

## **Evidence Provided by UMKC to *The Kansas City Star***

Below is a summary of some of the key pieces of background the University of Missouri-Kansas City presented to *The Kansas City Star* in regards to questions they raised about the Henry W. Bloch School of Management and its Regnier Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

*The Star* chose to ignore evidence we presented to them that reinforced the validity of those rankings. The evidence, in our view, clearly disproves the thesis offered by the reporters that UMKC and the Bloch School have engaged in “a pattern of exaggerations” or took “short cuts” on a path to achieving national and global recognition and rankings.

And in fact, it’s important to note that *The Star* did not include any reporting in its piece regarding student success stories, strong community engagement in the program or the excellence of the overall faculty and curriculum of the entrepreneurship and innovation programs – or any other area of the Bloch School for that matter. When faculty members offered to meet with the reporters to discuss program goals and successes, or when UMKC offered to connect *The Star* with students who have gone on to excel post-graduation, *The Star* declined to pursue those interviews.

With regard to the rankings of our faculty as the top performers in the field of innovation management research in a highly respected academic journal, the Journal of Product Innovation Management (JPIM), the newspaper focused on the complaints of one disgruntled UMKC faculty member.

Well below the massive headline accusing UMKC of “misleading” activity, note the extremely qualified language the newspaper uses in smaller print: “In addition, the experts said, it **appears** the study **may have been** structured in such a way to ensure that the Bloch School received the top ranking.” The translation into simple English: “We can’t prove this actually happened.”

### **Re: Does UMKC aggressively market the awards, recognition and rankings earned by the Bloch School?**

Yes, we certainly do – just as advertising of rankings and awards is a staple of virtually all U.S. college and university marketing efforts, as reporters Mara Williams and Mike Hendricks acknowledged during their interview with Dean David Donnelly. However, no rankings can be earned if an institution does not have the substance to back it up. And the Bloch School most certainly does – in multiple areas from entrepreneurship and innovation to finance, accounting, public affairs and much more.

UMKC also makes no secret of – and makes no apologies for – the fact that it identified entrepreneurship and innovation as an emerging field of specialization within management education, saw that as an opportunity to establish leadership, invested significant resources in

that area of specialization as an early adopter, enjoyed success and capitalized on it. We see that as a smart and effective growth strategy.

***The Star* did not include extensive information provided by UMKC and benefactor Henry Bloch regarding why he decided to donate \$32 million to build the new Bloch Executive Hall.**

The article paints a picture of Mr. Bloch as being motivated primarily by rankings for his support of the Bloch School. This is simply not the case – and ignores the many years that Mr. Bloch supported the school even when it was not ranked. As far as the \$32 million gift: While Mr. Bloch has said he appreciates and relishes the school’s rankings successes, he was motivated by enrollment growth at the school and the very real possibility that Bloch would soon have to start turning away very well qualified students. He decided to give the gift some 8 months before UMKC would become aware of the No. 1 ranking in innovation management research.

Robert Virgil, Dean Emeritus of the John M. Olin School of Business at Washington University in St. Louis, is an advisor to the Marion and Henry Bloch Family Foundation, and also advised the search committee that recommended David Donnelly to replace Teng-Kee Tan. Virgil stated that he was present at the moment Mr. Bloch decided to endow the building.

Shortly after Dean Tan’s arrival in 2009, the faculty of the Bloch School revised its strategic plan, calling for a doubling of the school’s enrollment. That plan was presented to the Bloch Endowment Board in early 2010. At that meeting, Virgil said “Henry, we have to have a building. There isn’t any place to put all those students.”

Even at that point, Mr. Bloch hesitated; he declined to fund the building despite a request from Gary Forsee and Leo Morton in November 2010. Finally, however, Virgil approached Mr. Bloch again, in February of 2011, to strongly recommend that that he fund the building in order to allow the strategic plan for growth to proceed.

Both Robert Virgil and the Bloch family will attest to this sequence of events.

Bloch enrollment in degree and certificate programs started to surge in 2010. After single-digit increases the previous three years, cumulative enrollment growth, using 2007 as a base, was up 18.6% in 2010, 33.5% in 2011, 66.2% in 2012 and 65.5% in 2013.

There are also two media accounts that reinforce the enrollment-based reasoning for Mr. Bloch’s decision, one of which was published by *The Star*:

**KC Business Journal Aug. 15, 2013:**

<http://www.bizjournals.com/kansascity/news/2013/08/15/umkc-pulls-back-curtain-on-new-32m.html?page=all>

## UMKC pulls back curtain on new \$32M Bloch Executive Hall

At a time when many universities are seeing a declining student population, the [University of Missouri-Kansas City's](#) business school is bursting at the seams. But with the investment of the school's namesake, [Henry Bloch](#), business students at the Bloch School of Management will file in for classes Monday in a new multimillion-dollar state-of-the-art facility.

The school unveiled the recently completed \$32 million Bloch Executive Hall, which will house undergraduate classes and graduate and executive programs, as well as the Regnier Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

Years ago, the university's endowment committee spoke of the accomplishments and the growth the school was seeing. One member, [Bob Virgil](#), spoke to the challenges the school was facing and would continue to face if it wasn't able to expand and take in more students. Bloch agreed but said he didn't want to have to wait for the university to build it.

"I decided we need to do something now, and I'd like to be around when it opens up," Bloch said.

Two years later, that vision is a reality, accommodating the school's staggering growth. Since 2007, the school has had a 70 percent increase in enrollment.

**KC Star Aug. 15, 2013:** <http://www.kansascity.com/2013/08/15/4412648/putting-the-real-world-into-umkc.html>

### **New building puts real world into UMKC business classes**

By DIANE STAFFORD  
The Kansas City Star

The first time university officials approached Henry W. Bloch about a donation to help expand the University of Missouri-Kansas City business school that already bore his name, he turned them down flat.

"I said I had no interest," the 91-year-old co-founder of H&R Block said Thursday, sitting in the new state-of-the-art business school expansion that he subsequently gave \$32 million to build.

The Henry W. Bloch Executive Hall for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, just north of the existing Henry W. Bloch School of Management, will open for classes Monday on the UMKC campus.

After his initial lack of interest, Bloch said, he weighed the business school's needs along with a long list of other projects on the university's wish list.

"I figured there was no use putting it on the list," Bloch said, because "I won't be here when you get around to build it."

But then, he said, "the more I thought, the more I decided we need to do something now, and I'd like to be around when it opens up."

**Re: Questions about the legitimacy of Michael Song's ranking as the world's number-one scholar in innovation management by the *Journal of Product Innovation Management*:**

*The Star* story implies that the authors of the articles – Jeff Thieme in 2007, and PianPian Yang and Lei Tao in 2012 – deliberately structured their research in such a way as to ensure that Michael Song came out on top.

However, even if the three authors – working independently of each other, five years apart – had the intent to artificially inflate Michael Song's academic standing in their articles, they could not have accomplished such an objective of their own accord.

Both articles had to pass muster with the editors of the *Journal of Product Innovation Management* (different people in 2007 and 2012). When questions about their methodology were first raised by the disgruntled UMKC faculty member, the matter was taken to the publications committee of the Product Development and Management Association, the Journal's parent group.

The Product Development and Management Association (<http://www.pdma.org/>) is the premier global advocate for product development and management professionals, made up of practicing professionals, academic researchers, professors and students and those service providers that support corporations with their innovation and product development expertise. The organization is active in more than 50 countries around the world. Board members include Charles H. Noble, Proffitt's Professor of Marketing at The University of Tennessee; Peter Bradford, Senior Project Manager at IBM; Abbie Griffin, Royal L. Garff Presidential Chair in Marketing, University of Utah; and Meredith Baratz, Vice President, Strategic Insight and Innovation, at UnitedHealth Group.

The PDMA conducted two separate investigations of the original complaint about the second article. The first was by the PDMA's publications committee. The second was by an independent review board appointed by the committee; the review board included three eminent scholars in the field of innovation research. Their review was double-blind: The

members of the review board were not informed of the identity of the person making the complaint, and the complainant was not informed of the identity of the reviewers.

Excerpts from the review board's findings:

**Reviewer One:** I see no fatal flaw in the methodology or analysis that would lead to retraction. The critic alleges that there has been significant manipulation but you reported to me that there is no evidence of the authors being visiting scholars at the time the article was prepared. Even if that were the case it would not necessarily be a cause for retraction, since there would need to be evidence that the content of the article was biased in some way to lead to the published results. The method described in the article provides a reasonable basis for the analysis.

**Reviewer Two:** The claims and allegations laid out by this external critic appear to be targeted at a specific institution and its authors, and urge the *JPIM* to retract the article and a similar one five years earlier. The institution and its authors in fact have numerous publications in the innovation management area (as indicated by a check of their CV's), and it should not be surprising that they rank high. The vitriolic language and accusations used by this external critic appear more like a vendetta than an academic inquiry. None of the editors named in this criticism, nor the journal itself (*JPIM*) should retract the original article from publication. Their behaviors are entirely in accord with the mission of the journal.

**Reviewer Three:** We must ask, "Is there a fatal flaw?" My response is, "No". Could it have been done differently and perhaps more rigorously? Of course—and this comment applies to virtually all social science research. In summary, I believe *JPIM* is on solid footing regarding the issue in question.

(Given the stridency of the complainant's continued aggressive pursuit of the matter, and his ongoing harassment of the journal editors and members of the publication committee, the PDMA has declined to make the reviewers' names public. Under the circumstances, we understand their concern and support their decision. The stature of the reviewers as eminent scholars in the field, and the legitimacy of the process in which they engaged, has been attested to by Abbie Griffin, Ph.D., Royal L. Garff Presidential Chair in Marketing, David Eccles School of Business, University of Utah.)

In interviews with Michael Song and David Donnelly, *Star* reporters have also made much of the fact that the authors of the second article – Tao and Yang – modified the variables used in the original 2007 study on which their 2012 follow-up article was based. The 2007 article focused on 14 journals over a 15-year period from 1990 to 2004. The 2012 article by Yang and Tao focuses on a period of 20 years from 1991 to 2010. The 2012 article focuses on nine of the 14 journals analyzed in 2007, and added "one top operations management journal for its growing attention in the innovation management field." In laymen's terms, they modified the variables, ran the numbers again, and Michael Song still emerged as the top scholar. We see this as a

strength, not a weakness, and makes the case for Song's ranking even stronger than it would have been otherwise.

The 2012 study that rated Prof. Michael Song number-one in the world showed him with a total of 53 research reports; the Michigan State researcher in second place had a total of 24 during the same period – less than half of Song's output. It's hard to imagine what lengths a redesign of the methodology would have to go to in order to change the result when the gap is that large.

Also, the overall theme of the 2007 Thieme article is that Song's wide network of connections with other scholars in the field is a primary factor in his high rate of productivity. His wide array of relationships within this field, as demonstrated by the article, make it difficult to identify a scholar capable of writing such an article who is not connected in some way to Michael Song – especially when you consider, as David Donnelly pointed out in his interview, the size of the field. There are approximately only 400 AACSB-accredited scholars in the field, compared to about 4,000 AACSB-accredited scholars in accounting.

Keep in mind that the *Journal of Product Innovation Management* is a highly respected, and highly ranked, academic journal. Journal Citation Reports (JCR) is an annual publication by the Science and Scholarly Research division of Thomson Reuters. It ranks journals in various fields each year, based on a proprietary formula that yields an "impact factor"; each year, the number of journals and the rankings vary.

In 2011, the *Journal of Product Innovation Management* was ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 42 engineering and industrial journals by ISI Journal Citation Reports; 28th out of 113 journals in the category "Business", and 39th out of 166 journals in the category "Management".

To continue to question the legitimacy of those two articles at this point requires a belief that a number of highly respected academics, scattered around the globe, have all put their careers and academic reputations on the line in order to produce, protect and defend a phony, trumped-up ranking for a professor at UMKC. These would include:

- the authors
  - Jeff Thieme, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Marketing in the Marketing and Supply Chain Management Department in the Fogelman College of Business & Economics at the University of Memphis;
  - Lei Tao, Assistant Professor at the Management School of Xi'an Jiaotong University in China;
  - PianPian Yang, Ph. D. candidate at Xi'an Jiaotong University in China
- two editors who approved the publication of the articles in advance
  - Anthony Di Benedetto, Ph.D., professor of marketing at Temple University in Philadelphia;

- Gloria Barczak, Ph.D., Professor of Marketing at Northeastern University in Boston;
- as well as the members of the PDMA publications committee and the three PDMA members who participated in the review panel.

Not only does UMKC reject such a scenario; we contend that *not* rejecting that scenario requires a stubborn commitment to a point of view initially formed by incomplete and superficial information, and clung to in the face of mounting evidence of the scenario's improbability.

*The Star* also cites a man named Ivan Oransky as one of the primary critics of the JPIM research. Who is Ivan Oransky? He is a journalist who covers the medical profession – the editorial director of a website called *MedPage Today*. *The Star* referred to him as “co-founder of RetractionWatch.com.” RetractionWatch.com, a four-year-old website, is run as a part-time effort, in addition to their full-time jobs, by Adam Marcus, the managing editor of *Anesthesiology News*; and Oransky. Their site is focused primarily on medical and bioscience journals and issues, a wholly different discipline from social sciences such as economics or entrepreneurship. So far in 2014, as of June 4, the pair posted a total of 107 items about medicine and bioscience issues; 16 in physical sciences (eight on climate change and eight on engineering); and five in social sciences, all on economics. They admit their lack of expertise in the area on their own site:

**Why are so many of the retractions you cover from the life sciences?**

There are a number of reasons for this. The two most important are that 1) we're both medical reporters in our day jobs, so our sources and knowledge base are both deeper in the life sciences and 2) there are more papers published in the life sciences than in other areas. We'd love your help beefing up our [physical sciences section](#), so keep those tips coming.

When *The Star* first informed us that they were planning to cite Oransky as a critic, we protested, arguing that he is wholly unqualified to criticize research in innovation management. We did this in writing on June 12; they chose not to include our protest in today's article.

**Re: Michael Song's status as a world-class scholar:**

Even if we were to concede any flaws with the ranking by JPIM – which we most certainly do *not* concede – what of it? Different methodology might have yielded a different result, but by any measuring standard, Michael Song is unquestionably one of the most outstanding and honored researchers in his field.

The two JPIM articles ranked him number one, and of course we have made much of that fact in our marketing – who wouldn't? Those rankings are hardly Michael Song's only claim to stellar scholarship. Here is just a sampling of his academic accolades:

- Research Publication Award, International Association for Management of Technology, 2009.
- Ranked among "Most-Cited Scientists in Economics and Business, 1996-2006" by Essential Science Indicators
- Best paper award, 2008, Board of governors, IEEE Technology Management Council
- Ranked as one of the top 20 technology management scholars over the period of 1954–2003 in a ranking article published at R&D Management [Ball, Derrick F. and John Rigby (2006), "Disseminating Research in Management of Technology: Journals and Authors," R&D Management, 36 (2), 205-215]. (The study ranks the world's top 20 scholars in the field of R&D, innovation, and technology management on the basis of research articles published across 10 top academic journals in R&D, technology and innovation management over the period 1954–2003. The ranking includes the research of 1,179 scholars worldwide.)
- "Best Paper Award for 2008" for outstanding contributions to the journal of IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management, awarded by the Board of Governors of the IEEE Technology Management Council.
- One of the two recipients of the 2005 Overseas Distinguished Scholars' Award, China Natural Science Foundation (Overseas Distinguished Scholars; Award #: 70528002; RMB400,000), 2005-2008
- "Marketing Strategy Best Paper Award", received at 2003 American Marketing Association Summer Educators' Conference (for the article entitled "The Role of Suppliers in Market Intelligence Gathering for Radical and Incremental Innovation in Start-up Firms," co-authored with R. Jeffrey Thieme.)
- Winner of the 2001 University of Washington Initiative Fund (awarded \$215,000 per year for four years)
- "Best Paper Award" from the Research Conference of the Product Development and Management Association in 1996

**Re: *New York Times* logo on the Regnier Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation web page:**

The logo is simply placed at the bottom of the page

<http://www.entrepreneurship.bloch.umkc.edu/>, along with the USASBE and GCEC logos. It makes no specific claims, nor do the GCEC or USASBE logos. On the Institute's "Awards and Achievements" page

[http://www.entrepreneurship.bloch.umkc.edu/about/awards\\_achievements.asp](http://www.entrepreneurship.bloch.umkc.edu/about/awards_achievements.asp), it simply states that "The Regnier Institute was featured in *The New York Times*" and provides a link to a



reprint. The Institute makes no claims of endorsement on the page. As for any off-the-cuff remarks Prof. Michael Song may have made verbally about the article, accidental misstatements are not uncommon, especially for people speaking a non-native second language. To our knowledge, the Regnier Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, as an entity, has never made a claim of endorsement by *The New York Times*.