UK among schools under investigation by Trump administration

BY SARAH LADD, MCKENNA HORSLEY **KENTUCKY LANTERN**

FRANKFORT — The University of Kentucky is one of 45 higher education institutions under federal investigation for "allegedly engaging in race-exclusionary practices in their graduate programs," the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights announced Friday.

The office announced investigations of seven other schools for "alleged impermissible race-based scholarships and race-based segregation."

President Donald Trump's newly appointed Secretary of Education Linda

McMahon cited efforts to "reorient civil rights enforcement" and "ensure all students are protected from illegal discrimination."

"Students must be assessed according to merit and accomplishment, not prejudged by the color of their skin," McMahon said in a statement. "We will not yield on this commitment."

The investigations follow a Feb. 14 Dear Colleague Letter from the Education Department's Office of Civil Rights to institutions putting them on notice that they "must cease using race preferences and stereotypes as a factor in their admissions, hiring, promotion, compensation, scholarships, prizes, administrative support, sanctions, discipline, and other programs and activities."

UK is the only Kentucky institution on the list. UK spokesperson Kristi Willett said in an email the university was aware of the press release announcing the investigations.

"We are aware of the release this morning from the Department of Education Office of Civil Rights. We have not received any official notification of this review," Willet said. "However, the university complies with both the constitution and Title VI. Our graduate programs are open to all qualified applicants. We will continue to monitor and review

this issue, cooperate with any official inquiries and, as always, comply with the law."

The release from the Education Department cites allegations that the schools violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (1964) by partnering with The Ph.D. Project, which it calls "an organization that purports to provide doctoral students with insights into obtaining a Ph.D. and networking opportunities, but limits eligibility based on the race of participants."

According to the Ph.D. Project's website the organization has helped more than 1,500 people earn doctoral degrees since its founding in 1994 and has more than 240

students in Ph.D. programs as part of its mission to diversify workplaces and broaden the pipeline of business leaders.

The federal announcement comes as Kentucky's Republican-controlled legislature has voted to eliminate diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives at the state's public universities and colleges. The legislation would prohibit universities and colleges from awarding scholarships while considering "an individual's religion, race, sex, color, or national origin."

Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear is expected to veto the anti-DEI bill but the Republican supermajority can easily override his veto.

Last August, announced it was disbanding its Office for Institutional Diversity without firing anyone amid pressure from Republicans in Frankfort.

At that time, President Eli Capilouto said that "we share the value that out of many people, we are one community. But we've also listened to policymakers and heard many of their questions about whether we appear partisan or political on the issues of our day."

This article was originally published by the Kentucky Lantern, a nonprofit news site covering state government and politics, at kentuckylantern.com.

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Public Notice Lyon County Water District

Notice is hereby given that the _yon County Water District has filed an application with the Energy and Environment Cabinet for a permit to con-struct nearly 9,300 LF of new waterline, consisting of 8-inch piping to interconnect with neighboring water systems near the City of Kuttawa and the City of Eddyville. This vork includes up to seven sub-fluvial stream/drainage crossings, including Knob Creek near KY 295: all in Lvon County. Any comments or objections can be submitted via email to: DOWFlo olain@ky.gov Kentucky Division of Water, Floodplain Management Section, 300 Sower Blvd Frankfort KY 40601. Call 502-564-3410 with questions.

Mat Blane, Superintendent

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ATTENTION to family members of those interred at Cedar Hill Cemetery and Memorial Gardens Cemetery in Princeton, KY:

Due to the upcoming mowing season and an increase in public complaints regarding multiple items being placed, and left, around headstones, we are asking that all items more than one set of flowers on the ground and one statue or Shepards hook placed on either the right or left side of the headstone (angel, shepherds rod etc.) be removed by April 5, 2025.

Any item (benches, overabundance of concrete statues etc.) deemed to be outside of the city ordinance, will be removed from the cemetery on April 7, 2025 and will be available for pickup at the Cedar Hill Cemetery office on Stone Street. Thank You.

> City of Princeton, Kentucky, 206 E. Market Street, Princeton, Kentucky

Sat, Mar. 29th - 10:00 A.M. Don Spurrier Estate - 181 DN Spurrier Rd, Marion, KY AUCTION HIGHLIGHTS jamesrcash.com *For Picture*

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