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Community Connection





Dear Neighbors and Community Partners,

We hope this message finds you well! Even as residents, communities, businesses, and institutions look to reopen in different capacities, address injustice, and face an uncertain future, I am struck by the stories of perseverance, adaptation, and support throughout our community. Whether it is Brian Owens and his ongoing work to build opportunity and a hot bed for creativity in North County, or Metro Transit testing new ways to serve residents, or Shawntelle Fisher's working to build pathways to employment for justice involved individuals, or the economic and health resources being made available in our neighborhoods, our community is hard at work finding a way forward.

While there are no easy answers in these challenging times, it is important to keep trying to build a better world and support one another's well-being. We know individuals and companies will continue to navigate changing employment, health access, education, and business environments. As we journey forward, we hope you find inspiration in some of the stories below and that you make use of the resources listed.

Sincerely,
Kristin Sobolik



Photo by St. Louis Public Radio

Brian Owens Is Building A 'Creative Ecosystem' In North St. Louis County

St. Louis Public Radio • July 7, 2020

COVID-19 Resources

[Click here](#) to view resources for support during the pandemic.

UMSL Community Connection

[Click here](#) to sign up for the community connection newsletter.

UMSL Community Card

[Register](#) for a community card to receive benefits and discounts at UMSL events and facilities.

UMSL Contracts

Interested in bidding on projects at UMSL?

[Procurement Bids](#)
[Construction Bids](#)

Resources and Reminders

Lifeline Phone and Broadband Discounts

LifeLine Program Phone and Broadband Discounts are offered by the Federal Communications Commission to qualifying low income consumers. Many fixed (landline) Lifeline carriers already offer unlimited local and toll-free calling to their subscribers, and mobile wireless Lifeline carriers that are temporarily offering unlimited calling to subscribers during the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information, [click here](#).

Ameren Offers Energy Bill Relief for Small Businesses

If you're a small business owner with 50 or fewer employees and are having trouble paying your energy bill, now is the time to apply for energy assistance through Ameren Missouri's new COVID-19 Small Business Relief Program.

Starting July 6, 2020, Ameren's new program will provide up to \$250 in energy assistance per eligible small

The secret to Brian Owens' success is no secret at all. "I always tell people I get these heavenly hookups," he explained. "God's favor in my life. It's begun in spite of me to position things to happen." The Ferguson-based soul singer, a devout Christian, can cite numerous blessings of late where he sees God's hand in the works. There's the former church building donated to his nonprofit Life Arts; he's working on its renovation now. There's also \$200,000 in funding for that nonprofit from a New York-based benefactor. He joined St. Louis on the Air recently to talk about those developments and his goals for his community going forward.

[Click here](#) to listen and read more.



Metro Transit Launches Ride Share Program, Via Metro STL, in North and South St. Louis County

Metro Transit is piloting a ride share program, Via Metro STL. The service is operating in North and South St. Louis County service areas. "This new service allows transit riders to hail a vehicle directly from their smartphone using the Via app, and travel to any location within the service area during operating hours." The service is free through August and then will cost \$2 per ride. To learn more about the service areas, hours of operation, and how to access the service, [click here](#).

This services is in addition to the Metro Transit, [Lyft program](#), "that offers \$1 rides to connect with a Metro Transit Center or MetroBus stop." Starting June 1, every rider and driver using the Lyft program is required to self-certify in the app that they will wear a face covering throughout the ride, are COVID-19 symptom-free, and will follow CDC and local guidelines related to COVID-19.



UMSL's CLIMB Internship Program Goes Virtual To Investigate Covid-19

HEC Media

business or non-profit 501(c)(3) customers. [Click here](#) for eligibility, program details, and to apply.

Managing Forward: Courses to Reinforce and Strengthen Your Small Business for the Future

The Managing Forward Series are online courses to reinforce and strengthen your small business for the future. These sessions are hosted by the Missouri SBDC and facilitated by subject matter experts from the Henry W. Bloch School of Management at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, with examples from Missouri businesses. Courses remaining in the series are:

July 23, Maintaining Continuity and Effective Management of Small Businesses in Remote Environments

July 30, Online Essentials for Small Businesses

August 6, Agile Marketing, Sales and E-commerce for Small Businesses

August 13, Supply Chain Challenges for Small Businesses

August 20, Essentials of Cybersecurity for Small Businesses

August 27, Managing Forward series Live Q&A Panel

To learn about and register for sessions, [click here](#).

MO Department of Economic Development Small Business Grant

The purpose of the Small Business and Family-Owned Farm Grant Program is to provide grants to small businesses and family-owned farms for reimbursement of costs of business interruption caused by the COVID-19 public health emergency. In addition to focusing on family-owned farms, the Department of Economic Development (DED) is focused primarily on impacting

The University of Missouri – St. Louis Collaborative Laboratory Internships and Mentoring Blueprint (CLIMB) paid summer internships went virtual and are researching Covid-19. Fourteen select students from Jennings and University City High Schools were chosen to work with faculty members and participate in research including Chemistry, Biology, Psychology, Math and Computer Science, Music, Education, Economics, and Communication. It began in 2015 to offer select bright, yet disadvantaged high school students from North St. Louis County the opportunity to explore potential careers. Later, a mentorship program, JUMP was created to pair up Biology graduate students with high school students forming year-round personal mentoring. [Click here](#) to see a video about this unique program.



Photo by Regions Bank

Soul Survivor: How One Woman's Reentry Journey is Empowering Countless Others

Shawntelle Fisher's own reentry journey resulted in founding The SoulFisher Ministries in 2012 to provide workforce training and educational support for justice involved individuals returning to society. Through a grant from Region' bank, The SoulFisher Ministries partnered with UMSL to work with employers on demystifying hiring of justice involved individuals. The initiative was called "Successful Second Chances". The partnership between UMSL and SoulFisher had deeper meaning for the collaborators as Shawntelle is an alum of UMSL and of the Neighborhood Leadership Academy by UMSL and MU Extension.

To read about Shawntelle's story and the "Successful Second Chances" program, [click here](#).



the industries that were hardest hit by the COVID-19 crisis: Retail Trade, Accommodation, Food Service, and Health Care. However, the grant is not limited to these industries. Grants may be up to \$50,000. Applicants must incur/have incurred COVID costs between March 1, 2020, and November 15, 2020. To learn more about the program and how to apply, [click here](#).

Business Recovery: What Businesses Need to Know Right Now

North County Inc., US Bank, Small Business Administration, St. Louis Economic Development Partnership, and the Missouri Department of Economic Development are hosting a webinar July 22 at 8:00 a.m. on grants, loans, and programs available to the business community. For more information on the program, [click here](#).

COVID-19 Testing Sites

In addition to Affinia Healthcare offering testing at their Pagedale location, a number of pop-up testing sites are available in North St. Louis County. Testing for COVID-19 will be available at the following locations on the dates listed. Appointments are required and can be made online [here](#).

Every Wed. and Fri. beginning July 12 testing will be available at:

Bellefontaine Rec Center
9669 Bellefontaine Rd. Saint Louis, MO 63137

Aug. 1st and 2nd from 8:00 a.m. to noon testing will be available at:

Northside Seventh-day Adventist Church
9001 Lucas & Hunt Road St. Louis, MO 63136



Neighborhood Leadership Academy

Neighborhood Leadership Academy Open for Enrollment

The Neighborhood Leadership Academy (NLA) connects resources at the University through Creating Whole Communities, a partnership of the University of Missouri-St. Louis and MU Extension, with neighborhood leaders from across the state of Missouri to learn together through a virtual project-based curriculum, developing the skills and building the networks necessary to create healthy, vibrant and whole communities.

The NLA provides in-depth and multifaceted leadership training that emphasizes community building principles and strategies, project planning, organizational leadership and management practices, and personal leadership skills. [Click here](#) to learn more and apply.

Share with Us

We'd love to hear your questions and comments about UMSL and stories about great things happening in our communities. Your thoughts will help shape content covered in future newsletters to be pertinent to you and your neighbors. Leave any suggestions, questions, or stories [here](#). Thank you!

Images courtesy of the 2020 Missouri Census website

Step Up and Be Counted! Census 2020 is Underway

Good news, there is still time to take the Census! Self-response has been extended through October 31 and is available online or over the phone. EVERYONE living in the United States needs to be counted. Communities benefit from this data because it affects how funding is managed for city infrastructure, health care centers, the number of seats Missouri has in Congress, schools, and more. To see how your city or county is stacking up against others across the state, review [these rankings](#) or go to <https://2020census.gov/en/response-rates.html>.

Don't wait! Visit <https://2020census.gov/> for more information and to complete the Census now.

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