

Connecting - November 18, 2015

1 message

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Wed, Nov 18, 2015 at 9:41 AM

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Connecting

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Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning!

Our Connecting colleague **Kia Breaux** ([Email](#)) has a unique perspective on her alma mater, the University of Missouri, and the issues that have thrust it into the national spotlight over the past two weeks - a student's hunger strike that was part of a protest over campus racial issues that led to a tent encampment, a threatened boycott by the

football team and the resignations of the university's president and chancellor.

Kia, an 18-year Associated Press veteran who is based in her hometown of Kansas City, is black and has long been active with the AP and the university in helping foster diversity. The second member of her family to attend Missouri, she is raising two sons who one day may follow their mother to Columbia. No one I know bleeds Missouri black and gold more than Kia, whom I have known - and greatly respected - from the time she began her AP career in Kansas City and later became the first black chief of bureau in the Kansas City bureau's 131-year history.

I asked Kia to share her experiences as a student in the university's widely respected school of journalism and as a proud Mizzou graduate, and her resolve to continue working to effect change. As she notes in the final paragraph of her remarkable story:

"My prayer is that my sons don't have to endure some of the things that my sister and I did in order for me to add their names to our family's brick on the Mizzou Legacy Walk. I have and will continue to work to make sure every student accepted into the university is made to feel they belong."

Paul

Missouri events rekindle painful memories for veteran AP journalist



Kia Breaux with her older son John (Randle IV), 10, outside of Faurot Field before Mizzou's 21-3 homecoming loss against Florida.

By KIA BREAU

The events that recently unfolded at Mizzou brought back many painful memories. They also were an indication the work I've done to improve things for the next generation of students at my alma mater has fallen short.

As a student pursuing a journalism degree at Mizzou in the 1990s, my intelligence was questioned. I was called a nigger and I was subjected to offensive racial stereotypes. I also was respected, educated and nurtured by faculty and staff of all races.

My first recollection of being treated differently as a black student came within a year of my enrollment.

My 3.8 grade point average enabled me to take honors courses.

I walked into an English class on the first day and took a seat. The professor came over to me and said, "This is HONORS English."

I told her that I was aware of that. She requested to see my schedule and I gave it to her. She shoved it back in my hand and walked away.

Several white students entered the class after me. None was asked to turn over a schedule for verification of enrollment. I was the only black student in the class all semester.

After I was accepted into the journalism school I worked at the university's daily newspaper - The Columbia Missourian - as required for all journalism majors in the news-editorial sequence.

One day the police scanner in the newsroom indicated there was a disturbance at an intersection in a predominantly black neighborhood in Columbia. A faculty editor ordered a student reporter to get to the scene. The editor admonished the reporter for not moving fast enough and said, "They aren't going to be out there all day eating their chicken and watermelon." She was unaware that I was sitting a few feet away.

The editor had a look of shock and embarrassment on her face when I stood up and glared at her.

A year later while working as a residence hall assistant, I found the word "nigger" written on the bulletin board outside my room a day after I reported a group of underage white students for having alcohol in the dorm.

But the incident that nearly led to my transfer out of the university came when I was covering a rural Missouri county as a reporter for the Missourian. I was assigned to interview the neighbors of a murder suspect. A woman refused to talk to me when I knocked on her door and suggested I go talk to the people who lived on the "colored" side of town.

I was in tears when I called my father that night and told him I wanted to withdraw from the university. He told me I'd be doing what the racists wanted me to do if I left. He encouraged me to stay and prove that I was as deserving as anyone else to be there. My father also told me racism would likely exist at whatever college in which I decided to enroll next so I might as well stay and make the most of the situation.

I also had black professors at the university who could relate to the unique challenges I faced as a black reporter covering a rural, predominantly white area. They shared similar experiences as young journalists working in the South. Family support and diverse faculty members who could identify with my struggles helped me stay the course.

While I harbored some bitterness and resentment in the years after I graduated, I maintained ties to the university via my involvement in the student chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists. I also joined a historically black sorority and returned to campus to support various activities. I eventually purchased a lifetime membership in the Mizzou Alumni Association and began making donations to the university. I've served on various committees and boards and mentored dozens of aspiring journalists.

My goal has been to bring a diverse viewpoint to conversations about making the university a better place for all students. I've worked alongside some caring individuals of all races and from all walks of life who have been committed to diversity and inclusion. I've been able to look past my hurtful experiences at Mizzou and focus on the positive things my college education has meant for my life.

My sister graduated from Mizzou six years before I did and she suffered racial harassment. She hasn't returned to campus since she graduated. Her memories are too painful. Nonetheless I purchased a brick bearing both of our names on the Mizzou Legacy Walk outside the alumni center.

I took my oldest son, who is 10, to a Mizzou homecoming for the first time this year. I wanted him to see where I went to college and expose him to all of the traditions that make Mizzou such a great university.

I've done a lot of reflecting about what the atmosphere at the university will be when my son could enroll less than a decade from now. He's already determined to be a Tiger.

My hope is that students, faculty, administrators and alumni take advantage of this opportunity to bring about meaningful change.

All students should have the right to pursue higher education in an environment that is welcoming and free of racial harassment and intimidation.

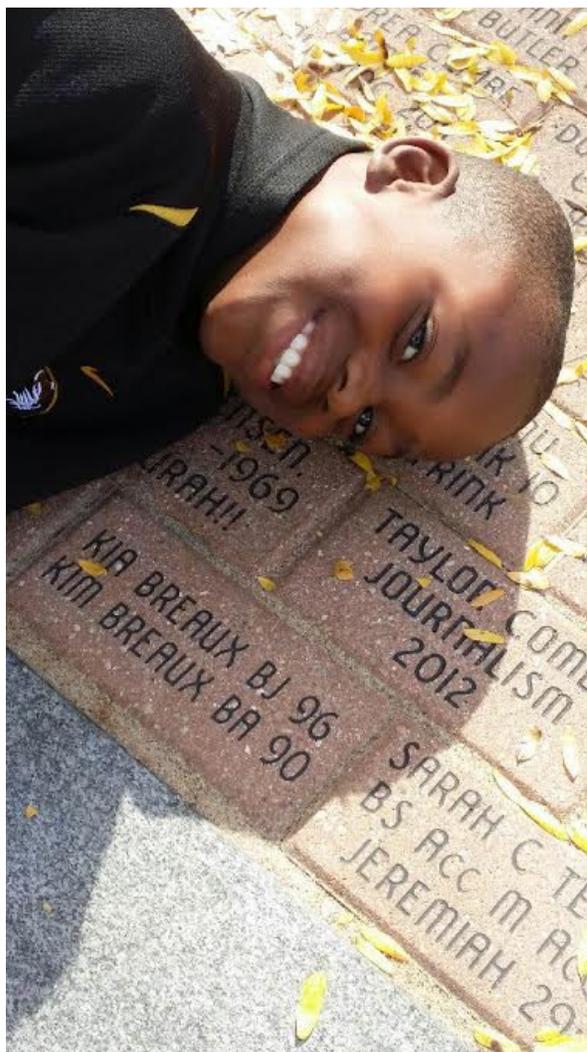
They should also have an opportunity to be taught by faculty reflective of the changing demographics of our country. The fact that I did made a huge difference in the university retaining me as a student.

Reaching those goals is going to take some time and it's going to require open, honest communication on all sides.

If I had to do things over again, I would still enroll at Mizzou because I learned from some of the best journalism educators in the world. I still keep in touch with many of my former professors. I've also made lifelong friends.

My prayer is that my sons don't have to endure some of the things that my sister and I did in order for me to add their names to our family's brick on the Mizzou Legacy Walk. I have and will continue to work to make sure every student accepted into the university is made to feel they belong.

(Kia Breaux is AP's director of regional media based in Kansas City, Mo. She joined AP as a newswoman in Kansas City in 1997, and later worked as AP's Roanoke, Va., correspondent and as news editor in Omaha, Neb. She also worked as assistant bureau chief in Kansas City prior to being named chief of bureau in 2010.)



John poses next to a brick that bears his mother and aunt's names along Mizzou's Legacy Walk. The walkway leads up to the Reynolds Alumni Center.

Connecting mailbox

Bert Rosenthal - one of my favorite people

Jim Cour - Bert Rosenthal was one of my favorite people. His nickname was meters. I had no idea that he had problems with his heart. He was always so positive. This is a sad, sad day for me.

Richard Herzfelder - When I joined the Baseball Desk as a dictationist way back in 1978, it didn't take long to figure out that Bert was a complete professional ... somehow that photo in the obit looks a bit off, though, no offense to Marty Lederhandler but Bert didn't look right unless he was squinting at you through thick lenses with black frames ... catching some error in your box score before you did ...

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More kudos to Mort Rosenblum

Joseph Benham - Kudos to Mort (Rosenblum) for his piece on Paris, etc. Mort and I shared many a drink of duty-free shop booze and excellent Argentine wine when we were based in Buenos Aires at the same time.

Still an AP man at heart, I fed Mort and other AP bureau chiefs in South America stuff that I ran across that I knew would be good AP copy even though it wouldn't interest my bosses at US News. I admired Mort for his ability to spot a good feature story that no one else had noticed (Ken Davis had the same knack in New Orleans and in Buenos Aires when he was there ahead of Mort.)

The last time I tried to give a tip to AP's Dallas Bureau, the call was piped-through to Washington, where the staffer who answered explained that Dallas is on a long list of bureaus that are no longer manned at night, except maybe in sports.

My years in Dallas and NY were spent almost entirely on the night and overnight (aka "early") shifts, where I learned about 99 percent of what I know about editing from a bunch of pros including Tim Parker, Dick MacMurray, Herb Barker, Gus Winkler (who also edited the AP Style Book in those days) and Harris Jackson.

I suppose that one reason for the disappearance of the early shift is

that afternoon papers needing copy turned out overnight have disappeared. That's a pity; some of the best copy I remember handling on the General and World Desks was the work of craftsmen in Washington and foreign bureaus that

went on the wires during the night for PMs.

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From Paris



Two women stand outside the Petit Cambodge restaurant, a site of last Friday's attacks, in Paris, Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2015. France made an unprecedented demand on Tuesday for its European Union allies to support its military action against the Islamic State group as it launched new airstrikes on the militants' Syrian stronghold, days after attacks in Paris linked to the group killed at least 129 people. (AP Photo/Daniel Ochoa de Olza)

Snoring can be funny or dangerous ZZZZZZZZZZZ

Gene Herrick - I laughed when I read George Zucker's piece on snoring and sharing a room with an AP teammate.

In the 50's, I covered a giant flood at Cairo, Illinois, at the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. First thing I obtained a room in a hotel right at the edge of

the river levy. Then I went to work, but didn't get to bed for more than two days. In the meantime, I let some other journalist friends use the room. I later got so tired I was about to collapse. The flood waters were within inches of overflowing the river levy. I didn't care, so I went up to my room, only to find two guys in the bed and one on the floor. I chased the two out of the bed. "This is my bed and my room - sorry gentlemen, I'm going to bed."

Another time, I shared a room with a fellow AP newsman at some big story. The second night, when we were going to bed at the same time, he sat up in bed and sternly admonished me that I had to stay awake until he went to sleep - or else. I fought the sandman until I heard him breathing heavily, and then I dropped off to sleep. No problem the next morning.

But the most interesting story occurred in Mexico, where I was a patient in an alternative-care hospital receiving treatment for prostate cancer. My roommate was quite upset after the first night, claiming loudly to the doctors that I had kept him awake snoring all night. The next night, he pleaded with the doctor to give both of us some natural sleeping medicine. When I awoke the next morning, I noticed doctors, nurses, and patients casually walking down the hall, many of them staring at me. After a few moments, I realized that I was in my bed, but the bed was out in the hallway. My roommate, irritated with my apparent snoring, had pushed me, and my bed, out into the hallway. I had the room all to myself for the remainder of my stay.

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The Donald not happy with The AP

A tweet from Donald J. Trump:



Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump · 1h

.@AP is doing very badly. I can say from experience their reporting is terrible & highly inaccurate. Sadly, they are now irrelevant!



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Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump · 1h

One of the saddest things in journalism is what happened to the formerly great @AP. They have lost their way and are no longer credible.

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AP photographers honored in Atlanta

The Atlanta Photojournalism Seminar announced results this week for its annual photo contest and several AP photographers were awarded prizes. Congratulations to David Goldman, Vadim Ghirda, Patrick Semansky, Alvaro Barrientos, Mukhtar Khan, Daniel Ochoa de Olza, Matthias Schrader, Andres Kudacki, Maye-E Wong, Jerome Delay, and Santi Palacios. See all of the award-winning photos: <http://apne.ws/1N9wOIC>

Yake honored as 2015 Purpose Prize Fellow

San Francisco, CA. [Encore.org](http://encore.org) today (Tuesday) announced six winners of the Purpose Prize and 41 Purpose Prize fellows in recognition of their innovative social-impact contributions to improve local communities and the world.

Byron Yake, of West Orange, NJ, who started Writeon Sports 10 years ago to teach middle school students how to write about sports as a way to help them write, was selected as a Purpose Prize Fellow.



"I'm honored to be a Purpose Prize Fellow," said Yake, 75, whose journalism career with weekly newspapers and the Associated Press, gave him excellent background on which to draw for his venture. "It's exciting to see a program grow from an idea to something that has significant impact on the lives of middle school students."

The Purpose Prize®, a program of [Encore.org](http://encore.org), is a national nonprofit that is building a movement to tap the experience of people in midlife and beyond who are using their encore years - the time of traditional retirement - to undertake powerful social-impact projects.

[Click here](#) for a link to this story. Shared by Lou Boccardi

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



to

Bob Dobkin ([Email](#))

Stories of interest

A teaching moment (Gateway Journalism Review)

By [Terry Ganey](#)

COLUMBIA, Mo. - At the world's oldest journalism school, the professors for the most part are long on academic credentials but short on in-the-trenches reporting experience.

Still, the University of Missouri School of Journalism prides itself on offering "real world" opportunities for its budding journalists. It's called "the Missouri method" which combines "a strong liberal arts education with unique hands-on training in professional media."

Tim Tai, a photojournalist student from St. Louis, got a real education this week when protestors and some faculty members blocked his attempt to cover the demonstrators' tent city on the Carnahan Quadrangle. Freelancing for ESPN, Tai

was trying to document what was happening after the departures of two top administrators in the wake of racist events on the campus.

The story of how the football team's boycott led to the departures of the UM System President Timothy Wolfe and MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin made national news. But it was the sidebar about what happened to Tai and another student that rang alarm bells in the School of Journalism.

Terry Ganey is a former AP journalist in St. Louis and Jefferson City. [Click here](#) to read more.

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What it's like to report from inside ISIS training camps (Poynter)

"I love my job, I love journalism- I want to tell the top stories in the world," Afghan-born journalist Najibullah Quraishi told me, by phone.

I have heard plenty of journalists around the globe say such things

. But he isn't just saying it. He risked his life to get to the core of the most important story in the world right now.

[Tuesday night, Quraishi reports for PBS' Frontline](#) from inside ISIS held territory in Afghanistan. Quraishi, has reported from Afghanistan for a decade, has traveled with Taliban fighters but this time was invited, by ISIS, to document how ISIS fighters are teaching "jihad lessons" to elementary school children. In one scene, viewers witness "children being taught how to kill people, how to behead, and how to become suicide bombers."

[Click here](#) to read more.

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Iran detains cartoonist to serve prison term (AP)

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) - An Iranian news agency says authorities have detained a prominent newspaper cartoonist.

The semi-official Tasnim news agency, which has ties to government hard-liners, reported Tuesday that cartoonist Hadi Heidari was taken into custody to serve a one-year prison sentence. It did not provide details on the conviction.

Calls to authorities and Heidari's newspaper, Shahrvand, were not immediately returned. The 36-year-old cartoonist was detained briefly twice during postelection unrest in 2009.

Earlier this month, Iran detained five Iranian journalists, including two known for their reformist views. Other recent arrests have included two poets and a filmmaker. Iranian-American Washington Post journalist Jason Rezaian was convicted of charges including espionage in October.

[Click here](#) to read more. Shared by Sibby Christensen.

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The Media Did Cover Attacks on *Insert Country Here* - You Just Weren't Reading It (Huffington Post)

On Friday night, terrorists stormed a rock concert and a restaurant in Paris, as well as detonating bombs outside the Stade de France.

At the time of writing, 132 people have died from the horrific attacks, with hundreds more injured, some critically.

Landmarks across the world, including Tower Bridge and the Sydney Opera House, lit up in the colours of the French flag in solidarity, with countries across Europe today falling silent at 11am to pay respects.

I was working on a national newspaper website, the Daily Star Online, over the weekend, and it was the biggest story of the year. People in their thousands were reading every single update, with every news website shunning all other stories for blanket coverage of the atrocities.

But in the aftermath of the Paris attacks, many people have taken to Twitter and Facebook to complain about why 147 people being killed by militant gunmen at Garissa University College in Kenya didn't get as much coverage as Paris.

"Why isn't the media covering this?" I saw several Facebook posts exclaim, while sharing a link to a BBC News story on the tragedy.

[Click here](#) to read more.

Today in History - November 18, 2015

By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, Nov. 18, the 322nd day of 2015. There are 43 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 18, 1865, Mark Twain's first literary success, the original version of his short story "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County," was first published in the New York Saturday Press under the title "Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog."

On this date:

In 1883, the United States and Canada adopted a system of Standard Time zones

.

In 1886, the 21st president of the United States, Chester A. Arthur, died in New York.

In 1928, Walt Disney's first sound-synchronized animated cartoon, "Steamboat Willie" starring Mickey Mouse, premiered in New York.

In 1936, Germany and Italy recognized the Spanish government of Francisco Franco.

In 1942, "The Skin of Our Teeth," Thornton Wilder's Pulitzer Prize-winning allegory about the history of humankind, opened on Broadway.

In 1959, "Ben-Hur," the Biblical-era spectacle starring Charlton Heston, had its world premiere in New York.

In 1964, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover described civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. as "the most notorious liar in the country" for allegedly accusing FBI agents in Georgia of failing to act on complaints filed by blacks; King denied making such a claim.

In 1965, Henry A. Wallace, who had served as vice president during President Franklin D. Roosevelt's third term of office, died in Danbury, Connecticut, at age 77.

In 1978, U.S. Rep. Leo J. Ryan, D-Calif., and four others were killed in Jonestown, Guyana, by members of the Peoples Temple; the killings were followed by a night of mass murder and suicide by more than 900 cult members.

In 1985, the comic strip "Calvin and Hobbes," created by Bill Watterson, was first published. (The strip ran for 10 years.)

In 1999, 12 people were killed when a bonfire under construction at Texas A-and-M University collapsed. A jury in Jasper, Texas, convicted Shawn Allen Berry of murder for his role in the dragging death of James Byrd Jr., but spared him the death penalty. American author and composer Paul Bowles died in Morocco at age 88.

In 2000, actors [Michael Douglas](#) and Catherine Zeta-Jones were married in an extravagant wedding at The Plaza hotel in New York City.

Ten years ago: The Republican-controlled House spurned a call for an immediate pullout of troops from Iraq in a 403-3 vote hastily arranged by the GOP that Democrats denounced as politically motivated. Suicide bombers killed more than 50 worshippers at a pair of Shiite mosques in Iraq. Eight months after Robert Blake was acquitted at a criminal trial of murdering his wife, a civil jury decided the actor was behind the slaying and ordered him to pay Bonny Lee Bakley's children \$30 million. Tropical Storm Gamma formed off the coast of Central America. Character actor Harold J. Stone, 92, died in Woodland Hills, California.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama rallied former diplomatic and military chiefs from both parties to pressure reluctant Republican senators into ratifying a nuclear weapons deal with Russia. (The Senate ratified the treaty the following month.) General Motors stock resumed trading on Wall Street, signaling the rebirth of an American corporate icon that had collapsed into bankruptcy and was rescued

with a \$50 billion infusion from taxpayers. Felix Hernandez of the Seattle Mariners was chosen the AL Cy Young Award winner.

One year ago: Several feet of lake-effect snow paralyzed the Buffalo, New York, area on a wintry day when temperatures fell to freezing or below in all 50 states. Israel vowed harsh retaliation for a Palestinian attack on a synagogue in Jerusalem that left five people dead.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Brenda Vaccaro is 76. Author-poet Margaret Atwood is 76. Actress [Linda Evans](#) is 73. Actress Susan Sullivan is 73. Country singer Jacky Ward is 69. Actor Jameson Parker is 68. Actress-singer Andrea Marcovicci is 67. Rock musician Herman Rarebell is 66. Singer Graham Parker is 65. Actor Delroy Lindo is 63. Comedian Kevin Nealon is 62. Pro Football Hall of Fame quarterback Warren Moon is 59. Actor Oscar Nunez is 57. Actress Elizabeth Perkins is 55. Singer Kim Wilde is 55. Rock musician Kirk Hammett (Metallica) is 53. Rock singer Tim DeLaughter (dee-LAW'-ter) is 50. Actor Romany Malco is 47. Actor [Owen Wilson](#) is 47. Actor Dan Bakkedahl is 47. Singer Duncan Sheik is 46. Actor Mike Epps is 45. Actress Peta Wilson is 45. Actress Chloe Sevigny (SEH'-ven-ee) is 41. Country singer Jessi Alexander is 39. Actor Steven Pasquale is 39. Rapper Fabolous is 38. Actor Nate Parker is 36. Rapper Mike Jones is 35. Actress/comedian Nasim Pedrad is 34. Actress Allison Tolman (TV: "Fargo") is 34. Actor Damon Wayans Jr. is 33. Actor Nathan Kress is 23.

Thought for Today: "Few people can see genius in someone who has offended them." - Robertson Davies, Canadian author (1913-1995).

Got a story to share?



Got a story to share? A favorite memory of your AP days? Don't keep them to yourself. Share with your colleagues by sending to Ye Olde Connecting Editor. And don't forget to include photos!

Paul Stevens
Editor
Connecting newsletter
stevenspl@live.com

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