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**NEWS**

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**MU Receives \$25 Million Gift from the Kinder Foundation**  
*The Kinder Institute established by this gift positions MU as a national leader  
in the study of political thought and history*

COLUMBIA, Mo. – The University of Missouri today received a \$25 million gift from the [Kinder Foundation](#) to fund the [Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy](#), an initiative to promote excellence in teaching and scholarship about American constitutional and democratic principles, history and traditions.

This new, endowed gift will provide permanent support for the Kinder Institute, formerly named the Kinder Forum, which was created in 2014 by a prior \$1.67 million gift from the Kinder Foundation through the [Jack Miller Center](#). The Kinder Institute supports the research and scholarship of MU faculty, undergraduate and graduate students who seek to explore questions related to the history, theory and practice of constitutional democracy as it was crafted by the American founders and developed in subsequent generations.

The Kinder Foundation, a family foundation established in 1997 by Rich and Nancy Kinder of Houston, Texas, provides transformational grants that impact urban green space, education, and quality of life. Mr. Kinder, a native of Cape Girardeau, Missouri, earned his bachelor's and law degrees from MU in 1966 and 1968, respectively.

“Future generations should have the opportunity to study and understand the history and importance of how our country and government system was created,” Kinder said. “I am confident this gift will create a world-class Institute that will focus on constitutional democracy and what makes America the greatest nation on earth.”

The Institute supports these efforts through postdoctoral fellowships, research and travel grants, course development funds, and the Kinder Scholars Program, which includes a summer academic internship in Washington, D.C. The Institute also offers an interdisciplinary minor to undergraduate students in American constitutional democracy. The minor rewards students for pursuing an integrated course of study on the U.S. Constitution's historical and philosophical predecessors and the subsequent history and development of American constitutional government.

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“One of MU’s primary missions as a state university is to promote and provide education on our government and its history for its students and the population as a whole,” said MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin. “To understand the present, we have to understand the past. It is important for all students, and members of our society, to have a breadth of knowledge about how our government was created and how it works today. The Institute will promote that education across campus, creating a forum to discuss and learn, from multiple viewpoints, the theoretical foundations and historic practice of American constitutional government. The Kinders’ philanthropy and vision will help position MU as a national center for education and scholarship on our governance system’s founding and purpose.”

“This generous gift will have an enormous impact on our comprehensive campaign *Mizzou: Our Time to Lead*, which we are announcing publically tonight at the Mizzou Arena,” said Tom Hiles, MU vice chancellor for advancement. “Mr. Kinder’s business acumen and leadership are inspiring. We could not be more grateful for his and his wife, Nancy’s, investment in our endowment, a main priority of this campaign.”

The Kinder Institute currently is directed by Justin Dyer, an associate professor of political science and is supported by two staff members and 11 core faculty members, including Jeff Pasley, a professor of history and associate director of the Kinder Institute. Several faculty in other disciplines at MU also are affiliated with the Institute.

This transformative gift serves as the lead gift as the University kicks off the public phase of its comprehensive fundraising campaign *Mizzou: Our Time to Lead* on the evening of Oct. 8 in Mizzou Arena. The history of Mizzou is one of private philanthropy. In 1839, more than 900 Boone County citizens pooled their resources to establish the University of Missouri. The comprehensive *Mizzou: Our Time to Lead* campaign will harness the spirit of giving that has existed among Mizzou students, alumni and friends for more than 175 years in order to secure Mizzou’s position as a global leader in education and research by focusing on three central priorities: endowment, signature centers and institutes and campus renaissance.

Rich Kinder is co-founder and executive chairman of Kinder Morgan, Inc., the largest midstream and the third largest energy company in North America based on enterprise value. He also serves as chairman of the board of trustees and a life trustee of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and chairman of the advisory board of Rice University’s Kinder Institute for Urban Research. Nancy Kinder is president of the Kinder Foundation. She also serves on the boards of Discovery Green Corporation and MD Anderson Cancer Center, as well as president of the Advisory Board of the Kinder Institute for Urban Research at Rice University. The [Kinder Foundation](#) has granted more than \$150 million in gifts to transformational projects such as Rice University’s Kinder Institute for Urban Research; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Texas Heart Institute; Houston Parks Board/Bayou Greenways 2020; Buffalo Bayou Park; and Discovery Green among others. For more information, visit [kinderfoundation.org](http://kinderfoundation.org).

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**Note: For more information about the Kinder Institute, visit: [democracy.missouri.edu](http://democracy.missouri.edu).**

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