

The Link



The University of Missouri – St. Louis Staff Newsletter
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<http://www.umsl.edu/services/sassoc>

THIRD ANNUAL HOLIDAY BAZAAR – DONATIONS SOUGHT

Because the Holiday Bazaar has been both lots of fun and so successful in raising money for the John Perry Scholarship, we're going to do it again December 12th!

We need YOU to donate newly purchased items, hand-crafted items, baked goods, or to fill a gift basket with goodies by December 6th. If you or your department decide to put together a gift basket, the Staff Association will even provide the basket (while supplies last) – email Faith Lucas, flucas@umsl.edu. Jewelry, knitted hats and scarves, pies, brownies and themed gift baskets were very popular in previous years.

Your donations can be made to Faith Lucas at 204 Woods Hall (ext. 5090), Theresa Keuss at 351 MSC (ext. 4602) on North Campus, or to Margaret O'Connor at 113 NAB (ext. 6071) or Mary Brown at 127 SCCB (ext. 6016) on South Campus. If you need help transporting your donation, please contact one of us.

And don't forget to mark **December 12th** on your calendar! Ease your stress by shopping the bazaar for all your holiday gifts.

The John Perry Scholarship benefits dependents of staff members. For more information go to:

<http://www.umsl.edu/services/sassoc/jppscharship/scholarship.html>

CAROLYN KUO: ADDING GLAMOUR TO YOUR WORLD

"When I took this job I thought I'd be designing classrooms," said Carolyn Kuo, managing interior designer at the university. "In the last 13 years I've turned chapels into offices, designed a playground for pre-schoolers, created retail space to sell eyeglasses, residential

spaces, classrooms and conference rooms. It's just a great job with a variety of work."

Tucked up on the second floor of Normandie Hall, Kuo's office is a jumble of blueprints and rug samples. She's part of the Facilities Planning team -- the university's planners, architects and construction project managers who report to Reinhard Schuster, vice chancellor of Administrative Services.

There isn't a room on campus Kuo hasn't been in or a department she hasn't worked with and she's probably had some hand in making most of them look good. Over the years, she's developed her own mantra to keep her on track: "Style and function." These are the two most important qualities of her work.

"I design for the custodians and the students," she said. "Academia is a competitive business and students have lots of choices these days. People around here are beginning to understand that an enhanced environment will attract students and aid their learning experiences. The students are a lot more sophisticated than I was when I was going to college and expect more. And if we don't design it right, the custodians can't keep it looking good."

Among Kuo's favorite projects are:

*The new Math Technology Lab Center, one of 16 instructional computing labs on campus. It is housed in what was once the bookstore in University Center. Nearly 100 new computers sit in clusters, or are lined up singly against the walls and in pinwheel configuration. The front desk with its high-tech, curved metallic front stands out against the soft earth tones of the carpet and walls. The space is filled with light, a seemingly good place to consider the complex world of mathematics. Some of the facility's success, according to Kuo, can be attributed to a student comfort level with the space.

"It's a good looking space and students are using it. They're doing well. More importantly, this math program is working," said Kuo. "It's not just a pretty space. It's doing what it was designed to do." She added that she installed red and gold bike flags at each desk. Need a question answered? Just push the flag up to alert the tutors you need help at your station.

*The E. Desmond Lee Technology and Learning Center (a chapel transformation) and two “cool looking” conference rooms for Education.

*The enhancement of the JC Penney lobby for Continuing Education, from the 60’s to the new Millennium.

She declares the removal of asbestos in Clark Hall in 1999 was her “biggest” project to date.

“We shut down the building for just three months, and then replaced everything, flooring, lighting, paint, furniture. It was a very big project. We were off-loading lighting fixtures from the truck and installing them the weekend before fall classes started.”

“There was new management at the MSC after it was finished, different styles, different functions, people moved,” said Kuo of the MSC. She has redesigned all but three of the areas in the Millennium Student Center, just completed in 2000.

Kuo’s primary responsibilities lie in the existing spaces in over 50 academic and general use buildings on campus. She works closely with deans and departments helping to solve design problems and what she calls “issues of space enhancement,” writing plans, doing budgets and listening. For all the recently built buildings interior design is a function of the architectural firm, but she has been sitting in on some of the planning. She was in at the beginning of the planning for the new Oak Hall residence on South Campus working with the architectural firm and working with the students.

“I got in there early and helped with the floor plans, general spaces and the finishes,” she said. “I was there to bounce ideas off of for the consultant. Then UMSL let me do the furnishing of the building, the ‘icing on the cake’ stuff.”

Currently Kuo is creating “gathering spaces” in the College of Education and College of Optometry and the Science Complex where students can sit and read or meet before, between and after classes. It’s a concept that’s grown out of the continuing success of the MSC – attractive spaces draw students in. She’s also working on another chapel conversion to office space. And then there are the never ending classroom designs. She seldom has a ho-hum day.

Early in her career Kuo was told that doing facilities work meant “you had to live with your mistakes every day.” Kuo admits to her share of a few mishaps – a piece of furniture in a residence hall that didn’t hold up with exuberant student use comes quickly to mind – but she also gets to see all the good work that’s been accomplished in her 13 years.

“I still love this job and I’m really proud of what I’ve done for this University while serving the kids,” she said. “That’s what we’re here for, right?”



Carolyn Kuo
Managing Interior Designer
Facilities Planning

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WITH AN INTERESTING JOB ON CAMPUS?

Thanks to Maureen Zegel for submitting the article on Carolyn Kuo. We hope you enjoyed reading it. If you have an interesting job, or if you know someone with an interesting job that you’d like to know more about, please send your idea to The Link, mao@umsl.edu

RIVERSTAR EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Congratulations to the following Riverstar Employee of the Month winners for June, July, August and September 2006.



September 2006 Winner
Outstanding Customer Service

Dena Martin
Administrative Secretary
College of Business Administration



**August 2006 Winner
Positive Attitude**

Yolanda Weathersby
Administrative Associate I
Welcome Center



**July 2006 Winner
VIP (Versatile, Innovative, Productive)**

Pamela Steinmetz
Assistant Coordinator
Intramural/Recreational Sports



**June 2006 Winner
Superb Communicator**

Julie Gram
Administrative Associate II
College of Optometry

FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

Planning for **Focus on the Future 2007** is underway. Our goal this year is to offer technology sessions that reinforce and expand skill you already have, as well as to offer sessions that introduce new technologies and/or introduce new aspects of existing technologies.

The Focus on the Future 2007 Planning Committee wants to put together a program containing sessions that will benefit **you**. Consequently, we invite you to submit suggestions for session topics; we also welcome your suggestions for session presenters.

Please send your ideas to Jan Carrell at carrellj@umsl.edu or call her at ext. 6134. A response by Friday, October 27th is appreciated. We look forward to hearing from you!

SPECIAL THANKS

Thanks to this year's Homecoming Parade Team who assembled another great entry for the Staff Association:

Chris Burwell, Debra Graslaub, Mary Ellen Heckel, Charlotte Hitchcock, Faith Lucas, Don Schaper, Joann Wilkinson



Staff Association
Homecoming Parade
Float

STAFF MENTORING PROGRAM HAS BEGUN

The UM-St. Louis mentoring program has begun. Nearly 40 people have gone through the training program which prepares current employees to serve as mentors for newly hired employees.

The purpose of this program is to create a means for sharing the values, culture and knowledge of UM-St. Louis with new employees at the university. Mentors will support the transition of these new employees to their new work environments by familiarizing them with the operation of the campus, helping them to access resources or resolve work-related concerns, and providing them with moral support. Mentors will maintain contact by phone or in person with the new hires throughout their probationary periods.

You can apply to become a mentor if you have at least two years full-time work experience at UM-St. Louis, are in good standing, and have your supervisor's permission to participate in the program. We will match you with a new employee protégé in a different department who is in your job classification, i.e., management, professional, non-professional/administrative/clerical, or union-eligible. Human Resources will provide you with a short training session as well as guidance and assistance as needed.

Here is the website with information and an application form,
http://www.umsl.edu/services/hrs/current/mentor_program.html

For additional questions, contact Sylvia Poe (Human Resources) – ext. 5258.

SHARE YOUR PHOTOS WITH THE STAFF YEARBOOK

What have you and your colleagues been up to lately? Share your joy with the rest of the UMSL staff by submitting the best pictures from your events for inclusion in a new online UMSL Staff Yearbook, sponsored by the Staff Association. Send your submissions to Rachel Sommerer at rachel@umsl.edu. The yearbook can be visited at <http://www.umsl.edu/services/sassoc/yearbook/>