

Pets could be called 'wonder drugs'

COLUMBIA, Mo., Sept. 29 (UPI) -- Pets lower hypertension, spur exercise and improve psychological health, and if this appeared in pill form it would be called a wonder drug, a U.S. expert says.

"Research in this field is providing new evidence on the positive impact pets have in our lives," Rebecca Johnson, an associate professor in the University of Missouri Sinclair School of Nursing, the College of Veterinary Medicine and director of the Research Center for Human-Animal Interaction, says in a statement.

Johnson says the International Society for Anthrozoology and Human-Animal Interaction Conference in Kansas City, Mo., Oct. 20-25 will include conference discussions on ways that human-animal interaction benefits humans and animals.

"Pets are of great importance to people, especially during hard economic times," Johnson says. "Pets provide unconditional love and acceptance and may be part of answers to societal problems, such as inactivity and obesity."

ReCHAI sponsored the Walk a Hound, Lose a Pound and Stay Fit for Seniors program that matched older adults with shelter dogs, while another group of older adults walked with humans. For 12 weeks, participants were encouraged to walk on an outdoor trail for one hour, five times a week.

"The older people who walked their dogs improved their walking capabilities by 28 percent," Johnson says. "They had more confidence walking on the trail, and they increased their speed. Those who walked with humans had a 4 percent increase in their walking capabilities."



Medical records are key in deal

Some UM staffers still wary of Cerner

By Janese Heavin

Published September 28, 2009 at 6:18 p.m.

Updated September 29, 2009 at 1:02 p.m.

Advertisement

The newly formed Tiger Institute for Health Innovation will allow the University of Missouri and Cerner Corp. to develop, test and market health care information technology, generating a new revenue stream for both entities.

UM System President Gary Forsee and Cerner CEO Neal Patterson unveiled the institute yesterday, touting it as a way to promote innovative solutions that ultimately will cut health care costs in Missouri. The partnership is "just what the doctor ordered," Forsee said.

The partnership with Cerner, which Forsee said did not require a bid process, is expected to be a \$100 million benefit to the university over the next 10 years. That amount includes a direct \$20,000 contribution in cash and resources from Cerner and estimated revenues generated from the commercialization of new products. Those products will be developed in the institute's "Living Lab" and tested in university hospitals and clinics.

Through the Tiger Institute, the entities would market and sell medical information products to physicians statewide and split the profits. Those details are outlined in a 14-page memo of understanding signed yesterday. It's unclear how the university would spend funds generated by the sale of new products.

"The decision would be made by" the board of governors "on a case-by-case basis," health system spokeswoman Mary Jenkins said in an e-mail. "That said, the spirit of the arrangement is to both reinvest where innovation needs to grow or be enhanced, as well as create revenues for the principals that could be used at their discretion if or when an innovation becomes commercialized."

UM has also agreed to showcase Cerner products and will be compensated for referrals and consulting services. Cerner and the university also will go after grant funding and federal stimulus dollars earmarked for electronic health records.

The Tiger Institute's goal is to create secure, user-friendly, electronic access to health records, allowing medical staff to make better-informed decisions about new patients.

The arrangement will have a more immediate effect on 100 MU workers expected to become Cerner employees in 2010. Although the agreement says the employees will receive equal or better compensation and benefits than they now get, workers are leery.

"Some people think it's exciting stuff, but by and large we're taking a wait-and-see approach," one staffer said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"Everybody I talked to feels like we got shafted," another employee said. "There were a lot of tears and sick stomachs, that's for sure."

One concern is Cerner's reputation as a demanding employer. Patterson made national news in 2001 when he sent an e-mail to workers threatening to lay off staff and freeze benefits unless employees worked 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and half-days on Saturdays. In 2006, two staff associates sued Cerner for not paying overtime.

UM workers are likely to remain salaried, so they would not be eligible for overtime pay, Cerner spokeswoman Kelli Christman said. "But those are human resources issues that are being discussed right now and have not been finalized," she said.

In a prepared statement, Rep. Mary Still, D-Columbia, said she's concerned about the arrangement and "any potential negative effect the new partnership with Cerner might have on University employees."

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CAMPUS CHATTER

JANESE HEAVIN



Cerner's C-YA statement

By Janese Heavin

Posted September 29, 2009 at 3:12 p.m.

Cerner's press release touting the new Tiger Institute contained all the promises media and community members heard yesterday.

"The Tiger Institute's urgent mission is to create innovations in healthcare delivery that could potentially reduce Missourians' escalating healthcare costs by up to \$1 billion annually through modernizing and automating the way healthcare is delivered," the Cerner release says.

And the company repeats goals to "accelerate MU's existing healthcare information technology projects," "connect all of the University of Missouri Health Care hospitals, clinics and pharmacies, and could eventually extend to providers in the Columbia community and across the state of Missouri" and so on.

But in an interesting twist, Cerner concludes the press release with this C-YA (aka "cover your" ... you know) disclosure (copied and pasted in case it's later removed):

This release contains forward-looking statements that involve a number of risks and uncertainties. It is important to note that the Company's performance, and actual results, financial condition or business could differ materially from those expressed in such forward-looking statements.

The words "achieve", "plans", "could", "will", "expected", "estimated", "intend", "opportunity", "mission", "aim", "can", "want" or the negative of these words, variations thereof or similar expressions are intended to identify such forward-looking statements.

Factors that could cause or contribute to such differences include, but are not limited to: the possibility of product-related liabilities; potential claims for system errors and warranties; the possibility of interruption at our data centers or client support facilities; our proprietary technology may be subject to claims for infringement or misappropriation of intellectual property rights of others, or may be infringed or misappropriated by others; risks associated with our

recruitment and retention of key personnel; risks related to our reliance on third party suppliers; changing political, economic and regulatory influences; government regulation; significant competition and market changes; and, failure of the parties to achieve the intended benefits.

Additional discussion of these and other factors affecting the Company's business is contained in the Company's periodic filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The Company undertakes no obligation to update forward-looking statements to reflect changed assumptions, the occurrence of unanticipated events or changes in future operating results, financial condition or business over time.

(And just FYI, this isn't a boiler plate PR statement. Other, similar Cerner releases do not contain this disclosure.)

Thoughts?

Reader comments

The opinions expressed below are those of the readers who submitted them. Readers are solely responsible for the content of their comments.



BrutusMaximus says...

Well done, Janese. It will be interesting to see if that disclaimer is removed from the press release.

September 29, 2009 at 3:45 p.m. ([link](#) | [suggest removal](#))



JoeClay says...

Good grief!! Why in the world would any 'leader' of a state institution even consider dealing with such nefarious bull hockey? A poster several days ago indicated some kind of connection between Forsee and Cerner. It will be interesting to see how this all plays out. (Maybe interesting is the wrong word)

September 29, 2009 at 4:28 p.m. ([link](#) | [suggest removal](#))



local atty says...

Sorry, but this is not a conspiracy or anything really that interesting.

This disclaimer is pursuant to a federal statute, the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These disclaimers appear on almost every press release issued by public companies if they relate to the future of their business, as opposed to facts regarding the past or present.

If you do a "google" search for "forward-looking statements" there are over 8 million hits.

September 30, 2009 at 12:03 a.m. ([link](#) | [suggest removal](#))



jheavin (Janese Heavin) says...

Thanks for the update, local atty. Just thought it was interesting Cerner hadn't used this on other releases, but maybe that's because other releases weren't partnerships with public universities? Wonder why the public university didn't provide this disclaimer in its releases?

-- Janese

September 30, 2009 at 5:45 a.m. ([link](#) | [suggest removal](#))

theman eater

MU, Cerner to form 10-year alliance

The partnership will create the Tiger Institute of Health Innovation.

By Travis Cornejo
Published Sept. 29, 2009

After more than a decade of collaboration, MU and Cerner Corp., a leading health care provider, announced their plans Monday to create the Tiger Institute of Health Innovation.

Through Cerner's investment, the Tiger Institute will provide a \$100 million positive impact for MU, the largest capital investment by a corporation in MU history, an MU news release stated.

"It will be transformative because it will create one of the nation's most digitized health systems and in a few years begin to achieve up to \$1 billion in annual economic benefit to the state," UM system President Gary Forsee said.

MU Health Care CEO James Ross said combining Cerner and MU resources allows the newly formed Tiger Institute to become a leader in academic health.

"Things are changing so it'll be a little awkward until we find the edges, but we're confident in this partnership and its leadership," Ross said.

Cerner CEO Neal Patterson said the partnership offers his company many benefits.

"From our side, this is a huge opportunity to be aligned with the forefront of patient care," Patterson said.

Patterson said Cerner would benefit from the new generation of doctors studying at MU.

"We have to move to the edge and utilize the talents of the doctors and the nurses here," Patterson said. "We're going to make a fundamental difference in health care."

According to the memorandum of understanding between the UM system Board of Curators and Cerner, the purpose of the Tiger Institute is to create innovations designed to improve patient care and population health.

"Given the troubles our nation is having with health care, we believe this partnership is just what the doctor ordered," Forsee said.

Forsee said now is the right time of year to bring this to MU and the partnership could benefit other hospitals in mid-Missouri.

"We also may be able to share this with other hospitals in the region," Forsee said.

The alliance between MU and Cerner will last an initial term of 10 years, with the possibility of being extended with the mutual agreement of both parties, the memorandum stated.

"I would like to emphasize this is cash neutral," Forsee said. "It's not a cost-cutting move, nor will it cost the university anything more than what we're already spending."

According to the news release, the information technology staff at Cerner and MU will be combined into one team.

MU will pay Cerner to take on employees, Forsee said.

He said there are 123 employees affected by the partnership. Some will remain hospital employees and more than 100 will be reassigned to Cerner.

"We've made it clear to them that their jobs are safe," Forsee said.

Ross said the pension plans for employees will depend on each employee's circumstances, and no jobs will be eliminated in the process of creating the Tiger Institute, according to the news release.

"Health care is 16 percent of our economy," Patterson said. "This \$2 trillion industry will double in the next 10 years, which means a lot of jobs will be created."

According to the news release, early Tiger Institute initiatives include Cerner's capital investment in new software, services and personnel.

Comments (0)

Oops! Mizzou Sells Phones Without Wiping Memory

(AP) Mike Bellman got more than he bargained for when he purchased a box of old cell phones from the University of Missouri athletics department.

Bellman bought the cell phones earlier this year at a university surplus sale with the intent of reselling them for parts. He paid \$190 for 25 old cell phones, figuring he'd sell the parts for around \$1,000.

Turned out the information on the phones might be worth more than the hardware. No one at the university had deleted the text messages, e-mails and contact numbers from the phones.

Bellman told the Columbia Tribune last week he hoped to sell the old phones to a sports collector, with an asking price of \$3,000. Bellman did not respond Tuesday to several calls and e-mails from The Associated Press.

The Tribune reported last week that among other things, one Sprint Treo previously used by basketball coach Mike Anderson still had text messages between Anderson, football coach Gary Pinkel and Athletics Director Mike Alden. It was nothing controversial _ well wishes for upcoming games and congratulations after wins.

Still, the university has caught some flak from several online sites for not being more careful with information that could fall into the wrong hands _ someone affiliated with Kansas, Nebraska or some other Big 12 rival, for example.

"Missouri Manages to Screw Up Throwing Out Cell Phones," was the headline on Deadspin.com.

Athletics spokesman Chad Moller said the incident has prompted a change in the way the athletics department discards old cell phones.

"We certainly since this happened have gone over our internal procedures, so when we do have phones to turn over, we'll take it upon ourselves to make sure the information has been wiped," Moller said.

After the university realized the information had been left on the phones, officials tried to buy them back.

"We offered to pay him what he bought the phones for, or we also indicated that if he'd simply bring the phones to our offices, we'd wipe them clean and then he could go out and resell them for whatever he wanted," Moller said.

But Moller said Bellman broke off communications and refused to sell them back to the university. Bellman told the Tribune he believed the phones could a valuable addition for a collector of Missouri sports memorabilia.

"I'm looking for that crazy collector who wants to take these phones and read about what happened when it happened," he told the newspaper.

Blue Springs Park Can Help Innovate Area into a Better Future

September 25, 2009
Kansas City Business Journal
Mike Braude

One of my favorite people at one of my favorite places, the University of Missouri, is Mary Anne McCollum. A former mayor of Columbia, she is manager of constituent relations in the university affairs department. She recently invited me to come to Blue Springs to meet with Mayor Carson Ross, Blue Springs Economic Development President Brien Starner and civic leader Bill Wrisinger to discuss a joint Blue Springs-University of Missouri project.



Mary Anne McCollum
University of Missouri

That project is the Missouri Innovation Park at Blue Springs. Ten minutes into our meeting, I readily understood why Mary Anne is so excited about this park.



The park is an approximately 500-acre science and technology innovation project that will provide a clustered focus for knowledge-based innovation and commercialization. It is a joint venture of the Blue Springs EDC, the city of Blue Springs and MU, which will be the main tenant. As anchor tenant, MU will concentrate on research collaboration as a true partner in this knowledge-based community.

The park will be a huge win for the city of Blue Springs. Brien Starner gave me some perspective. He told me: "Twenty years ago, Blue Springs was a hot spot, the Missouri-side juggernaut. Then, even with its strong demographics, the Rip Van Winkle syndrome stepped in, and economic development fell off. This project puts Blue Springs back on track."

The site, at the Adams Dairy Parkway exit from Interstate 70, is a natural. It is adjacent to RED Development's Adams Dairy Landing retail project and includes what now is a lovely public golf course.

I asked for an example of how the synergies might work. Roger Duncan, MU's vice chancellor for research, provided it.

Duncan said that "continued and increased collaboration between biotech firms and academia will occur at the proposed Mizzou Center, including joint research with scientists from both areas working together, as well as fee-for-service projects. As an example of the latter, not long ago, University of Missouri researchers worked with pharmaceutical companies, providing radioactive isotopes to help diagnose and treat several types of cancer, including tumors and relief of pain for metastasized soft-tissue cancers. One example is the drug Quadramet, which relieves pain associated with bone cancer."

The park will look for tenants whose strengths align with MU's three areas of technology emphasis: the convergence of human and animal health, food for the future and sustainable energy (especially nuclear and bioenergy). I cannot imagine three more cutting-edge spheres.

I like this project because I believe it will establish a solid economic base for job creation in our area in the science and technology sectors.

I think it will do wonders for the high-value, long-term economic development of the very important eastern side of our metro area.

Finally, it will be a state-of-the-art facility that will be a vital center for the activities of our state university in the western part of Missouri.

I foresee the park being a home run for its three partners and, more important, for our entire metropolitan area.



Conferences go higher-tech

UM, businesses freshen images.

By Janese Heavin

Tuesday, September 29, 2009

Advertisement

University of Missouri System President Gary Forsee met face to face with executives in Texas and Virginia yesterday thanks to state-of-the-art video technology now available at all four UM campuses.

With his wife, Sherry, by his side in the TelePresence conference room at Ellis Library, Forsee thanked Cisco Systems and AT&T executives — depicted on screens from their respective conference centers — for their help in making the video system possible.

Cisco's TelePresence System enables the university to link to other users through AT&T's global network. TelePresence rooms have three high-resolution, 65-inch plasma display screens that depict life-size images from other participating sites. Microphones at conference tables are sensitive enough to allow participants to speak in normal voices.

Forsee last year donated \$1 million to get the system at all four campuses. Cisco and AT&T contributed the design, equipment, installation and networking. Forsee expects the technology to save the university as much as \$1 million on travel expenses by allowing campus administrators to meet without leaving their respective towns. The UM System Board of Curators used the system for the first time last month, and "it went off swimmingly," he said.

The system also is connected through AT&T's Virtual Private Network, which allows any of the campuses to connect to research or business partners or other colleges that subscribe. Right now, only 20 universities have a TelePresence center.

Eventually, the system could be used to provide new classroom settings, Cisco CEO John Chambers suggested. "The future is all about video," he said.

AT&T executive and MU alumnus Jose Gutierrez praised Forsee for embracing advances in technology.

"I'm proud of what you and your team are doing with the university," he said. "This is one more example of the innovative thinking and great leadership you're bringing to your field."

During yesterday's brief demonstration of the system, Chambers also introduced a new handheld flip camera that allows users to record and play back high-quality videos. He said he would provide UM with 10 of the cameras, which he envisions will be used ultimately to record classroom lectures or presentations.

Those types of new technologies, Chambers said, will make the TelePresence center in a few years "seem like one small step."

Missourinet

MU professor co-authors book to help choose elder care

Tuesday, September 29, 2009 10:11 AM

By Jessica Machetta - 2009

A book co-authored by a University of Missouri professor helps when people need to make quick calls in finding long term care for their loved ones.

Marilyn Rantz is a professor at the University of Missouri school of nursing who began her research more than 15 years ago. The newest edition of her book, "How to Find the Best Eldercare," focuses on telling people the best ways to find long-term care, and in a short amount of time. She says the book covers common sense topics.

Rantz says other topics tackle tough decisions that might not be so common sense, others might take people by surprise

She says the biggest change in long-term care over the past few years is the number of options available regarding in-home care, nursing home care and assisted living.

She says families need to weigh their care wishes with their savings. Elder care ranges between five and seven thousand dollars a month. In some cases, but not all, Medicaid kicks in once personal assets have been exhausted

The book -- "How to Find the Best Eldercare: A 20-Minute Guide to Assisted Living, In-Home Care, Nursing Homes & Senior Housing in Your Community" -- is available through most retail book stores

She says the book is both for those who are planning ahead for themselves and others, as well as those who are faced with the task of having to make a quick decision

The book takes a "series of studies to learn about the best ways to help nursing homes do the best possible care," she says. "We've also learned a lot about how to judge the quality of care of nursing homes, what the best quality of care is and what that really means to consumers and healthcare providers. We've been able to summarize it so people can actually use it and make judgments "