

VISAS FOR SALE

Administration stirs anxiety by raising H-1B fees to \$100,000 and rolls out a \$1 million 'gold card' visa for wealthy individuals

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TIGERS RECLAIM CUP

Missouri defeats South Carolina 29-20 to win back the Mayor's Cup as it opens SEC play with a victory and moves to 4-0 on the season

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COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

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Pro-Palestine group can join Mizzou parade, judge decides

BY MISSOURIAN STAFF

A federal judge ruled Friday that Mizzou Students for Justice in Palestine can participate in next weekend's Homecoming parade, as long as they comply with the university's parade policy.

In his ruling, U.S. District Judge Stephen Bough noted that while the court finds that the organization must be permitted to participate in the parade, nothing in the order prohibits the University of Missouri from enforcing the requirements of the parade policy.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations called the ruling a "major victory for the civil rights of all Americans," according to a news release.

"This is a testament that we're doing something right," said Isleen Atallah, former president of MSJP. "We are as much a part of the Mizzou community as we think we are. Despite what the administration wants the public to believe, we've never been a threat, and we continue to not be a threat."

Earlier this year, the university updated its Homecoming parade policy to exclude political expression. The new policy also denies participation of organizations that don't adhere to the parade's "black and gold" theme.

According to the updated policy, "the purpose of the Homecoming parade is to celebrate Mizzou and its supporters. It is not a venue for protests."

Todd McCubbin, executive director of the Mizzou Alumni Association, told the judge during a hearing Tuesday that the organization's 2025 application would likely be preliminarily approved, and the Office of Alumni Engagement would work with the group to ensure it complies

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WAXING HISTORIC



BEN HUGHES • Missourian

Caroline Iranpour, 2, and her mother, Katie Iranpour, make candles Saturday at the Heritage Festival at Nifong Park. The annual festival features historical artisans and performers with interactive activities to teach about life for Missourians of the past. The festival continues from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

For more coverage, see Page 4A.

MU to seek proposals from private developers for projects on campus

BY SARAH MOURA

Columbia Missourian

The University of Missouri plans to request proposals from private developers interested in building properties on the MU campus.

This effort was announced at the last UM System Board of Curators meeting earlier in September. UM System President Mun Choi presented a map during the meeting highlighting zones across the campus where such a project might be feasible.

Mizzou spokesperson Christopher Ave said the university

is seeking opportunities that could serve as year-round commercial assets while enhancing the game day experience within the MU Athletics Sports Complex.

Ave added the initiative will explore all appropriate opportunities for development, including "public-private partnerships" and long-term lease arrangements for mixed-use development, housing and other viable projects.

"The main benefit to the university would be to increase revenue, but development could also enhance

game day experiences as well as provide people more reasons to visit our campus community," said Ave.

The group heading this initiative includes Board Chair Todd Graves, Curator Bob Blitz, Athletic Director Laird Veatch, General Counsel Mark Menghini and Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Ryan Rapp.

Graves noted during a news conference in September that public-private partnerships are a national trend to bring more amenities surrounding

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Judge orders revisions to ballot lingo for abortion ban proposal

Amendment 3 wording fails to alert voters of reproductive rights repeal

BY RUDI KELLER
Missouri Independent

The Republican plan to ban most abortions in Missouri can go before voters next year but the ballot title must plainly say its intent, a Cole County judge ruled Friday.

The decision from Circuit Judge Daniel Green concluded that lawmakers properly combined bans on gender-affirming treatments for minors with reproductive rights in the proposed constitutional amendment but misled voters with the ballot language.

Quoting a Western District Court of Appeals ruling from 2020, Green wrote

that "it was insufficient and unfair for a summary statement to fail to 'alert voters to that change in some fashion.'"

And the ballot language, he wrote, fails to alert voters that it would repeal the reproductive rights section of the Missouri Constitution approved in the 2024 election.

In the ruling, Green ordered Secretary of State Denny Hoskins to submit revised language within seven days. Green also found that the "fair ballot language" summary posted on Hoskins' office website was misleading for also failing to state abortion would be banned in most cases, and ordered revisions to be submitted within seven days.

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STORMS POSSIBLE
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City receives \$14.3 million from settlement

2014 suit targeted unpaid fees owed by CenturyLink, which Brightspeed bought

BY ALEC MARTIREZ
Columbia Missourian

The City of Columbia has received \$14.3 million in a settlement with Brightspeed Communications from a 2014 lawsuit filed by Columbia and Joplin regarding unpaid licensing taxes and fees.

"At this time, we do not have plans on how to utilize this funding because we have a budgeted deficit," Matthew Lue, the city's finance director, said in an interview. "We won't do

anything with the funding until we figure out how to address the ongoing deficit; therefore, there is no immediate impact."

The infusion of funds comes at a time when city leadership is coping with higher employee salaries and other growing expenditures — increases that are trending toward outpacing the city's revenue growth.

Brightspeed is an internet provider that in 2023 acquired portions of a business that used to be known as CenturyLink, according to Missouri case filings. That acquisition included including internet operations in mid-Missouri.

In the lawsuit, the company

argued that some of its services, such as long-distance toll and private lines, should be exempt from local business taxes imposed by any city.

New Orleans filed a lawsuit in 2010 against Brightspeed over similar unpaid franchising fees.

Brightspeed is based in Charlotte, North Carolina, and operates in 20 states. A spokesperson reached by email said the company would not comment on the settlement.

Lue said the 2014 lawsuit was predicated by a class action lawsuit filed by the city of O'Fallon in 2012 on behalf of all Missouri municipalities. Columbia and Joplin opted out of that class

action suit to pursue their own lawsuit in 2014, believing they had a better case on their own.

The internet provider was ordered to pay the cities of Columbia and Joplin each what they were owed in June 2020 as part of a summary judgment.

The original estimate of what Brightspeed owed Columbia specifically from July 2007 to June 2021 measured as much as \$54 million. The decision that Brightspeed had to pay this estimate was reversed, and the case was sent back to trial after Brightspeed appealed.

That second trial was preempted by the settlement, which was reached in July.