Illinois Lt. Governor Sheila Simon to headline Academy dinner on May 24

Lawyer, teacher and mother: All are words that describe Sheila Simon. Illinois Lieutenant Governor is another; and let’s not forget bassoonist and banjo player.

Elected on a joint ticket with Gov. Pat Quinn in November, 2010, Simon is the second highest executive officer in Illinois. She will give the keynote address at the 21st Century Leadership Academy Dinner, May 24, 2012, at the Saint Louis Woman’s Club.

Simon was selected by the Democratic State Central Committee to be Quinn’s running mate after the primary winner, Scott Lee Cohen, bowed out following disclosures about his personal life. She is the second female to hold the office of lieutenant governor in Illinois, following Corrine Wood, who served between 1999 and 2003. Wood was the keynote speaker at the Leadership Academy in 2002.

Simon graduated from Georgetown University Law School in 1987 and worked as a staff attorney at Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance before spending four years prosecuting DUI and domestic violence cases as an Assistant State’s Attorney in Jackson County.

As a member of the faculty at Southern Illinois University School of Law, Simon helped launch the school’s domestic violence clinic. She served four years on the Carbondale City Council and, in 2009, was tapped by Gov. Quinn to serve on the 15-member Illinois Reform Commission.

Public service is Simon’s family business. She is the daughter of the late Paul and Jeanne Simon, who served in the Illinois House together. Her father served as Lt. Governor himself before being elected to the U.S. House and Senate. Her mother was a Chicago corporate lawyer, and served as a Cook County assistant state’s attorney before being elected one of the first female state representatives in Illinois.

A less known fact is that for more than 10 years, Simon has played the bassoon and banjo as a member of “Loose Gravel,” blues and boogie band in Carbondale.

The 21st Century Leadership Academy is a week-long residential leadership program for 36 college students, representing nine Missouri public universities. The Academy begins on Sunday, May 20, at UMSL and will include a day trip to the State Capitol where the “Shear Fellows” will participate in a mock legislative session, have lunch at the Governor’s Mansion with woman leaders in state government, and meet with the three female justices on the Missouri Supreme Court.

Tickets for the dinner are $80 ($40) for students. For more information or to reserve a ticket, call (314) 516-4727.

Meet 2012 Amethyst Award Winner, Churie Spreng

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INSIDE:

- Number of women candidates down from previous years
- Judicial appointments on the Court of Appeals, 7th and 21st Circuits increase gender diversity on the bench
- Statehouse Sisters get serious about law and order
- Election success for Pipeline graduates
- Report confirms that women outnumber men at the voting booth but not in public office

21st Century Leadership Academy Keynote Dinner

with
Hon. Sheila Simon
Lt. Governor of Illinois

Thursday, May 24, 2012
Reception at 6:00 p.m.

Saint Louis Woman’s Club
Tickets: $75 individual
$37 for students

For more information or to reserve tickets, please call 314.516.4727.
NAMES IN THE NEWS

Mikulski Makes History as Longest Serving Woman in Congress

Senator Barbara Mikulski, Democrat of Maryland, made history earlier this year when she became the longest serving women in Congressional history. Mikulski, 75, served 10 years in the House before being elected to the Senate in 1987. She has served more than 12,800 days in Congress.

Bensouda Selected Chief of International Criminal Court

Fatou Bensouda, a former Gambian attorney general and minister of justice, has been named the new chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in The Hague. She is only the second person, and first woman, to hold the post, making her the public face and chief strategist responsible for investigating war crimes, genocide, crimes against humanity, among others.

Previously, Bensouda served as deputy to the prosecutor of the Court, and as a legal adviser and trial attorney at the international tribunal that prosecuted leaders of the 1994 Rwanda genocide. She was voted in by consensus, winning the support of the 120 countries that recognize the authority of the Court. She will serve one nine-year term.

Vázquez Mota Chosen by Ruling Party to run for President of Mexico

Josefina Vázquez Mota held off two male opponents in the primary of the National Action Party to become the first woman from a major party to be a candidate for president of Mexico. Vázquez Mota, who served as education secretary in outgoing President Felipe Calderón’s cabinet, garnered enough votes to avoid a runoff in her party and will now face two candidates in the July presidential contest. “I am going to be the first woman president in history,” she said, using “presidenta,” the feminine form of the word. (New York Times, Feb.6, 2012).

Hubbard Wins Special Election and Seat on the St. Louis Board of Aldermen

First-time candidate Tammika Hubbard won a special election in December to represent the 5th Ward on the St. Louis Board of Aldermen. She replaces April Ford Griffin, who stepped down to take a job in the Mayor’s cabinet.

Banda Named First Woman President in Malawi

Joyce Banda, one of Malawi’s most visible champions of gender equality, was sworn in as Head of State on April 7, 2012 after the sudden death of Malawian President Bingu wa Mutharika.

Banda joined the government in 2004 as Minister of Gender, Child Welfare and Community Services. She became Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2006 and the country’s first female vice president in 2009. She also founded three major organizations in Malawi: the National Association of Business Women, the Young Women’s Leaders Network, and the Joyce Banda Foundation.

Banda is third female to serve as head of state in Africa, the first in southern Africa. She will serve until elections in 2014.

Are you a woman in public life with news to share? e-mail dstock@umsl.edu or fax 314.516.6621.

Media intern keeps Institute in the spotlight

If you “like” the Sue Shear Institute on Facebook, chances are you noticed an increase in the number of posts in recent months: You can thank Na’Quasha Smith for keeping you informed.

Na’Quasha started a one-semester media internship with the Institute in January. She is a media studies major at UMSL with a minor in Spanish.

A St. Louis native, Na’Quasha attended South County Technical High School where she was a Skills USA Vica in 2005. She transferred to UMSL from Forest Park Community College where she studied International Business.

During her tenure at the Sue Shear Institute, Na’Quasha has helped enhance the Institute’s social media presence and has been a trusted and reliable contributor to a number of Institute programs and initiatives. She graduates on May 12, and her goal is to work as a writer for an organization or publication. We’ve enjoyed having Na’Quasha with us for the past four months—she will be missed!
Number of women candidates dips

It’s too early to speculate on the outcomes of the August Primary, but one thing is certain at this point: fewer women are running.

A total of 95 women are running on major party tickets for all offices, down from 101 in 2010. The field of major-party women candidates for state representative — 70 — is smaller than any other election year in the past decade, with the exception of 2006, when only 60 women ran. The party breakdown is almost evenly split: 37 women are Democrats and 34 are Republicans.

Another certainty: Newcomer Kathy Swan, District 147, will join the five women incumbents who are uncontested in the primary and general, thereby assuring victory. Another 28 incumbent women are seeking re-election.

Swan, a Republican, has served as a member of the Cape Girardeau City Council since 2010, and is the chair of the Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE). She was first appointed to the CBHE by Gov. Holden in 2003 and was reappointed by Governors Blunt and Nixon. Swan is president and owner of JCS Wireless, a small wireless communications company with offices in Cape Girardeau, Perryville, Doniphan, and Poplar Bluff in Missouri and Chester, Illinois.

The current number of women state representatives is 41, which ties the all-time high. In addition to the 33 women incumbents seeking re-election, 18 women are challengers and 19 are running for open seats (including Swan).

In races for the Senate, 12 women are running for nine seats (9D/3R). That’s double the number of women who ran in 2010, and on par with 2008, but it still represents only 28 percent of the pool of 42 candidates. Democratic Senator Kiki Curls (D-Kansas City) is unopposed in her bid for re-election; all but three other women candidates face primary opposition.

Six women serve in the Senate currently. One woman Senator lost her seat due to redistricting, so at least one new woman will have to be elected in order to maintain the status quo.

There are no major party women primary candidates for Governor, Secretary of State, State Treasurer or Attorney General. The only constitutional office with women contending in the primary is Lieutenant Governor. Five women are among the candidates seeking the Democratic nomination for that office including former State Auditor Susan Montee, State Rep. Sara Lampe, former State Reps. Judy Baker and Jackie Townes McGee and former Saline County Presiding Commissioner Becky Platter.

Unless one of these women wins, it will be the first time in 28 years that at least one woman candidate has not been on the General Election ballot for a state constitutional office.

At the federal level, former State Treasurer Sarah Steelman is pursuing the Republican nomination to challenge United States Senator Claire McCaskill (D) who is seeking re-election. Six women are running for the U.S. House of Representatives, including incumbents Jo Ann Emerson (R-8) and Vicky Hartzler (R-4). Ann Wagner, former U.S. Ambassador to Luxembourg, is seeking the Republican nomination in the open 2nd Congressional District.

For a complete list of women candidates in Missouri, visit http://www.umsl.edu/sueshear/cand_elections/2012Primary.html

Quigless appointed to Court of Appeals

Krauser, Kerr join 7th, 21st circuits

Three women judges have been appointed since January, increasing the gender diversity on three courts under the jurisdiction of the Missouri Non-Partisan Court Plan.

Most recently, Circuit Judge Angela Turner Quigless was appointed by Gov. Jay Nixon to the Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District.

Judge Quigless has been a circuit judge in the 22nd Circuit in St. Louis City since 2003. She was first appointed as an associate circuit judge in 1995. On two occasions, she served as a special judge on the Missouri Supreme Court.

A graduate of Saint Louis University Law School, Judge Quigless holds an undergraduate degree from the University of Missouri in Columbia. Prior to becoming a judge, she was an assistant United States Attorney, an assistant circuit attorney, and attorney for the Missouri Department of Revenue and Missouri Public Service Commission. She also worked in the St.

(Continued on page 5)
Appointments
Serving on a public board or commission is an excellent way to put your talents to use in public service without running for office.

If you are interested in serving on a board or commission, contact the Institute at (314) 516-4727 and visit our website at www.umsl.edu/sueshear to complete a “Public Service Personal Profile” on-line.

For a list of boards and commissions in Missouri, visit the Governor’s website at http://governor.mo.gov/boards/
The following lists include women who have been appointed to boards and commissions since November 2011:

**St. Louis City**

No appointments to report.

**St. Louis County**

Jami Ake  
Domestic & Family Violence Council  
Kathryn Jane Howard  
Domestic & Family Violence Council  
Aida Kadunic  
Mid-East Area Agency on Aging  
Carol Swartout Klein  
Metropolitan Park & Rec. Board of Directors  
Chaunceia Mayfield  
Domestic & Family Violence Council  
Judith Metzger  
Planning Commission  
Mary Elizabeth Monafo  
Productive Living Board  
Kim Allen Murray  
Domestic & Family Violence Council  
Susan Rehkopf  
Historic Building Commission  
Barbara Roberts  
Met-ZPB Commission of the Art Museum Subdistrict  
Carol Stroker  
Metropolitan Park & Rec. Board of Directors  
Susan Uchitelle  
Historic Building Commission  

**State of Missouri**

Donna K. Borgmeyer  
State Rehabilitation Adv. Council for the Blind  
Sarah Bur kemper  
Truman State University Board of Governors  
Marsha M. Campbell  
Missouri Health Facilities Review Committee  
Elizabeth Canuteson  
Missouri Technology Corporation  
Christine Chadwick  
Harris-Stowe State Univ. Board of Regents  
Nico le Col bert-Botchway  
Bi-Partisan Apportionment Commission  
Cheryl M. Darrough  
Appellate Judicial Commission  
Betty K. Farley  
State Rehabilitation Adv. Council for the Blind  
Rita Galbraith  
State Rehabilitation Adv. Council for the Blind  
Lori L. Glasscock  
Board of Cosmetology and Barber Examiners  
Charlotte L. Haden  
Public Administrator, Cedar County  
Aliah Holman  
Bi-State Development Agency of Missouri-Illinois Metropolitan District  
Eva Danner Horton  
Missouri Workforce Investment Board  
Paige Jenkins  
MO State Univ. Board of Governors, Student  
Amy G. Johnson  
Univ. of Missouri Board of Curators, Student  
Sherry Jones  
State Fair Commission  
Robert a LeGrand  
Missouri Workforce Investment Board  
Mary LePage  
MO Board of Nursing Home Administrators  
Beverly Miller  
Missouri State University Board of Governors  
Dorinda M. Nicholson  
Missouri Humanities Council  
Susan Plassmeyer  
Truman State University Board of Governors  
Brenda Porter  
State Council for Interstate Adult Offender Supervision  
Nia V. Ray  
State Rehabilitation Adv. Council for the Blind  
Pamela J. Riggs  
Missouri Humanities Council  
Melanie R. Rippeteo  
Missouri Higher Education Loan Authority  
Alexis B. Roam  
MO Board of Nursing Home Administrators  
Geneva Shearburn  
Board of Certification of Interpreters  
Naomi Soule  
MO Assistive Technology Advisory Council  
Phyllis Stayton  
MO Board of Nursing Home Administrators  
Melissa (Lisa) Turner  
Missouri Workforce Investment Board  
Phyllis Gaulding Turner  
Ozark County Treasurer  
Susan L. Venable  
Credit Union Commission  
Laura D. Verhulst  
Credit Union Commission  
Sheila Wright  
State Rehabilitation Adv. Council for the Blind  
Patricia L. Yokum  
State Rehabilitation Adv. Council for the Blind  
Catherine T. Zinkel  
Audrain County Collector

Women’s report cites persistent equity gap


Using the latest census data and other public information, the report examines the status of women compared to men in the areas of access to health-care, workforce & education, economic justice and civic engagement.

It is the first county-by-county analysis of women’s status produced in Missouri. The Women’s Policy Alliance created the report with the University of Missouri’s Office of Social and Economic Data Analysis.

Among the findings related to civic engagement: More Missouri women than men are registered to vote, and women voters outnumber men in every county of the state. Also, women comprise slightly over 29 percent of school boards across the state, and a fraction of the 330 county commissioners in Missouri; In Spring, 2011, the number of women commissioners was 15, or less than five percent.

The full report is available on-line at http://missouriwomensreport.org/

Infinity Project CLE Program
8th Circuit Judicial Conference
Kansas City, Missouri
August 9, 2012 • 4:30-6:30 p.m.
Call (314) 516-4727 for more details or to RSVP

The Sue Shear Institute is a partner in the Infinity Project, an effort to increase the gender diversity of the federal bench to ensure the quality of justice in the Eighth Circuit.
Louis City Counselor’s Office.

Judge Quigless was selected from an all-female panel (a first) submitted to the Governor by the Appellate Judicial Commission. She replaces the Honorable George W. Draper, and her appointment increases the number of women judges on the Eastern District Court of Appeals to five (of 15).

In the 21st Judicial Circuit (St. Louis County), Gov. Nixon named Kris Kerr Circuit Judge, filling the vacancy created by retiring Judge James R. Hartenbach.

Judge Kerr has served as a Family Court Commissioner for the Juvenile Division of the St. Louis Family Court since 2004. Previously, she was a trial attorney with the public defender offices in St. Louis City and County for 16 years. She earned her law degree from Boston University and her undergraduate degree at Brown University.

Her appointment brings the percentage of women judges in the 21st Judicial Circuit to 45 (14/31). The associate circuit bench in the 21st has a female majority, as does the associate circuit bench in the 7th Judicial Circuit (Clay County) following the recent appointment of Karen L. Krauser to associate circuit judge.

Prior to her appointment, Krauser was as a Clay County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, serving as the Chief Deputy since 2008. She has also served as a Municipal Judge in Excelsior Springs and Platte Woods.

Judge Krauser is a graduate of the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law and earned an undergraduate degree from Park University in Parkville. She replaces the Honorable Donald T. Norris, who retired. She is one of two women judges on the three-member associate circuit bench where overall, women comprise 50 percent of the officials in the Circuit.

Additional vacancies in the Eastern District Court of Appeals and the 21st Circuit bench are in the process of being filed, and the 22nd Circuit has posted a vacancy resulting from the appointment of Quigless. All appointments will be made by the Governor.

Pipeline grads enjoy unprecedented success in April contests across St. Louis region

A record-high 80 percent of the graduates of the Sue Shear Institute’s January “Pipeline to Local Office” Program won their elections on Apr. 3.

Among the winners were first-time candidates Joanne Boulton who was elected to the Clayton Board of Aldermen, and Sherri Rogers, who was one of two top vote-getters in a three-way contest for the Rockwood School Board.

Patricia Zahn and Kimberly Baker, both appointed to fill unexpired terms in 2011, won contested elections for full terms. Zahn serves on the Affton School Board and Baker is a member of the Maryland Heights City Council. Alderwomen Kathy Kerlagon in Ballwin, Michelle Harris in Clayton, and Margie Jones in Country Club Hills were all re-elected.

Dana Valley, Joan McGivney, and Nancy Luetzow, all graduates of the Institute’s fall “Pipeline to Public Office” program were also elected; Valley to the Greendale Board of Aldermen, and McGivney to the St. Louis Community College Board of Trustees. Luetzow joins former Pipeline attendees Gina Jaksetic and Gerry Biedenstein who both won reelection to the Kirkwood City Council.

The Sue Shear Institute offers the “Pipeline to Local Office” program every January, specifically for candidates preparing for municipal and school board elections. “Pipeline to Public Office” is offered in November of odd-numbered years.

Statehouse Sisters program features women in the law

Women prosecutors were the focus at the Sue Shear Institute’s tenth annual “Statehouse Sisters” program on March 12 at the University of Missouri – St. Louis.

For the second time ever, the top prosecutors in Missouri’s metropolitan areas are women, and both of them—St. Louis Circuit Attorney Jennifer Joyce and Jackson County Prosecutor Jean Peters-Baker—were on hand for this Women’s History Month event.

Held at the Millennium Student Center at UMSL, the panel was moderated by Federal Magistrate Nannette Baker. Students from UMSL and neighboring universities, faculty, and community members attended the event where the panelists offered insight on their roles in the real world of law and order.

Circuit Attorney Joyce and Prosecutor Peters-Baker touched on a variety of topics, ranging from why they pursued their positions to their perspectives on guns.

“It felt like the right thing”, said Joyce in regards to pursuing her office. Baker summed up the panel’s discussion with her thoughts about why women should pursue leadership positions and left the audience with some keen words of advice:

“People are going to tell you that it’s not your turn or it’s not your time, but if you feel like it is, take it.”
It is always exciting to receive "progress reports" from graduates of our leadership programs. In addition to updates from Leadership Academy alums, we’re now including news from graduates of the UMSL Women LEAD program. We are proud to share their accomplishments with you! (Note: The number in parenthesis represents year of participation in the Leadership Academy.)

♦ LeAnn Beaty  
Missouri State University (’02)  

♦ Suzanne Struglinski Broadfield  
University of Missouri –Columbia (’98); Amethyst Award winner (’08)  
Suzanne has been elected to a three-year term on the Board of Governors at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. She is the press secretary for legislative affairs at the Natural Resources Defense Council.

♦ Mary Grace Bruntrager  
Truman State University (’11)  
Mary Grace spent the last semester studying abroad in Rome. This summer, she is working on Stacey Newman’s re-election campaign for the Missouri House.

♦ Marcia Chatelain  
University of Missouri–Columbia (’99); Amethyst Award winner (’09)  
Marcia just launched her own public speaking and consulting practice: “Marcia Chatelain, Speaking Of...” at www.marciachatelain.com. She is an assistant professor of History at Georgetown University in Washington, DC.

♦ Rebecca Clifton  
Missouri State University (’06)  
Becky is a Domestic Relations Officer for the Greene County Family Court.

♦ Julie Eager (Crow)  
Missouri S & T (’98)  
Julie is an engineer with Bechtel Marine Propulsion in upstate New York, where she does work related to the US Navy.

♦ Lauren Gepford  
University of Missouri-Kansas City (‘11)  
Lauren was a city management intern for the City of Raymore during the summer of 2011, and worked for the Department of Homeland Security, Citizenship and Immigration Services. She chairs the UMKC College Democrats and was recently elected as National Committee-woman for the Young Democrats of Missouri. Lauren will earn her bachelor’s in political science from UMKC in May.

♦ Brittany Gholson  
Southeast Missouri State University (’10)  
Brittany leaves July 11 for India where she will be an Idex Fellow, working to expand sustainable social enterprises in schools near Hyderabad.

♦ Paula Hodges  
Truman State University (’05)  
Paula is the Public Policy & Advocacy Director for Planned Parenthood of New England. She and her husband live in Warwick, RI.

♦ Alana Inman  
Missouri State University (’98)  
Alana manages the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center, a branch of the Texas State Library and Archives in Liberty, Texas. Previously, she worked for the Missouri State Archives.

♦ Jheel Mehta  
University of Missouri-Kansas City (’07)  
Jheel is finishing her masters in Asian Studies at Seton Hall University, with concentrations in human rights and foreign affairs and regional concentrations in India and China. She is an advisor at the Permanent Mission of India to the U.N., and Co-Founder and Editor at the Journal of Asian Studies.

♦ Kelli Nagle  
Southeast Missouri State University (’08)  
Kelli is in her second year of a dual degree program, pursuing a J.D. and M.A. of International Affairs at Marquette University Law School in Milwaukee, WI. This summer she is interning for the U.S. State Department Bureau of Western Hemispheric Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City, Mexico.

♦ Jessica Nobles (Nelson)  
University of Central Missouri (’07)  
Jessica is an instructor of criminal justice at Lewis and Clark Community College.

♦ Alexis Petri  
University of Missouri-Kansas City (’09)  
Alexis is nearing completion of her doctorate in Urban Leadership and Policy Studies in Education at UMKC. She was recently elected president of the board for Hogan Preparatory Academy, a public charter school, after three years as vice-president.

♦ E’Terrica Reeves  
UMSL Women LEAD ’11  
Terri has secured a summer job as a field manager for The Grass Roots Campaign, a non-profit organization that works to mobilize young voters.

♦ Candace Simpson  
University of Missouri –Columbia (’03)  
Candace is currently working as a product specialist with Schaeffer’s Investment Research in Cincinnati, OH. She is also volunteering for Judge Nadine Allen.

♦ Brittany Stegeman  
Lincoln University (’10)  
Brittany is an admissions counselor/recruiter at Lincoln University of Missouri where she works with 2001 Fellow, Liz Morrow.

♦ Rabekah Stewart  
Lincoln University (’00)  
Rabekah is a TRiO Upward Bound Project Director at The Ohio State University, and a 2nd year PhD student in higher ed or-
organizational management and policy.

♦ Hallie Thompson
University of Missouri – Columbia ('11)
Hallie was awarded the Pioneer Maize Doctoral Fellowship and started a Ph.D. program in the Plant Science department at Mizzou in January. She is presenting a poster at an international symposium in Dundee, Scotland, in June.

♦ Sukmeke Rainey Watkins
Lincoln University ('99)
Sukmeke recently started a new job as a legislative coordinator for the Chicago Transit Authority, working primarily with the Illinois State Legislature.

♦ Ali Weinel
University of Central Missouri ('10)
Ali is an intern in the City Manager’s office in Lee’s Summit, Mo.

♦ Sarah Welch
Missouri S & T ('00)
Sarah is a Scrum Master/Project Manager at a software company in Boulder, CO. On the side, she is in the very early stages of her first startup and is writing two cookbooks—one based upon the recipes of her grandmother, a real Rosie the Riveter. A Ron Paul supporter, Sarah was a delegate to the Colorado Congressional District 2 Assembly and the Colorado GOP State Assembly & Convention in April.

♦ Amy Williams
University of Missouri – Columbia ('10)
Amy graduates from the University of Missouri School of Law in May. This fall, Amy is attending Utrecht University in The Netherlands to study international human rights on a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship.

♦ Emma Wilson
Missouri State University ('11)
Emma is a reporter at the Ozarks Public Radio station, KSMU, where she produces stories on local history for the station’s “Sense of Place” series. You can hear her story on renowned artist (and Kewpie Doll creator), Rose O’Neil on our website.

For more fellows’ updates, visit: www.umsl.edu/sueshear/leadership/fellow-updates.html

Amethyst Award winner rises above circumstance to be a representative, role model and mentor to others

It is not where Churie Spreng ended up that made her an obvious choice for this year’s Amethyst Award: It’s where she began.

Her teenage mother had – and still suffers from – a dual-diagnosis of severe substance abuse and bipolar disorder. Her father was incarcerated for all of his adult life. A self-proclaimed “child of the streets,” Churie overcame bad habits and “even worse role models,” channeling her experiences into a passion for helping others in similar circumstances.

In 2004, armed with a GED, she enrolled at Florissant Valley Community College where she balanced coursework with her roles as a teaching assistant and swim instructor. Churie transferred to the University of Missouri-St. Louis in 2006 to study Sociology and Social Services. Once on campus, she became involved with the Associated Students of the University of Missouri (ASUM) and soon began visiting the State Capitol to lobby on behalf of student interests.

She became a Shear Fellow in 2009, and just over a year after she graduated from the Leadership Academy, Churie was elected State Representative for the 76th District.

She is a member of the House Small Business Committee and the House Utilities Committee, but she finds her service on the House Children and Families Committee most rewarding.

“I decided some time ago that affecting change and bringing aid to our neediest citizens happens through personal commitment and, in my view, being politically active,” she said. “My work on the House Children and Families Committee is dedicated to making the laws of Missouri benefit our neediest citizens – those who are abused, who live in poverty, who have no education, ...who have no voice.”

Churie credits mentoring from women she met at the Sue Shear Institute with bolstering her self-esteem, and she is passionate about mentoring other young people who may be struggling.

“There are many young women out there who are just like I was – lost in the swirling abyss of poverty ... and the tragedy of neglect and lack of self-worth,” she says. “I believe mentoring is the most positive commitment we can make to others.”

As the Amethyst Award winner, Churie will receive an unrestricted cash award of $1,000 at the 21st Century Leadership Academy keynote dinner on May 24, 2012. The Award is given annually to a Shear Fellow who has inspired others by applying the skills and knowledge she gained at the 21st Century Leadership Academy.

Previous awardees include Kelly Anthony ('05), Allison Howard Zupon ('06), Chyanne Lockhart Cardarella ('07), Suzanne Struglinski Broadfield ('08), Marcia Chatelain, Ph.D. ('09), Kelly Newsome McNichols ('10) and Carolyn Chrisman ('11). •
Yes, I want to support the Institute’s mission in helping women participate fully in public policy decision making arenas.

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Contributions are tax-deductible. Thank You.