

# Economic woes affect students, graduates

BY PAUL BISCHOFF  
Staff Reporter

When the economy is down, people stop dancing.

This concept has hurt senior Ashley Tomten, who runs Fitness Fusion, a downtown dance studio. Since consumers have cut back, Tomten's dance studio has suffered.

"Everybody sees [a dance course] as kind of an extra thing, an extracurricular activity that they don't need," Tomten said. "If people are spending money on gas or food or whatever they need, they're not just going to spend it on fitness classes or dance classes."

Tomten is just one student who has felt the effects of a slow economy, and as students graduate and look for jobs, strategic money management will come into play.

In order to support their family of three, Tomten's husband dropped out of college and works at a pork processing plant, and Tomten picked up a second job at a local gas station.

"I had to find another job," she said. "I can't just run my dance studio. I also work at Kum & Go, which is fun, but I wouldn't have worked at a gas station if we weren't struggling for money."

Professor of economics David Gillette said people spending less is a cause

of the economic slowdown, but he acknowledged that students are not the driving force of the economy. Gillette said paranoia about economic conditions only worsens the situation.

"When you're told that there's a crisis looming, what's your first response? You're going to keep [your money]," he said. "If you don't spend it, what happens to sales at stores in the community? They go down. What do they do in response? Order less stuff because they are not selling as much. What do their producers do because their orders are now falling? They lay people off."

As for students on the career search, Gillette said prospective employees should learn as much as possible about the market they are entering and the firms they are considering working for.

"It's going to be more competitive, but we've got the caliber of students here that can be more competitive," Gillette said. "There are always opportunities. I'm too convinced that the country we live in didn't get called the land of opportunity for nothing."

Professor of economics Terry Olson said students struggling to pay for college should cut back on unnecessary expenses, explore other financial aid opportunities and get a part-time job. He also gave some advice for graduating seniors.

"One of the major real costs of going to graduate school is not earning the full time salary you would have been making working," Olson said. "If finding a job is harder to do, it's better to go to graduate school during a recession than when the economy is booming. ... It might be a good time for them to investigate changing the timing of their graduate school plans and maybe move them up — accelerate them."

Olson said the labor market hasn't been fully affected by the economic slowdown yet, but that he thinks employment will continue to sink for a while.

"I don't want to work for an hourly wage," junior Kelsey Leick said. "That would kill me. I'm just hoping to find something semi-related to what I want to do at this point."

Leick is attending Truman on borrowed money. She receives some federal aid including a \$1,000 grant and \$5,000 in loans. Besides feeling the economic turmoil in her student life, Leick said it also has affected her home life.

"It has affected my family," Leick said. "My dad owned a bakery, and that ended up closing. He had to close it, so clearly I've seen firsthand how it's quickly going downhill, even within my own family."



Amy Gleaves/Index  
A student uses the U.S. Bank ATM on the first floor of the Student Union Building.

# Oktoberfest taps root beer keg, campus fun

BY STEPHANIE HALL  
Staff Reporter

Frosted puffs of breath in the air matched the frosted beer steins in the hands of the first 250 people in line for \$1 unlimited root beer at Oktoberfest last Friday.

The first annual Oktoberfest had students lining up half an hour before the event to fill up on root beer in celebration of a German tradition. The Fun and Spirit Committee hosted the event. Senior committee member Aaron Sparks said it was one of the first events hosted by the committee.

"The Fun and Spirit Committee is newly formed this year," Sparks said. "[It's a] Reslife committee in response to the report that was done last year that said that Truman doesn't have enough fun."

The Art and Science report last semester showed that prospective students thought Truman seemed boring. Sparks said the committee exists to help students put on programs and activities like Oktoberfest.

"We're putting [Oktoberfest] on so people will associate our name with it, so that people

will come ask us, 'Could you guys help?' when they want to do something," Sparks said. "So we're kind of advertising for ourselves."

The report also cited a lack of school spirit as a problem at Truman. Senior Garrett Boatright, co-adviser for the Fun and Spirit Committee, said the committee helped facilitate the Dog Pound, a student section at football games.

"[We're just] making sure that students are aware of the games," Boatright said. "[We're] encouraging people to wear purple, come out."

Boatright said the Dog Pound would extend to other sports like basketball, volleyball, soccer and swimming. He also said he was actively involved with Oktoberfest.

"I brought it up to the group because Oktoberfest is traditionally just beer," Boatright said. "But I thought about the [residence] halls and adapted it with root beer."

Big tents and long tables were brought in to

re-create a German beer hall and to create a festive atmosphere where students could eat and drink. Three kegs of St. Louis-based Fitz root beer were brought in, German bratwursts were replaced by hot dogs and pretzels, he said.

"[We] definitely had a lot of collaboration and funding from [the Center for Student Involvement], Reslife, [the Inter Fraternity Council] and Student Senate to pull this off," he said.

In addition to behind-the-scenes collaboration, other campus organizations came together for Oktoberfest. KTRM provided music, University Swingers strutted their stuff on the mall and TruMen lent their voices. Entertainment also included "drunk" tricycle racing with beer goggles, a root beer chugging contest and horseshoes.

Sophomore Brooke Voss worked at Oktoberfest and said people started lining up at 3:30 p.m. — a half hour before the event started.

"We had 250 hot dogs at the start and ... we had to have Lou Ann Gilchrist go buy 300 more."

Brooke Voss  
Sophomore

The first 250 people at the event got a free Truman stein with their \$1 purchase of unlimited root beer.

"We had 250 Truman mugs and ran out by 4:30 [p.m.]," Voss said. "They went pretty fast."

The event drew more than 450 people, which caught the committee off guard and extra supplies had to be brought in.

"I believe we had 250 hot dogs at the start and by 4:45 [p.m.] we had to have Lou Ann Gilchrist [Dean of Student Affairs] go buy 300 more," Voss said.

Sophomore Tiffany Mooney came to the event at 3:40 p.m. to be guaranteed a Truman stein.

"When we got here there was already about 20 people in line in front of us," Mooney said. Mooney and a friend watched Swingers and the tricycle race, but she said the steins really were the best part.

Boatright said this is only the beginning of the Fun and Spirit Committee's activities. The committee is looking at seasonal events like campus-wide snowball fights for future projects, but Boatright said he encourages students to bring any activity ideas to the committee that they would like to see happen.

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