarah Beth McRoberts, daughter of Pat and Nancy McRoberts, pre-journalism junior, graduate of Blue Valley High School of Stilwell.
To hear some folks tell it, you’d think that the 2008 legislature did little on health care. I disagree.

There is no magic-bullet answer to the “health care problem” in our state or our country. In fact, there really isn’t even agreement on exactly what “problem” it is that needs to be solved. For some, the problem is the high cost of prescription drugs. For others, it’s the high cost of health care generally, or the absence of sufficient medical professionals in smaller communities, or the inability to get insurance, or the number of uninsured people who feed to costly emergency room care, or the lack of consumer education and healthy lifestyle choices, or any one of dozens of others.

Truth is, all of these things are problems. And all need attention. But there isn’t going to be one package of legislation, or other reforms, that we can vote for and solve them all.

So health care reform has been, and probably will continue to be, a process of incremental changes and improvements. That’s especially true at the state level because so much of the existing health-care financing infrastructure - programs such as Medicare and Medicaid - are established by federal law and deal with problems that do not respect state lines.

Against that backdrop, here are the key changes and reforms the 2008 legislature enacted:

- Gave full and fair consideration to the 21 specific recommendations for reform put forward by the Kansas Health Policy Authority. About one third of those i  rejected, and still others were referred for further study and later consideration. One that was enacted that I find particularly good is the expansion of prenatal health care to more low-income women.

- Debated the proposal to establish and then expand a new state-level health care entitlement program, called “premium assistance,” to help pay for insurance for some uninsured Kansans. It was a good debate, but ultimately the projected cost - estimated at more than $100 million per year - was more than a majority of us were willing to commit. We rejected this proposal as getting too little “bang for the buck.” The idea will be studied in more detail this summer and fall to see if there is a way to improve it.

- Instead of creating a new state-level entitlement program, we expanded eligibility for the existing federal State Children’s Health Insurance Program, which helps provide health insurance to low-income families with children. More than 8,000 more Kansas kids will be able to get health coverage under this approach, but the cost is spread across the nation rather than being borne entirely by Kansas taxpayers. That’s a lot of “bang for the buck” for Kansans.

- Provided incentives for more employers to provide health savings accounts to their employees.

- Strengthened the ability of people who lose their jobs to get COBRA coverage while they are between jobs.

- Overhauled the state’s managed care program.
Overhauled the **state Board of Healing Arts** to improve the regulation and oversight of the health care profession in Kansas. This was prompted by concerns from several specific instances, including a high-profile case in Wichita, where the board’s approach to regulating health care fell short of protecting the public.

- Another key focus this year was strengthening the health care infrastructure in our state. In our rural communities, it’s increasingly difficult to get doctors, dentists, pharmacists and other health care professionals. To that end, we funded expansion of the **University of Kansas** School of Pharmacy in order to train more pharmacists, some of whom will serve rural communities where their skills are particularly needed. We also increased funding for the Wichita Center for Graduate Medical Education, which trains many of the rural doctors in Kansas, with the same goals in mind. The Senate also approved legislation to help train more dentists, but that measure did not win approval in the House of Representatives.

- We provided more funds this year to help our low-income safety net clinics reach out to help more Kansans. The safety net clinics are important medical assets in many of our communities, and they provide health care to many Kansans who otherwise would not receive it.

On the whole, I think it was a pretty good year for health care reform in Kansas. Some of the ideas proposed but not approved, such as a statewide ban on smoking in public places, no doubt will return to the agenda in coming years. And there will be new ideas put forward as well.

That’s as it should be. We’ll keep listening to folks back home, trying to sort through the various problems in our health care system, and taking action where we can to try to improve the situation. Thanks for all your suggestions and input. Keep it coming!

As always, I appreciate knowing what’s on your mind. The best way to reach me is through my Topeka office at the State Capitol, Room 390-E, Topeka, Kansas 66612 or by phone at (785) 296-2497. You also can e-mail me through my Website at [www.DerekSchmidt.com](http://www.DerekSchmidt.com).
The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of Kansas has announced recipients of annual awards and scholarships totaling about $300,000.

Dean Ann Brill announced the 130 award and scholarship recipients, including 11 incoming freshmen, during the April 29 ceremony in the Kansas Union. The awards presented totaled more than $11,000.

Miami County students earning awards included incoming freshman Allysha Danielle Newton, daughter of Dean and Ronda Newton, Fred W. Brinkerhoff Scholarship, Osawatomie High School; pre-journalism sophomore Francesca Amelia Chambers, daughter of Esther Zimmerman and Shane Chambers, Paola High School; and news and information senior Kendra Dawn Hall, daughter of Kathy and Charles Hall, Wendell R. Sullivan Memorial Scholarship, Paola High School.
Seventh Graders Earn Duke Honors

The University of Kansas was host to state recognition program Sunday at the Lied Center for about 400 academically talented seventh-grade students selected for the 2008 Duke University Talent Identification Program.

Students from this area earning a spot on the program were Adrien McKee and Deanna Rooney, both of Louisburg; Austin Kehoe, Trent Markus, Caylin Smith and Samantha Wagner, all of Paola; and Michaela Gustafson of Spring Hill.

Selection to Duke TIP is based on college entrance exam scores that are in the top 5 percent while the students are in middle school. Students participate by taking either the SAT or ACT national achievement tests. Working with host academic institutions such as KU, Duke TIP sponsors 35 ceremonies in its 16-state talent-search region.

Each Duke TIP student receives a medallion. The state recognition ceremonies honor seventh-graders who have earned scores above the average scores of college-bound high school seniors.

The program is in its 28th year, and this is the 10th year KU has hosted the Kansas recognition program.
Four Area Students Complete Global Awareness Study

In Lawrence — More than 110 students from 30 departments completed the Global Awareness Program at the University of Kansas this spring.

The program recognizes students for studying abroad, taking courses with an international focus, learning foreign languages and being involved in international co-curricular activities. All undergraduates are eligible to participate. To receive certification, students are required to complete two of three requirements. This semester, 10 students completed all three requirements.

Those students from this area completing the program include Katherine Elaine Holloman, daughter of Melvin and Penny Holloman of Centerville, Bachelor of Arts in Political Science senior, graduate of Prairie View High School; Sarah L. Byrne, daughter of Edward Byrne, Bachelor of Science in Finance, graduate of Saint Thomas Aquinas High School of Overland Park; and Sarah Beth Schiagel, daughter of Jil Schiagel, Pre-Social Welfare senior, graduate of Spring Hill High School; Sarah Beth McRoberts, daughter of Pat and Nancy McRoberts, Pre-Journalism junior, graduate of Blue Valley High School of Stilwell.

"Educating students in the context of an interconnected world gives them a much needed advantage as they set out to work in a global economy," said Jane Irungu, program coordinator.

The newest organization to be affiliated with the Global Awareness Program is Students for Global Awareness, which was formed by program ambassadors to reach out to more students on campus and to allow graduate students and other interested students to participate in related forums and volunteer activities.

Launched in Fall 2004, the Global Awareness Program has recognized more than 600 students in the past three years. Students earn certification on their KU transcripts and are honored at a luncheon in the spring. More than 1,200 students are currently participating.
Mental health center's success earns praise

By CLEON RICKEL
Herald Senior Writer

The Elizabeth Layton Center, which provides community mental health services, won praise for taking part in an experimental program involving Dartmouth.

Diane Asher, a Kansas University researcher, said the Layton Center has been involved in the program for five years even though grant funds for the program have expired. Asher met with Franklin County Commissioners Wednesday. The county has a contract with the Layton Center to provide county mental health services.

"For a small rural town, they (the Layton Center) are doing some of the most advanced work in the country," Asher said.

The program was designed to help those with long-term severe mental illnesses cope with living in the community and stay employed and involved in the community, she said.

The program has successfully shown if those with such illnesses stay employed and involved in the community, they have fewer and less severe problems, she said.

"They're taking this cutting-edge research and putting it into practice," Asher said.

Only 12 clinics and hospitals in the state are taking part in the study, Asher said.