

UMSL

magazine

Spring 2011

Master of the song

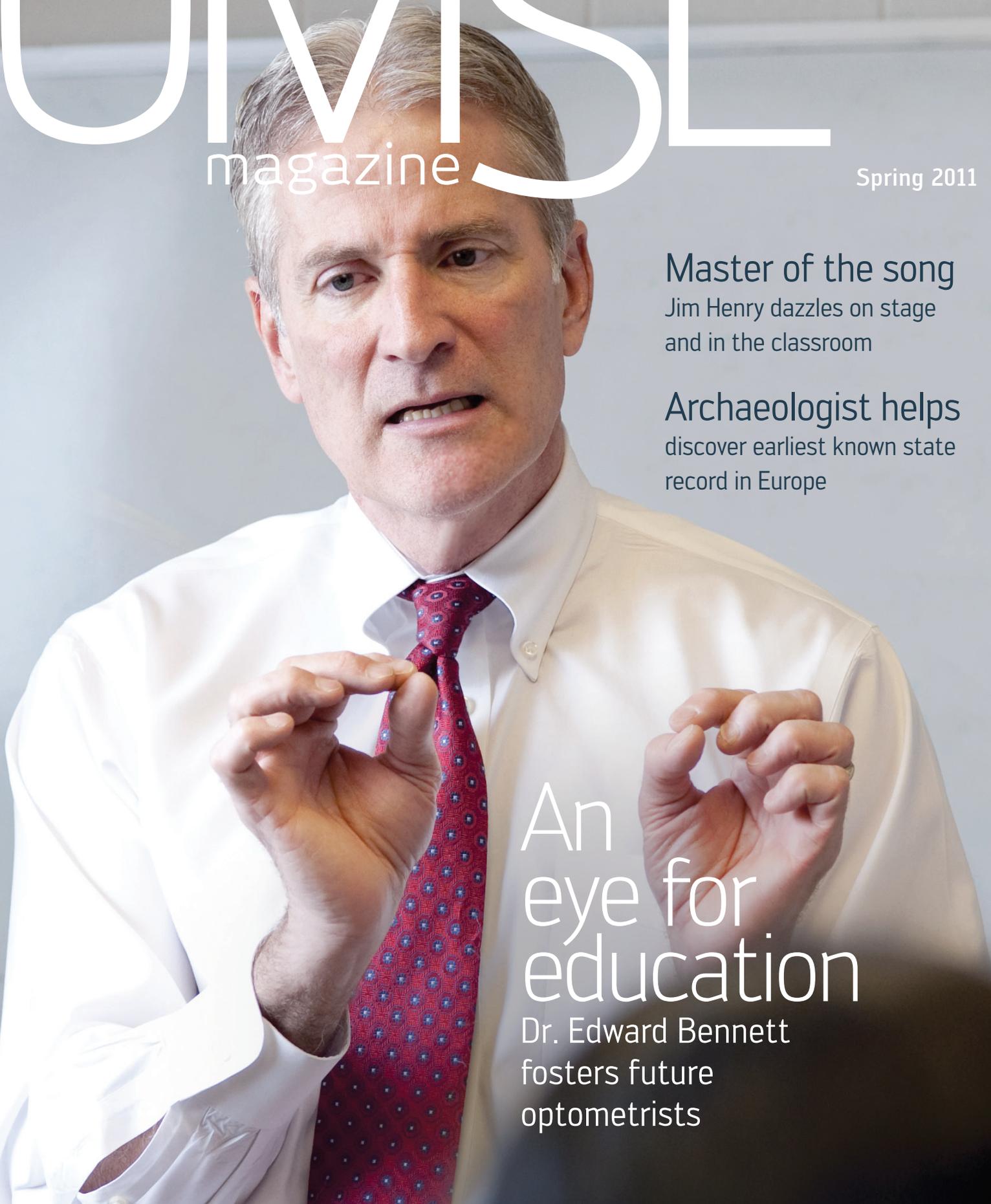
Jim Henry dazzles on stage
and in the classroom

Archaeologist helps

discover earliest known state
record in Europe

An eye for education

Dr. Edward Bennett
fosters future
optometrists





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The University of Missouri–St. Louis publishes **UMSL** magazine for alumni and friends. The magazine highlights excellence at the university. Circulation is 79,000, and the magazine is released twice a year.

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UMSL Director of Choral Studies Jim Henry was drawn to performance and music education at an early age and hasn't looked back.

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Archaeologist Michael Cosmopoulos helped discover an ancient Greek tablet dating between 1400 B.C. and 1350 B.C. It's thought to be the earliest known state record in Europe.

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Biologist Patty Parker led the effort to pinpoint the year avian

pox hit the Galapagos Islands. The discovery will allow scientists to better understand avian diseases.



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Optometrist, researcher and educator Dr. Edward Bennett is a favorite among UMSL students.

Dear Readers



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Every time I pick up UMSL Magazine, I'm impressed by the breadth and quality of stories about our students, alumni, donors and faculty. We have an outstanding collection of individuals associated with this university doing extraordinary work on and off campus.

But I'm particularly intrigued when I learn something new about someone I thought I knew well. Such is the case with optometrist Ed Bennett, economist Susan Feigenbaum and performer and music educator Jim Henry. Each is an excellent instructor at the university, and their stories in this issue reveal more.

Ed Bennett has been in education for 32 years and is an internationally recognized contact lens researcher. Optometry education and research, however, were not his first career options. Apparently, Ed might have become a beer baron, but he walked away from the beer distribution industry. I didn't know that.

Susan Feigenbaum is a force of nature. She's a faculty leader who serves on numerous campus committees and excels at research. She's also passionate about using real-life examples to teach economics. That enthusiasm, I learned, is the foundation of a new textbook that was developed with the input of her students.

Jim Henry is an award-winning performer and educator at UMSL. Nathan Lane is an award-winning American stage and screen star. A couple of twists this way or that, and Jim could have achieved Nathan Lane-type stardom, says Jim's former teacher. That's a fascinating observation and a wonderful compliment.

UMSL has many splendid educators whose academic expertise and world experiences enrich our classroom and enliven this magazine.

Sincerely,

Thomas F. George

Chancellor

He's known for his challenging classes and an unflinching desire to help pave the way for future optometrists.

18 student at home in gerontology program

Chinese student Shaoxuan Shi represents a growing trend of international students coming to UMSL to study gerontology.

20 textbook teamwork

Economist Susan Feigenbaum collaborates with students to create an economics textbook, which focuses on economic intuition and critical thinking.



On the cover

Dr. Edward Bennett is a renowned contact lens researcher and UMSL associate professor. See Page 16. (Photo by August Jennewein)



Senior Ryan Penfield led the UMSL Tritons men's golf team with a 74.17 scoring average and posted six top-10 finishes during the year. (Photo by Danny Reise)

UMSL Tritons find success as individuals, teams

The 2010-11 intercollegiate athletics season has seen quite a few successes for the University of Missouri–St. Louis Tritons.

JaCee Ellis, senior utility player on the softball team, was named the Great Lakes Valley Conference Player of the Year, while first-year head coach Brian Levin was named GLVC Coach of the Year. Levin led the Tritons to the GLVC regular season title with a 20-5 league mark and a 31-20 overall record.

Daniela Viotti, a freshman on the women's golf team, was named GLVC Player of the Year and Freshman of the Year. Viotti led the Tritons to five team titles this season. Sophomore Shweta Galande, who earned Freshman of the Year honors last year, qualified for the NCAA Division II Championships for the second year in a row.

Ryan Penfield, a senior on the men's golf team, was named to the GLVC All-Conference Team, while head coach Troy Halterman was named the GLVC Coach of the Year. For the first time since 2001, the men's golf team is heading to the NCAA Division II Championships. The Tritons qualified for the national tournament by tying for fourth place in the Midwest/South Central Regional in Georgetown, Ky.

Junior guard Gerald Fulton capped off one of the most successful recent seasons by UMSL's men's basketball team by being named to the GLVC All-Conference First Team. Fulton led the Tritons to a 16-11 record – the most wins since the 1990-91 team finished with 22 victories – and was named to the Daktronics Inc. All-Midwest Region First Team.

Bridge Program celebrates 25 successful years

More than 1,600 high school students and their families, as well as campus and community leaders, filled America's Center in downtown St. Louis March 19 to celebrate 25 years of the University of Missouri–St. Louis Bridge Program.

Since its inception, the pre-collegiate program has provided effective college access programming to students and parents. Bridge attracts more than 1,500 students each year representing approximately 90 public and private high schools in the region.

This year's Bridge senior class has been accepted to more than 90 institutions and has received more than \$1 million in scholarship offers. Bridge has an unmatched record of 100 percent of its students being admitted to college.

Teen HIV, drug prevention program awarded \$1.5 million grant

On the heels of its new partnership with the University of Missouri–St. Louis, the Missouri Institute of Mental Health has been awarded a five-year \$1.5 million grant to once again implement substance abuse and HIV and AIDS prevention services for African American females – ages 12-17 – through its award-winning Girls Holla Back! program.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration awarded the grant under its Ready-To-Respond Initiative. The MIMH program will serve 60 participants per year. This initiative will help develop a campaign to promote important prevention messages throughout five St. Louis neighborhoods reporting high incidences of drug use and HIV and AIDS cases.

University salutes Express Scripts by renaming building in company's honor



UMSL Chancellor Tom George (left) and George Paz, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Express Scripts, were on hand Feb. 25 when the university renamed a prominent North Campus building Express Scripts Hall. Formerly known as the Computer Center Building, it was renamed to recognize the UMSL-Express Scripts collaboration, one of the largest business-university relationships in the country. "We are honored that the university has recognized our partnership," Paz says. "We have always been proud of our association with this outstanding institution with which we share a commitment to the region's progress and growth." (Photo by August Jennewein)

UMSL recognized for stellar community engagement work

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching honored the University of Missouri–St. Louis for the depth and breadth of its institutional commitment and engagement to the greater community with a 2010 Community Engagement Classification in January. UMSL was one of 115 U.S. colleges and universities to receive the designation – and one of four in Missouri.

“Community engagement has been a central focus of UMSL since the university was established in 1963,” Provost Glen Cope says. “It’s who we are. It’s what we do. Civic engagement is woven into our mission, our research, our curriculum. Our ongoing commitment to society is the reason many of our students and faculty choose this university.”

The influence of hundreds of university partnerships, the leadership of its 60,000 alumni and the teaching, learning and service work of its faculty and students greatly enhances the region’s quality of life.

Singled out for its extraordinary service was the Des Lee Collaborative Vision, a partnership that serves more than 500,000 people, most of them children in urban K-12 classrooms across the St. Louis area. Thanks to generous gifts from philanthropist E. Desmond Lee and other donors, the collaborative has endowed 37 professors working with more than 100 community organizations.



50 years in, music educator makes hall of fame

Robert Nordman, the E. Desmond Lee Endowed Professor in Music Education at the University of Missouri–St. Louis, has devoted half a century to music education. His contributions were recognized in January with his induction into the Missouri Music Educators Association Hall of Fame.

Nordman, who holds a College of Education and College of Fine Arts and Communication joint appointment, says the achievement was a great way to begin his 50th year as an educator.

“I am deeply honored to be placed in the company of the internationally recognized composers and highly influential music teachers in the hall of fame,” he says.

Jim Richards, interim dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication, says he’s always admired Nordman’s creativity and uplifting spirit.

“Professor Nordman continues to have a significant impact as director of the Des Lee Fine Arts Education Collaborative, one of the university’s most dynamic and far-reaching community educational partnerships,” Richards says.

The collaborative provides services for 122 schools in 16 St. Louis-area districts. It annually presents in-school programs for 7,500 students and opportunities for 11,000 students to view concerts and museums.

Nordman has also served as supervisor of music education for St. Louis Public Schools and director of bands and orchestras at Southwest High School in St. Louis.

In his own words

Accountant crunches numbers by day, crushes pins by night

By Rose Postma

For years, Steve Moehrle discreetly went about chasing his decades-long addiction. He'd squeeze in fixes when his work and home schedules would allow – put his kids to bed, give his wife a hug and head to the nearest bowling alley to feed his need for strikes and spares.

But his recent service on the board of directors for the United States Bowling Congress helped nudge the cat out of the bag – Moehrle is one heck of a bowler. (Several 300 games and an 809 high series are among his accomplishments.)

He's also a professor of accounting at the University of Missouri–St. Louis. A UMSL guy through and through, Moehrle is a respected teacher and prominent researcher of financial accounting and reporting. He's a proud alumnus (BSBA 1985), and he's married to Jennifer Reynolds-Moehrle, an associate professor of accounting at UMSL.

How did you get into bowling?

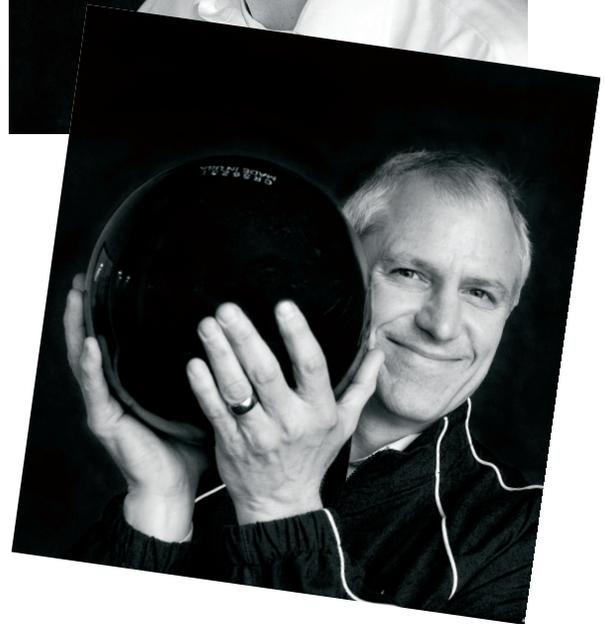
I began working at Red Bird Lanes while in high school. At that time, it was the center of the social scene in south St. Louis. I began as a pin chaser, which is the person behind the machines fixing them when they break down. Eventually, I worked as the desk clerk and weekend manager. I also did some bartending. It was a fun place to work. The center often had an hours-long waiting list for lanes, which meant there were always friends hanging around.

What about accounting?

I came to UMSL to major in accounting. The great student-friendly faculty here solidified my intention. The department had a reputation for providing a solid education and opportunities for students to earn positions at top accounting firms. It's amazing now to think that the College of Business Administration was only about 15 years old when I arrived on campus.

Tell me about the statistical model for bowling you're working on.

I'm trying to develop a model analogous to the "slope" rating that's used by the United States Golf Association. This is the system that assigns a handicap to golfers based on their scores at their home course and the relative difficulty of that course. Like golf courses, bowling center conditions vary in terms of both the lane surface and the lane-conditioning pattern that the center employs. As a result, one cannot inherently compare players based solely on their scores at any particular center. I'm hoping that I can develop a statistical model that will enable such



comparisons. I'm piloting data from the St. Louis-area centers to test my current model. This isn't just an academic exercise. Many players would like to participate in handicap-based tournaments but feel the handicaps are not fair. Currently, they are correct. I would like to create a handicapping system that is fair for all players.

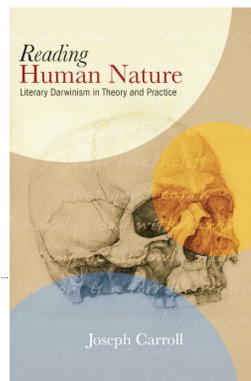
How has bowling changed?

Unfortunately, the popularity of bowling has decreased dramatically since its peak in the early 1980s. At its peak, the United States Bowling Congress had about 9 million members. It now has over 2 million active members, which is still quite impressive. Red Bird was a casualty of the decline. In the 1990s, Walgreens bought the location and still has a store there. We are seeing an increase in recreational bowling though, and I'm elated that centers have become a hip destination for young people. So many centers are now smoke-free. My hope is that this will allow more families to experience the sport.

How can a novice bowler improve his game?

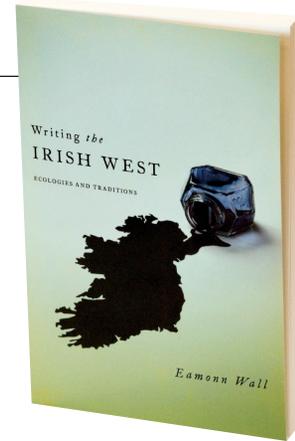
Bowling has changed so much in the last 20 years. But one thing remains the same: You have to develop hand-eye coordination and the ability to hit the target. As you progress in the game, knowledge of the equipment and the lane surfaces becomes increasingly important. Bowling ball companies have developed high-tech equipment with power-inducing cores and surfaces. High performance players have to learn to match the equipment with the surface to succeed. Thus, players have to study, study, study and then practice, practice, practice. It's not as easy as the pros make it look. ☰

Books by UMSL faculty



**“READING HUMAN NATURE:
LITERARY DARWINISM IN
THEORY AND PRACTICE”**
BY JOSEPH CARROLL
SUNY PRESS, MARCH 2011

Joseph Carroll, Curators’ Professor of English, is at the forefront of a movement he calls “literary Darwinism,” which looks at literature in the context of evolution and natural selection. His newest book examines several specific literary works and makes the case that “literary Darwinism” is not a passing fad in the field of literary theory but part of a giant shift in the humanities that is here to stay.



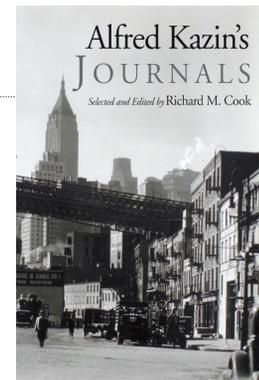
**“WRITING THE IRISH WEST:
ECOLOGIES AND TRADITIONS”**
BY EAMONN WALL
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME
PRESS, MARCH 2011

The way place shapes a writer has long been a topic of discussion in literary conversations, and Eamonn Wall, professor of English, specifically explores the influence of the Irish West. The book focuses on seven writers, including Richard Murphy and Mary O’Malley, whose work has been molded by the Irish West. The volume is filled with comparisons between Ireland and America, making it an important addition to transatlantic Irish studies.



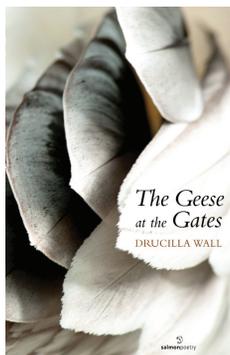
**“INVESTMENT INCENTIVES AND
THE GLOBAL COMPETITION FOR
CAPITAL”**
BY KENNETH P. THOMAS
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN,
JANUARY 2011

Governments at all levels have made attracting investments a high priority for decades. Kenneth Thomas, associate professor of political science, says these incentives are rarely a good policy especially for countries lacking education and infrastructure. Thomas is an expert on the international political economy and multinational corporations. The book features case studies from around the world and an analysis of the many methods used to control incentives.



“ALFRED KAZIN’S JOURNALS”
SELECTED AND EDITED
BY RICHARD M. COOK
YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS,
MAY 2011

Alfred Kazin (1915-1998) was an American literary writer and critic and one of the most influential thinkers of his time. Richard Cook, professor of English, compiled Kazin’s daily journal entries into a comprehensive book that reveals Kazin’s journey from his childhood in Brooklyn to his arrival as one of the country’s most prominent intellectuals. The book is a fascinating look into the daily life and struggles of one of America’s finest thinkers.



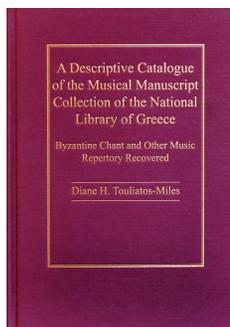
"THE GEESE AT THE GATES"
BY DRUCILLA WALL
SALMON PRESS, MAY 2011

Drucilla Wall's debut book of poetry is filled with the unexpected – small moments of humor, place and gesture playing off each other to create a dazzling collection. Wall, assistant teaching professor of English, says the title poem is set in St. Louis and explores what it means to be human in this complicated and often disconnected world we live in together and yet apart. The poem, in part, explores our need to reconnect with the undervalued parts of our selves.

"A DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE OF THE MUSICAL MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF GREECE: BYZANTINE CHANT AND OTHER MUSIC REPERTORY RECOVERED"

BY DIANE H. TOULIATOS-MILES
ASHGATE, OCTOBER 2010

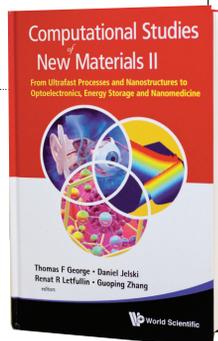
Diane Touliafos-Miles, Curators' Professor of Music, spent 12 summers in the National Library of Greece in Athens unearthing 241 Western, Ancient Greek and Byzantine music manuscripts. The resulting book includes a meticulous listing of the library's musical contents in their original language, titles of compositions, modal signatures, other attributions and a glossary that defines terms for non-specialists. Each entry also features a commentary in English indicating highlights and the composition's significance.



"FOUNDING ST. LOUIS: FIRST CITY OF THE NEW WEST"

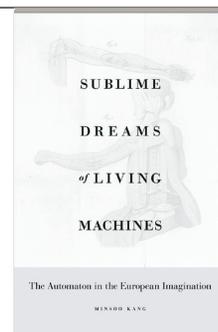
BY FRED FAUSZ
HISTORY PRESS, MARCH 2011

St. Louis and the French West are often overlooked parts of American history. Fred Fausz, associate professor of history, provides a fresh interpretation of St. Louis' earliest days as a cosmopolitan center of international commerce that eventually served as a model of multicultural harmony. Fausz details the contribution of Pierre Laclède, the early Chouteaus, Saint Ange de Bellerive and the Osage Indians – all before Lewis and Clark started on their journey west.



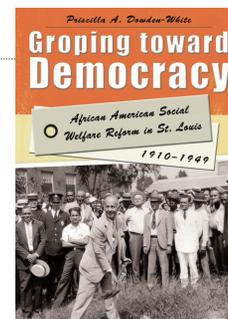
"COMPUTATIONAL STUDIES OF NEW MATERIALS II: FROM ULTRAFAST PROCESSES AND NANOSTRUCTURES TO OPTOELECTRONICS, ENERGY STORAGE AND NANOMEDICINE"
CO-EDITED BY TOM GEORGE
WORLD SCIENTIFIC, JANUARY 2011

UMSL Chancellor Tom George co-edited a follow-up to "Computational Studies of New Materials," which he edited in 1999. The newest book also covers developments in nanotechnology. It focuses on the materials and lets the algorithms live in the background. The book's 18 chapters are written by a number of researchers (including George, who also co-wrote the introduction). While the book may not be light reading, it is filled with insights on the evolving world of nanotechnology. Other editors are Daniel Jelski, Renat R. Letfullin and Guoping Zhang.



"SUBLIME DREAMS OF LIVING MACHINES: THE AUTOMATON IN THE EUROPEAN IMAGINATION"
BY MINSOO KANG
HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS, FEBRUARY 2011

The automaton or robot's origins can almost unbelievably be found in ancient myths, and Minsoo Kang, associate professor of history, examines these beginnings and traces the journey of the automaton to its current position of prominence in modern movies and literature. He leaves no stone unturned in the field of automata. The accessible narrative is equal parts literature, science, history and philosophy and is evidence of Kang's deftness as a writer.



"GROPING TOWARD DEMOCRACY: AFRICAN AMERICAN SOCIAL WELFARE REFORM IN ST. LOUIS, 1910-1949"
BY PRISCILLA DOWDEN-WHITE
UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI PRESS, MARCH 2011

Years before the civil rights movement of the 1960s, St. Louis was home to activism and social reform. Priscilla Dowden-White, associate professor of history, examines the hidden history of the city's black community activism in the first half of the 20th century. The book covers a group of dynamic African American social welfare reformers whose chief organizing principle was "community as a whole" and whose work paved the way for the civil rights movement.



Jim Henry, associate professor of music at UMSL, chats with students (from left) Ravi Raghuram, Maren Thoroughman, Bryan Ziegler and Amie Hopkins during a break from a vocal lesson in Henry's course Tonal Counterpoint. (Photo by August Jennewein)

TWO-PART HARMONY

Jim Henry is a world-class performer and 'masterful' teacher

By Ryan Heinz

Jim Henry remembers the song that changed his life. It was the hymn "Search Me O God." A choir from St. Charles (Mo.) High School sang it for Henry and his middle-school classmates at an assembly.

"It was just a simple song," recalls Henry, director of choral studies at the University of Missouri–St. Louis. "But it hit me. I felt, 'This I need to do.'"

That song made Henry want to sing for a living. Not that he was new to singing. The music seed was planted in Henry from his early childhood. His father and mother sang in barbershop groups, and Rob, his older brother, had a great voice.

"From my earliest memories, we would sing together in four-part harmony while driving in the car," Henry says. "I just grew up singing with my family, not that I ever thought I'd make a career of it."

But then there was that song. In all of his young, music-filled life, he says he'd never

had such a musical awakening. While already immersed in singing, Henry got more involved with music in an educational setting. He began singing in his high school choir. As it turned out, it was the same choir, led by the same director (Richard Eichenberger), that provided Henry with his life-changing moment in middle school.

Eichenberger says Henry was born to be onstage and he thought Henry was destined for Broadway as a Nathan Lane-style actor.

"[Henry] had the sense of timing and was great with comedy," Eichenberger says. "He had the voice. He had the personality. Learning lines and lyrics was nothing for him. He always wanted to do better. He wanted to be a better singer, a better actor, a better dancer."

Henry took a pass on performing full time, instead opting for a dual career in performance and music education.

Along with his brother, he sang in the Gas House Gang, a quartet now enshrined in the Barbershop Harmony Society Hall of Fame. In 2009, Henry became the first person ever to take home a gold medal as both a chorus director (Ambassadors of Harmony) and a quartet member (Crossroads) in the International Barbershop Competition.

Henry's also a renowned music teacher, having won the Missouri Governor's Award for Excellence in Education in 2010 and the International Leadership Network Dare to Lead award this year. In addition to his UMSL classroom teaching duties, he leads two university performance ensembles: the 50-voice University Singers chorus and the 22-voice Vocal Point a cappella group.

Ask his students. They'll tell you Henry commands both the stage and the classroom.

"He's extremely charismatic, and it's easy to relate to him," says Victoria Hood, a senior music major at UMSL. "He can get any audience in the palm of his hand."

Brian Owens, BM 2008, says he admired Henry as a choral conductor since high school and was thrilled to work with him at UMSL. They've since forged a friendship and have shared the stage together in a quartet that was rounded out by Owens' father and brother.

Owens says Henry has a passion that connects with his students without being overbearing or leading to expectations that can't be met.

Henry, however, maintains a reputation for demanding perfection from his students and getting the most out of their vocal talents. What separates him from other choir directors is his ability to get his students to understand the emotions of the story behind each song. He's able to get them to pour their mind, heart and soul into the music.

"It takes a matter of minutes until they are completely drawn into his way of thinking," says Jim Richards, interim dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication at UMSL and frequent Henry collaborator. "He has a masterful way of dealing with students."

Owens adds, "And then you compound that with the fact that [Henry] directs one of the best choruses on the planet."

Owens is referring to the Ambassadors of Harmony, a 160-person chorus based in St. Charles, Mo. Henry, 46, has directed the vocal behemoth since he was 27. He landed his first conducting gig at 18.

Henry's student, Blair Brown, a senior music education major at UMSL, marvels at him having the "chutzpah" to conduct at such an early age.

"I'm 24 now," Brown says. "I can't even wrap my head around that."

Henry's teaching is not confined to university students. Earlier this year, he taught students from Tonganoxie (Kan.) High School, served as conductor of the Ohio Music Education Association's All-State Choir and gave performances and workshops in Madrid with Crossroads, the award-winning quartet.

Eichenberger, who Henry says inspired him to teach, says he's not surprised his former student became a prolific performer and teacher. He recalls high school-aged Henry's insatiable appetite for music knowledge, learning everything he could about various singing styles and composers' biographical information. Henry's desire to share that information made him a perfect fit for teaching.

"There's no ego to this man," Eichenberger says. "He's just having a good time sharing his abilities and gifts so that the rest of us can be good musicians." ≡

ΑΣΚΟΥΘΥΣΙΑΥΤΗΣ
ΤΙΚΣΕΦΡΑΤΥΡΟΣΟΧΥ
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Tablet changes

Above: A 2 inch by 3 inch tablet was discovered in Iklaina, Greece. It's the oldest known tablet in Europe. The back of the tablet is pictured. (Photo by Christian Mundigler)

Right: UMSL archaeologist Michael Cosmopoulos works at the Iklaina excavation site in southwest Greece.

The hunk of hardened mud didn't look like much. Found at the end of a day's dig, it was hurriedly tagged and sent off for cleaning at the Pylos Museum in Greece. The next day Michael Cosmopoulos got a call. The pottery expert from his team could hardly speak.

"We found a tablet," she finally blurted out.

And just like that, what the world previously knew about ancient Greek society changed.

The clay tablet shard was discovered in an excavation funded by the National Geographic Society. Measured at 2 inches by 3 inches, the tablet is thought to be the earliest known state record in Europe – dating between 1400 and 1350 B.C. – 100 to 150 years older than what was thought to be the oldest such record.

"I was in disbelief," says Cosmopoulos, the Hellenic Government Karakas Family Endowed Professor of Greek Studies at the University of Missouri–St. Louis and director of the Iklaina Archaeologist Project, which he's led for 11 years. "According to what we knew, that tablet should not have been there."

The rare find was unearthed last summer during the UMSL excavation at the Iklaina site, which overlooks the Ionian

Sea and sits in the middle of an olive grove in southwest Greece.

Iklaina may have been an important district capital. It dates to the Mycenaean period (ca. 1500-1100 B.C.), an era famous for such mythical sagas as the Trojan War. Some scholars have suggested that Iklaina was one of the capital cities of famed King Nestor, who figures prominently in Homer's "Iliad."

"This is a rare case where archaeology meets ancient text and Greek myth," Cosmopoulos says.

The Mycenaeans used clay tablets in the palaces to record state property and transactions. The tablets were written in the Linear B system of writing, which is older than the alphabet. It consists of more than 80 syllabic signs. The signs stand for objects or commodities, but their phonetic value is uncertain. Archaeologists are still studying the inscriptions, but preliminary analysis suggests they may refer to some sort of manufacturing process.

"On the front there is a verb that relates to the manufacturing of cloth or chariots," Cosmopoulos says.

"On the backside, there is a list of men's names alongside numbers."

Tablets of this type were not meant

to be kept more than a year and as a result were never sent to a kiln. They are preserved only if accidentally burned, which is the case of the Iklaina tablet.

"This discovery is the biggest surprise in years of excavation," Cosmopoulos says. "It was found in a burned refuse dump dated to between 1450 and 1350 B.C."

The tablet is the latest in a series of discoveries at Iklaina. In the last two years, the excavation has provided evidence for the existence of a palace – elaborate architecture, massive terrace walls, colorful murals and a drainage system that was ahead of its time, according to Cosmopoulos. All are indicative of a major center, potentially a state capital.

Cosmopoulos is cautious, however, and says it's too soon to tell whether Iklaina was a capital or not. There's only a handful of known major state capitals. Pylos and Mycenae are among them.

"This find challenges what we know about the origins of states in ancient Greece," Cosmopoulos says. "Not only does it push the origins of those states back in time by at least a century and a half, but it proves that literacy and bureaucracy appeared earlier and were more widespread than what we had thought until now. We still have a lot to learn about the ancient world."

Each summer, Cosmopoulos returns to the dig site with a team of 40-60 students from UMSL and other universities. The team also includes 25-30 staff members and specialists. The land of the excavation was purchased on behalf of the Greek government, and by law all the finds remain in the local museum as property of the Greek state.

In addition to the National Geographic Society, the dig was funded with grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Institute for Aegean Prehistory, Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass., Pylos Archaeology Foundation and Center for International Studies at UMSL.

Visit iklaina.org for more information. ☰

UNEARTHING HISTORY

By Kylie Shafferkoetter

what we know about ancient Greece





"It's important to understand the history of avipoxvirus in wild bird populations on the Galapagos and its role in the accelerated rate of island-level extinction."

—Patrica Parker

Past meets future

Biologists work to save Galapagos birds

By Kylie Shafferkoetter

Using 100-year-old bird specimens, University of Missouri–St. Louis biologists Patricia Parker and Robert Ricklefs and a slew of other scientists have pinpointed 1898 as the year the avipoxvirus, or avian pox, hit the Galapagos Islands and started infecting the birds there. The estimation is vital to understanding avian diseases that affect today's Galapagos birds.

Eloisa Sari (left), who's pursuing a doctoral degree in biology at UMSL, and Patricia Parker, the E. Desmond Lee Endowed Professor of Zoological Studies at UMSL, look over a notebook that contains Sari's lab procedures. (Photo by August Jennewein)

Vials contain scab-like lesions excised from birds infected with avian pox on the Galapagos Islands. (Photo by August Jennewein)



Avian pox is a slow-developing disease that eventually causes lesions and a buildup of mucus that interferes with a bird's ability to feed, causing it to die.

Parker, the Des Lee Professor of Zoological Studies and chair of the Department of Biology at UMSL, is the lead author of the paper "110 Years of Avipoxvirus on the Galapagos Islands," which was published in PLoS ONE, an international, peer-reviewed, online science publication.

The group of authors – consisting of researchers from across the United States and Ecuador – examined bird carcasses collected on the Galapagos Islands between 1891 and 1906 and currently held at the California

Academy of Sciences in San Francisco and the Zoologische Staatssammlung in Munich. The collection includes 3,973 specimens representing species of finches and mockingbirds – two well-studied families of endemic passerine birds. Passerines include more than half of all bird species and are distinguished by feet that are adapted for perching.

According to the research paper, the absence of good disease records in historic wildlife is partially responsible for a controversy among scientists. The question is how big of a role the disease plays in regulating wildlife populations.

But Parker says she hopes new research approaches, such as those used by her team, can quell the debate.

"The combination of an extensive museum collection and modern genetics and histology have allowed us to home in on the arrival date of an important virus that threatens today's populations of unique birds," Parker says. "We are all excited to not only have the arrival date estimate, but to have important insights into the role that humans have played, and still play, in spreading pathogens like this virus."

The data show that avipoxvirus was present 64 years after Charles Darwin collected specimens on the Galapagos. Parker says that shortly after its arrival, the virus was much more likely to be found on human-inhabited islands, suggesting that humans inadvertently helped to spread the virus.

And while there have been no known extinctions of bird species found on the Galapagos, analysis of subfossil remains has shown that the island-level extinction rate is about 100 times higher since human colonization.

According to Parker, it's important to understand the history of avipoxvirus in wild bird populations on the Galapagos and its role in the accelerated rate of island-level extinction.

She says, "Having this awareness can help the development of protective measures." ≡

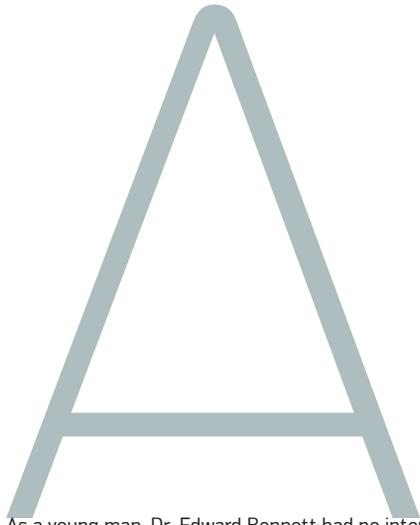




RENOWNED RESEARCH, TERRIFIC TEACHING

Optometrist ensures his students
receive same opportunities he did

By Ryan Heinz



As a young man, Dr. Edward Bennett had no intentions of being a teacher. He didn't even seek to become an optometrist. The Terre Haute, Ind., native's future appeared to lie in the family business: beer distribution.

After eight years of working part time in the business, he says he realized he might not have found his calling.

The brewing industry's loss was the gain of contact lens wearers and hundreds of aspiring eye doctors. Bennett went on to study optometry. He's become one of the foremost contact lens researchers and an expert in rigid gas permeable lenses. And he's beloved by his students.

How Bennett, associate professor of optometry at the University of Missouri–St. Louis, got to where he is today is a matter of, as he says, a few lucky breaks and the perseverance of an otherwise “mediocre student.” As a student, he got swept up in contact lens research while working under Dr. Irvin Borish, a legend in the field of optometry.

“That was luck,” Bennett says. “I can't think of a better time to be involved in contact lens research than 1978 and 1979 when all these new soft lenses were coming out in their infancy.”

He was involved with studies on the first extended-wear contact lenses, the first soft lenses that corrected for astigmatism and the first gas permeable lenses. And he was hooked. Bennett says he intended to go into private practice, but he found himself continuing his research as a faculty member at his alma mater, Indiana University in Bloomington. He says he didn't think teaching would stick.

“I thought, ‘I'll try it for a year or two,’” he says. “That was 32 years ago.”

Most of that time has been with the College of Optometry at UMSL where Bennett is also assistant dean for student services and alumni relations and co-chief of contact lens service.

His colleagues and students – past and present – describe him as a prolific researcher and tireless worker. He's well-connected within the contact lens field, and Bennett's students say he's the sort of teacher who opens doors, fostering the same “lucky breaks” he says helped him attain success in his career.

“It's impossible to go to a meeting with [Bennett] and not be introduced to several of those movers and shakers in the profession,” says Dr. Larry Davis, dean of the college, who met Bennett when he served a post-doctoral residency under him at UMSL.

One past student, Dr. Vinita Henry, OD 1985, says Bennett was instrumental in her being where she is now. She was a third-year student at UMSL when she began working with Bennett on researching the first gas permeable lens ever approved for extended wear. She then held the first contact lens residency at UMSL. She's now director of clinical operations and residency programs. Bennett and Henry have also edited three editions of “Clinical Manual of Contact Lenses.”

“I've been fortunate to work with him and have my name associated with him because people know who he is,” Henry says.

Henry says that while Bennett is an internationally known and respected researcher, he's as modest and hardworking as they come. He's a big enough celebrity in the world of contact lenses and

optometry that it seems everyone knows him at a research symposium. Yet he'll drive nine hours roundtrip to a university in Kansas to recruit pre-optometry students and still make it to class on time the next day.

“He could have a huge ego,” Henry says. “But he doesn't.”

For most UMSL optometry students, Bennett is one of the first faculty members they meet when they interview for admission to the program. They have him as an instructor in classes and clinics. They see him at college social functions like the Eyeball (a dance), Corneal Classic Golf Tournament and Sprint for Sight (a 5K fundraiser), which he regularly attends. And they see him when he pops in for their annual board exams to wish them luck.

In the classroom, he wins students over by putting them at ease and inviting their questions (“That's a good question,” he responds to most queries). Then, there are his animated lectures. One includes a video of a clinic scenario in which Bennett, whose acting career previously peaked with a bit role in the 1979 film “Breaking Away,” shows his range by playing every character – regardless of gender – in the scenario.

“Oh yeah, I've seen Dr. Bennett in lipstick and a wig, and I've heard his falsetto,” fourth-year student Hanna Kim says, laughing. “He's not afraid to make a fool of himself for our benefit and education.”

This year's graduating class named him “Outstanding Optometric Educator.” Despite that and plenty of gushing, conversations with Bennett's students repeatedly veered to a shared sentiment: “His tests are hard!”

Henry knows from firsthand experience. She failed one.

“He didn't win that award for being easy on students,” she says. “It's more because they can see his compassion – that he's there to support them and help them move on.”

Bennett's time with the students rarely ends when they graduate. He helps maintain EyeWire, the college's alumni newsletter.

And he never turns away inquiries from current or former students. Dr. Eyad Yehyawi, OD 2004, found proof when e-mailing Bennett with questions about a number of patient scenarios he encountered after graduation. Bennett always responded.

“I have a lot of respect for that man,” Yehyawi says, “as a person, not only as a teacher.”

Dr. Edward Bennett, associate professor of optometry at UMSL, shows a large-diameter scleral gas permeable lens to cornea and contact lens resident and alumna Dr. Jamie Gold (left), OD 2010, and recent graduates Dr. Erin Brooks and Dr. Mark Havara during a seminar. The contact lens design is new to the market and Bennett says they have proven successful in use by patients with irregular corneas. (Photo by August Jennewein)

Chinese student finds home in UMSL Gerontology Program, connects with university

By Maureen Zegel

Shaoxuan Shi introduces herself as Julia.

"It's my American name," she says proudly. Her Chinese friends call her Xuan, and she is one of 996 international students attending the University of Missouri–St. Louis.

Shi, 25, left her job as an intensive care nurse at a hospital in Tianjin, China, a coastal city near Beijing, to earn a master's degree at UMSL in the growing field of gerontology. She says she chose UMSL for many reasons – reasonable cost, its central location in the U.S. and its graduate Gerontology Program in the School of Social Work.

"Working in intensive care and neurology, I became very interested in older people," she says. "Older people have lots of wisdom and experience. I thought if I got a chance to work with them, it would be a good way to learn."

Shi bubbles over with excitement talking about her studies at UMSL. The two-year program in gerontology requires a practicum, and she's been assigned to the Charles F. and Joanne Knight Alzheimer's Disease Research Center at Washington University in St. Louis. With a clinical

research arm known as the Memory and Aging Project, the center offers practicums to students in nursing, gerontology and social work from UMSL and Saint Louis University. Shi observes physicians and nurse clinicians, learns about the genetics of Alzheimer's disease and is gaining certification to administer an evaluation test.

"I never expected to get a practicum like this," she says. "I am working with research participants, doctors, nurses and will have many opportunities to attend conferences and meetings. This is an excellent gerontology program."

Tom Meuser heads the UMSL program. The associate professor of social work and gerontology, says Shi has a bright future ahead of her.

"She represents a small but growing trend in internationally-trained health professionals coming to the U.S. to specialize in aging studies and gerontology," he says. "I receive inquiries from international students on a monthly basis."

UMSL has welcomed students from around the world since 1968 when Edwin Federer founded the Center for International Studies. Over the past four decades the center has expanded to include programs in academics, community engagement, performing arts and studying abroad. There's also an international student and scholars program that attracts students from 112 different countries.

"One of the most profound changes on our campus in recent years has been the influx of international student enrollment," says Joel Glassman, academic director of the center and associate provost for academic affairs at UMSL. He talks about the rich diversity that can be found at large, state universities where cultures, traditions and learning styles are shared.

"International students are high achievers," he says. "They're risk takers who work very hard to succeed academically. They contribute a great deal to campus life because they are full-time students, and most live on campus. And our St. Louis students who don't have the opportunity to study abroad get to know someone from the global community face to face."

Recent growth in the international student population on campus has meant an expansion of services. One of the most visible is UMSL's International Student Leadership House, which opened this year. It serves as temporary housing for new international students and provides a convenient place for social events and activities that promote interaction between domestic and international students.

Gifty Aryeetey, Huimin Ma, Darmawan Triwibowo and Zheng Zhang are four UMSL graduate students who live in the neat, two-story brick home on Natural Bridge Road across from Benton Hall.

Aryeety is a native of Ghana. Triwibowo hails from Indonesia, and Ma and Zhang are from China. The university chose them to be student leaders. Their task at the International Student Leadership House is to help international students have a cohesive, fun lifestyle.

In the spring, the foursome held a pizza party to introduce the new house to the campus. More than 40 UMSL students attended and got to know each other in a foreign language – English.

Once an international student is admitted to UMSL, they must take one or two semesters of English as a Second Language while taking regular courses. Denise Mussman is associate teaching professor in languages and director of ESL.

"It's a pretty tall order to learn English in one year," she says. "Although students enter with a strong background in English, learning slang and culture needed to participate in classes is quite hard."

On a recent Tuesday afternoon, 17 UMSL students from a number of countries gathered in a classroom in Clark Hall along with three

American graduate students. The meetings, dubbed the "conversation club," occur weekly. The international students leave their native language at the door to discuss a number of topics. On this day, the conversation began with an American film viewed the week before, the concept of "chick flicks" and the meaning of diversity, which was soon followed by the students' perceptions of America's "openness."

With ESL classes under her belt, Julia Shi says UMSL has helped her feel comfortable in her new home country and that she seeks out American classmates as friends.

"The Chinese students sometimes talk about how much they miss home," she says. "I miss home, too. But at the same time, I also want to stay in America after I finish my studies. I dream of New York City. There's so much I want to see and do." ≡



Shaoxuan "Julia" Shi is one of 996 international students from 112 countries who attend UMSL. She moved to the U.S. from China and says she feels at home in her new country. (Photo by August Jennewein)

Teaching for the book

Economist inspires her students
through creation of textbook

By Jennifer Hatton

Susan Feigenbaum is a great teacher. Her students say she possesses a remarkable combination of expertise and passion for their success, rarely missing a chance to better their understanding. Over the past few years, the professor of economics at the University of Missouri–St. Louis even turned her effort to co-write a textbook into a learning opportunity for her students.

“Principles of Economics: The Way We Live” will hit bookshelves in December, and Feigenbaum says getting her students involved in creating it has worked out well.

“Allowing my students to be a part of this process has been amazing,” she says. “The students have benefited from this experience. The book has, and I have.”

The book is rooted in a curriculum grant for nearly \$140,000 from the National Science Foundation. Feigenbaum and three other UMSL faculty members – Thomas Ireland, Sharon Levin and Anne Winkler – worked on the grant, which led to new microeconomics course curriculum.

Equitable Distribution

(ty Prosity)



Susan Feigenbaum, professor of economics at UMSL, talks with a class in March about the economic dynamics of divorce. The lecture was based on a chapter from Feigenbaum's textbook, "Principles of Economics: The Way We Live," which is due out in December. (Photo by August Jennewein)

“Great teachers make it safe for students to feel comfortable taking the risks required to learn.” — Susan Feigenbaum

Feigenbaum recalls thinking, “This would make a great textbook.”

And so it began.

The research and writing of the book spanned more than 10 semesters of Feigenbaum’s Principles of Microeconomics course. She allowed her students to use the textbook in manuscript form instead of having to purchase an existing book that would have cost each student more than \$130. The catch was they had to provide her with feedback on the textbook, including areas where she could improve the exposition or make it more relevant and accessible.

Feigenbaum’s undergraduate student assistants helped collect data to create exercises in economic numeracy, a skill that’s critical to the NSF. Those exercises were layered onto what Feigenbaum calls a “life-cycle” framework for the book. She says she designed the framework to hook students into learning and applying basic economic principles.

“So many textbooks focus on theories and technical analyses, which are unimportant to college students,” Feigenbaum says. “By using the life-cycle as the structure for the book, I examined everyday situations so that students could integrate economics into their everyday life and decision making.”

Chapters include “Elasticity: How Price-Sensitive Are Buyers and Sellers?” and “Affording the Lifestyle to Which We’ve Grown Accustomed: The Supply of Economic Goods.” Another chapter covers the division of household chores and how it relates to economics, and some chapters are organized in novel ways, including the decisions to go to college, enter the work force, get married and have children.

For almost a decade, Feigenbaum posted iterations of the textbook on MyGateway, a Web portal UMSL students use to access course information. Each revision benefited from the

exchanges that took place the semester before between her and her students, both in and out of the classroom.

David Sanders teaches economics at UMSL and St. Louis Community College–Meramec. While a UMSL graduate student, he worked as a peer-tutor in Feigenbaum’s microeconomics class for three semesters. He says Feigenbaum has created a book that readers can easily follow by giving them good examples and background stories.

“She finds examples that are relevant to their lives as they are in college, not as they may be in some situational future,” Sanders says. “I think students will remember that the most. I try to do the same thing in my classes, because I saw the positive results of it firsthand in that class.”

That taste of real life comes across in Feigenbaum’s classroom teaching, too. UMSL economics senior Sarah Calhoun says Feigenbaum is an effective teacher because she concentrates on students, not just the material.

“Her teaching style and textbook focus on helping students develop economic intuition, and they teach [students] to think in a critical way,” Calhoun says. “I think that my experience in

Feigenbaum’s class allows me to see a problem from different perspectives, which is something I feel will help me in many future situations.”

Feigenbaum says she loves teaching, respects her students and works to develop one-on-one connections with them.

“I also never embarrass a student,” she says. “I challenge them, but make sure they feel safe about the learning process. Great teachers make it safe for students to feel comfortable taking the risks required to learn.”

When the book neared completion, Feigenbaum says she realized there was a major gap in coverage – macroeconomics.

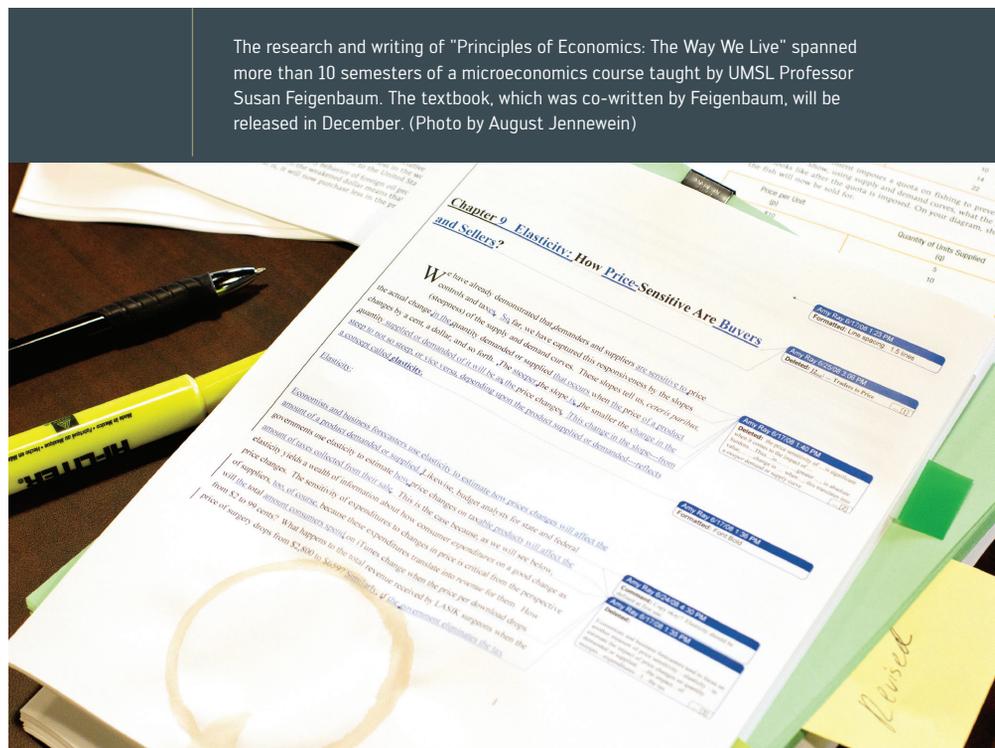
“A viable economics textbook must have both a microeconomics and macroeconomics split,” she says.

After some research, Feigenbaum brought in R.W. Hafer, professor of economics and finance at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, as co-author.

“He’s great,” Feigenbaum says. “Even with coming into the process late, he’s produced some wonderful material.”

“Principles of Economics: The Way We Live” is published by Freeman-Worth Publishers. ■

The research and writing of “Principles of Economics: The Way We Live” spanned more than 10 semesters of a microeconomics course taught by UMSL Professor Susan Feigenbaum. The textbook, which was co-written by Feigenbaum, will be released in December. (Photo by August Jennewein)





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Giving to Grace's Place CHARLIE AND MAUREEN HOFFMAN

support technology museum at UMSL



A gift from Maureen and Charlie Hoffman, BSBA 1974 and MBA 1976, will support moving and adding resources to Grace's Place, a technology museum at UMSL. (Photo by August Jennewein)

By Jennifer Hatton

Charlie and Maureen Hoffman's lives have centered on change and technology for 30 years. So they decided to help share the history of changing technology with others through a \$1 million gift to Grace's Place, a computer museum at the University of Missouri–St. Louis.

"After experiencing a career spanning the early days of computers to the latest wireless technologies, I felt a connection to Grace's Place," Charlie says. "I wanted to help provide a place where students can see where technology has been. It's ever changing and evolving, and Grace's Place provides a venue to display that."

Following a stint in the U.S. Air Force, Hoffman began a new part of his life as a single father of two young sons.

"The service helped me find what I really liked, and that was business," he says. "I knew I wanted to earn as much as I could and that I enjoyed the technology side of it."

So he enrolled at UMSL and went on to earn a bachelor's degree in 1974 and master's degree in 1976. Both are in business administration.

He then took a job as a marketing representative at IBM. During this time he met Maureen, a nurse at SSM Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital in St. Louis. The two of them hit it off.

"I thought I was marrying a nice guy from St. Louis who worked at IBM," Maureen says with a smile. "But within 18 months we were moving all over and didn't stop for 30 years."

An offer came from Southwestern Bell's new wireless business. He accepted and the job enabled Charlie to build the network and the business in St. Louis, Boston, Washington and eventually Mexico City.

Charlie says with each move came a better position with great opportunities for himself, Maureen and their children – his two older sons and their son and daughter.

"It was difficult with each move," Maureen says. "But I'd put down roots. You had to invest in the place and the company and get the children involved in school and activities. I ended up having some of the best experiences at each place and making some of the best friendships."

Returning from Mexico, Charlie joined Sprint PCS as president of its Northeast region. That position helped him gain his first public company chief executive officer position with Rogers Wireless, the Canadian wireless company formerly known as Cantel. Next, he joined Covad Communications, the national broadband carrier, as president and CEO, which brought the family back to the United States. After retiring in 2008, Charlie and Maureen moved back to the St. Louis area to be close to their six grandchildren.

Once they returned, Charlie reconnected with UMSL. While on a campus tour, he came across Grace's Place and decided to help. Through the Hoffman gift, the museum will be moved from its current location on the second floor of Express Scripts Hall (formerly the Computer Center Building) to the entrance of the yet-to-be-constructed Anheuser-Busch Hall, the new home of the College of Business Administration. The gift will also provide additional space and resources for the museum.

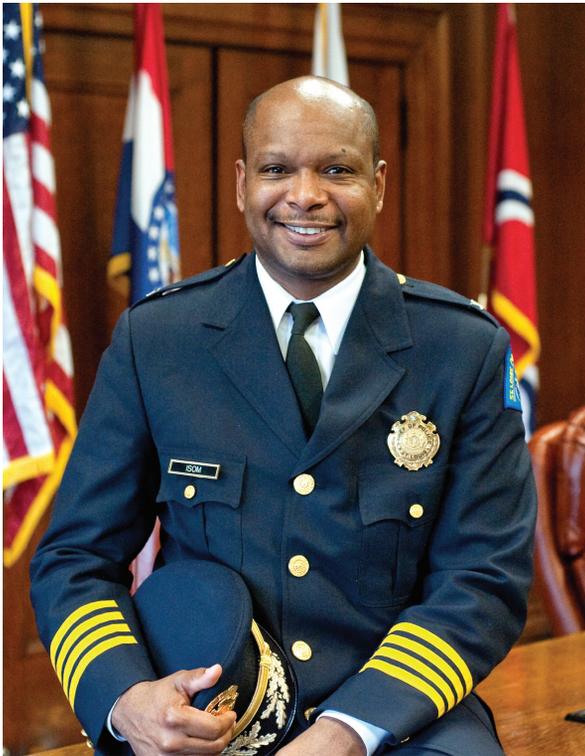
Vicki Sauter, professor of information systems at UMSL, created Grace's Place in 2004 to display old computers and teach students about the evolution of computing.

"This has always been my baby, and through the generosity of the Hoffmans it will continue, grow and be available for students for years to come," Sauter says.

The museum has a range of exhibits from early tubes and analog computers, to samples of in-home computers and microcomputers over the years. Many computers are disassembled to display individual components, motherboards and interesting artifacts. Grace's Place is named in memory of U.S. Navy Rear Admiral Grace Murray Hopper, a pioneer in the development of computers. ≡

DAN ISOM

How his UMSL education helped him become St. Louis' top cop



UMSL alumnus Dan Isom leads the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department. He says he was initially drawn to joining the police force because of his interest in law, governmental politics and public service. (Photo by August Jennewein)

By Linda Tracy

One morning this winter, while many of us were still bleary-eyed and thinking of nothing beyond coffee, St. Louis Metropolitan Police Chief Dan Isom had already visited a crime scene, talked with reporters and driven to a St. Louis-area hospital. The hospital stop was made to visit an officer who was shot in the leg while responding to a home invasion call. The officer was OK, and Isom once again navigated one of the more difficult parts of his job.

"You get the phone call at 1:30 in the morning that an officer was shot, and of course, you think the worst," Isom says. "There's all the emotions going through you, and you're driving down the highway. ... It's the people being hurt, citizens being shot, young people dying. It's a lot."

Isom, who earned bachelor's (1994), master's (2003) and doctoral (2008) degrees in criminology and criminal justice at the University of Missouri–St. Louis, has worked in the city's police department

for nearly 23 years. He began as a patrol officer and rose through the ranks while working in practically every unit including mobile reserve, police academy, internal affairs, audit advisory and community outreach. In October 2008, he was named chief of the department and its 1,900 employees.

"I was really lucky in that I had a lot of people who took an interest in my career and mentored me along the way," Isom says. "But even though I had a significant amount of experience over a short period of time in a lot of areas, I didn't think I had a chance of becoming chief."

Jumping from the rank of major to chief is unusual. It's only happened a few times in the history of the department.

"There's one more rank between major and chief, and that's lieutenant colonel," Isom says. "It took me 20 years to make it through four ranks, and that's considered fast. I was 41 years old when I became chief, and I'm the youngest to have the title."

As the third African American police chief in St. Louis, Isom says he thinks what gave him an edge during the interview process was that he'd prepared a 25-page strategic plan for the department.

"I had written a lot of papers while working on my degrees at UMSL that revolve around my plans for improving and strengthening the department," he says. "In the interview, I was asked how I would face pertinent issues, and I had almost everything I'd written in the 20 years I'd been on the police force and at the university. A strategic plan hadn't been written in a long time, or maybe ever, for the police department. I think that helped seal the deal."

But even with a solid plan, the job of police chief has a well-earned reputation for grinding away at the men and women who step into the role. The average length of service by police chiefs in the U.S. is about five years.

"As chief, you have to make some really tough decisions internally, so it wears on the organization, and if things are going particularly bad in the community in terms of crime, people understandably get frustrated," Isom says.

Isom has several family members who have worked in police or fire departments. His father-in-law was a lieutenant colonel in St. Louis and a member of the department for 35 years, and his brother-in-law is Ron Henderson, a former St. Louis police chief.

"Ron jokingly told me, 'Don't do it, don't do it!' when I asked if he thought I should pursue the job," Isom says. "I seriously have a lot of support and understanding from my family. For me, that's the most invaluable resource I can have." ■■■

JEFF AND STEPHANIE DITTER

The couple that studies together, nurses together

By Linda Tracy

Jeff and Stephanie Ditter are living the dream. No, their dream doesn't involve fancy estates, expensive cars or lavish vacations. The Ditters, who are married with three children, recently earned associate's degrees and became registered nurses – a long-time goal for the couple. And they're now earning bachelor's degrees in nursing at the University of Missouri–St. Louis.

Jeff worked in sales and debt collection for the past 15 years, and Stephanie was a stay-at-home mom in O'Fallon, Mo., to their children Shayna, 13; J.R., 10; and Shelby, 8.

"It was my plan to go back to school once the kids were older," Stephanie, 32, says. "Nursing is pretty much what I've always wanted to do. Actually, I was going through some papers my mom had kept from when I was right out of high school, and I'd even expressed an interest in nursing back then."

Jeff, 43, says he's always had an interest in the field, as well.

"My interest is in science, and nursing is basically a combination of science and helping people," he says. "However, I stumbled into sales several years ago and just stayed on that path until I had the chance to fulfill my dream."

Stephanie was the first to begin working on an associate's degree in nursing at St. Charles (Mo.) Community College. Jeff was quick to follow her lead.

Throughout the pursuit of their degrees, Jeff worked 40 hours a week in debt collection while attending class full time. Stephanie completed a nursing internship while attending school.

"We had a lot of help during those three years from family when it came to babysitting and getting the kids wherever they needed to be," Stephanie says. "Jeff and I would study together at night before bed and that was the extent of our quality time. It was a crazy schedule, but totally worth it to get where we are today."

The Ditters graduated in 2010 and had jobs lined up at two SSM Health Care Hospitals. Stephanie is a nurse in the emergency room at DePaul Health Center in Bridgeton, Mo., and Jeff is a nurse in the telemetry unit at St. Joseph Health Center in St. Charles, Mo.

Following graduation and starting their new jobs, the Ditters began working on their UMSL degrees through the university's online nursing program.



Between chores, school and ever-changing work schedules, Jeff and Stephanie Ditter lead a busy life with their children (from left) Shelby, J.R., Shayna and the family's pooch Chance. (Photo by August Jennewein)

"We decided to attend UMSL because the online nursing program is a perfect fit for us, and the college offers advanced programs including master's and doctoral degrees," Stephanie says.

She plans to earn a master's degree and become a nurse practitioner. Jeff says he's considering becoming a nurse practitioner or nurse anesthetist.

Whatever the future holds for their nursing careers, the couple says that UMSL was the right choice for them.

"We're definitely benefitting from the online nursing program because it's really flexible," Jeff says. "Our lives are a lot more manageable than before, and it gives us hope that we can keep moving toward our career goals without sacrificing time with our kids." ≡

Man in motion
 Martial artist **ALBERTO
 FRIEDMANN**
 studies brain-to-muscle
 communication at UMSL



Alberto Friedmann, who's pursuing a doctoral degree in teaching-learning processes at UMSL, is an eighth-degree black belt grand master in karate. (Photo by August Jennewein)

By Jack Crosby

If there's something Alberto Friedmann knows, it's motion. He knows how to move his body in special ways.

And he has the hardware to prove it. An eighth-degree black belt grand master in karate, he holds 12 gold medals, one silver medal and one bronze medal from the Martial Arts World Championships between 2000 and 2006. He was a bronze medalist at the 18th Maccabiah Games in Israel as part of Team USA.

Friedmann, who grew up in Rhode Island and now lives in Highland, Ill., has practiced martial arts for more than 30 years.

"It's been a lifelong passion," he says. "I pursued it on and off as a child. I moved to Japan and taught English while I was studying classical swordplay."

Among his latest achievements was taking the reins as head coach of the U.S. Martial Arts Team.

"I started as a competitor at the games in Sydney in 2000," he says. "I moved up to team captain, then to helping coach, and finally coach."

In the fall, Friedmann led the team to the World Championships in Las Vegas. Although the U.S. team finished second in the medal count to Canada, Friedmann says he and the team were pleased with the outcome.

"We did very well," he says. "No one who competed came away without a medal. We averaged three medals per person."

Friedmann is retired from active competition and says he's content with coaching.

"I don't think, 'I should get out there,'" he says. "I enjoy watching the team compete. I'm very happy coaching."

Friedmann's study of body motion extends beyond the teaching and practice of martial arts. He's also pursuing a doctoral degree in teaching-learning processes with a focus on kinesiology at the University of Missouri–St. Louis. He's looking at how the brain "talks to our muscles, tells them how to move."

"In the case of stroke victims, how do we get the brain talking to the muscles again?" he asked. "Rather than thinking about, 'How do we repair this?', I want to explore whether this is something that can be re-taught. Can we re-learn how to do this?"

Friedmann says he came to UMSL for the opportunity to work with Kathleen Haywood, professor of teaching and learning and associate dean for graduate education in the College of Education.

"She is just one of the best people around when it comes to motor learning," he says.

Friedmann's interest in motion was inspired by events in his own life. At 21, he was diagnosed with Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome. A connective tissue disorder caused by a defect in the synthesis of collagen, Ehlers-Danlos comes in many varieties. Friedmann says the syndrome affects his muscles, bones and skin.

"I was osteoporotic at 14 and my joints dislocate, my bones break easily and my tendons and ligaments tear easily, so I did what anyone with weak joints and osteoporosis would do and got into full-contact martial arts," he says, smiling.

Friedmann says his condition and his martial arts expertise had led him to develop body movements that protect him from the ravages of his disease.

"I have to be careful in my movements," he says. "I have to keep myself under control. I have to move right, exercise right. If I'm going to do something, I know how I have to do it."

After all, if there's one thing Alberto Friedmann knows, it's motion. ☰



UMSL Alumni Association goes



Left: Deborah Graham (fourth from right), director of alumni relations at UMSL, visits on March 25 with a group of UMSL alumni in Beijing. The alumni are (from left): Peng Zheng, Peng Xiong, Haisheng Wang, Jinjian Shen, (Graham), Dongying Wei, Xinxin Cheng and Yali Wang.

By Jack Crosby

Deborah Tansil Graham, director of alumni and community relations at the University of Missouri–St. Louis, visited with members of the new Chinese Chapter of the UMSL Alumni Association in March.

The new group's headquarters are in Beijing, and the group is led by chapter President Dong-ying Wei, who earned a master's degree in education in 2007 and a doctoral degree in education in 2009.

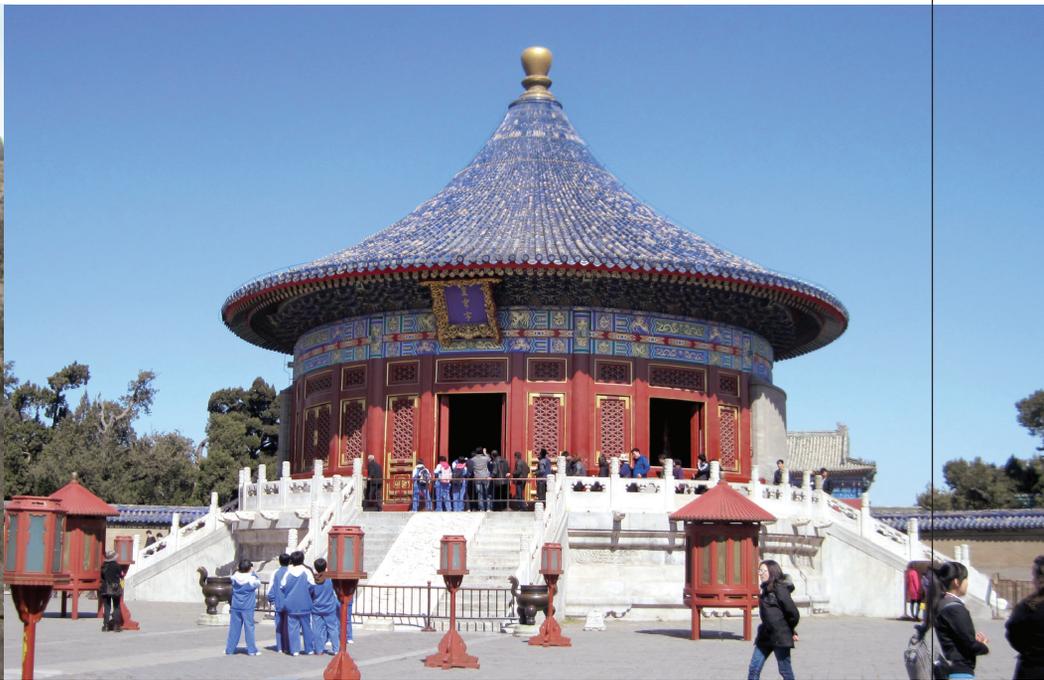
"These UMSL alumni love their alma mater, and they want to find ways to give back to the university," Graham says.

"I had a wonderful stay with them, and we are going to do everything we can to help them stay connected to UMSL."

Graham says she had a whirlwind, seven-day visit. She called on alumni, attended the kick-off meeting of the Chinese Chapter and toured many landmarks, including the Great Wall of China, Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City.

"They had a comprehensive itinerary, and I was on the go the whole time," she says.

Other chapter officers are Vice President Li Li, Secretary Zheng Peng and Treasurer Xiaoguang You. The chapter was chartered Oct. 10 and has 60 members. ≡



to China

Above, left: Deborah Graham (left) and Yufang Gao, a student at Beijing Normal University, visit the Forbidden City in Beijing on March 21. Gao was Graham's guide during her visit to China.

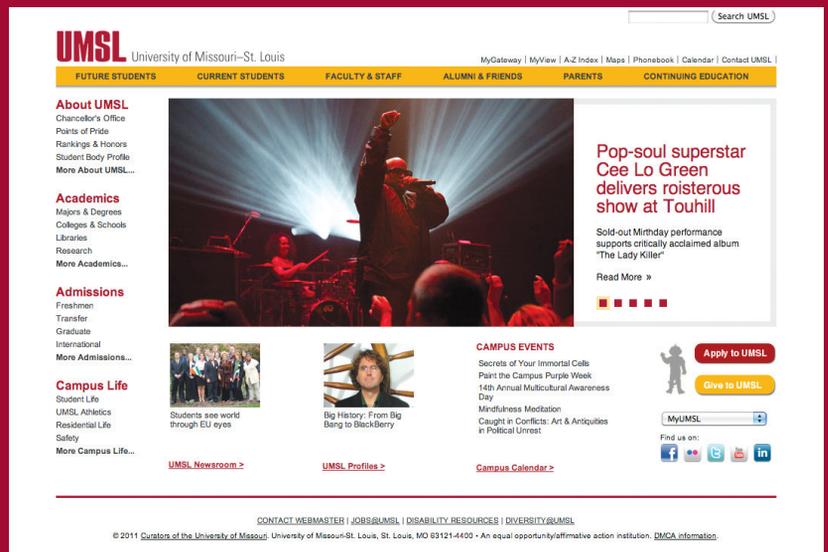
Above, center: With all its branches, The Great Wall of China spans about 5,500 miles.

Above, right: The Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests is the centerpiece of the Temple of Heaven, a complex of Taoist buildings in Beijing.

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Class notes

1968

Wiley Moore, BS chemistry, is a safety pilot at Boeing and lives in Tacoma, Wash.

1971

Mark E. Bretz, BA English, is principal at Bretz Public Relations in Florissant, Mo.

1972

Gerald Grindler, BSBA, is chief executive officer at Smart Card Auditors, Inc. in St. Louis.

Vincent C. Schoemehl Jr., BA history, was selected as one of the St. Louis Business Journal's "2011 Most Influential St. Louisans." He's president and chief executive officer of Grand Center, Inc. and former mayor of St. Louis.

1973

Charles Jones, BS physics, is a GED instructor at Parkway Area Adult Education and Literacy in St. Louis.

1974

David W. Froesel Jr., BSBA, is executive vice president, chief financial officer and treasurer of BioScrip, which is based in Elmsford, N.Y.

Kathleen T. Osborn, MEd and BS education 1970, was selected as one of the St. Louis Business Journal's "2011 Most Influential St. Louisans." She's executive director of the Regional Business Council in St. Louis.

1976

Mike Jones, BS education, was appointed by Missouri Governor Jay Nixon to serve on the Missouri Board of Education.

Thomas J. Minogue, BA economics, was selected as one of the St. Louis Business Journal's "2011 Most Influential St. Louisans." He's a partner at Thompson Coburn LLP in St. Louis.

Deborah J. Patterson, MA political science, was selected as one of the St. Louis Business Journal's "2011 Most Influential St. Louisans." She's president of the Monsanto Fund in St. Louis.

Joseph T. Porter, BSBA, is vice chair of the General Corporate Practice Group of national law firm Polsinelli Shughart PC.



Timothy C. Richards, BS administration of justice, is a former St. Louis police officer. He wrote the book "Crooks Kill, Cops Lie" (Lulu, 2010).

Howard Rosenthal, MEd and BA psychology 1974, is a professor and program coordinator of Human Services and Addictions Study at St. Louis Community College-Florissant Valley and the editor of "Favorite Counseling and Therapy Homework Assignments" (Routledge, 2010).

1979

Hubert H. Hoosman Jr., BS administration of justice, was selected as one of the St. Louis Business Journal's "2011 Most Influential St. Louisans." He's president and chief executive officer of Vantage Credit Union in Bridgeton, Mo.

1980

Patricia Barton, MA history, BA chemistry 1977 and BA history 1977, volunteers at the Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site in Collinsville, Ill., and was the 2010 Ladies Senior Champion at Glen Echo Country Club in north St. Louis County.

Thomas Deem, BSBA, is director of environmental health and safety at Boeing in North Charleston, S.C.

1981

John Cain, MPPA, is a military trainer with Northrop Grumman at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

1982

Shailendra Kumar, PhD chemistry, is academic coordinator of the Chemistry Program and professor of organic chemistry at Governors State University in University Park, Ill.

George Paz, BSBA, was selected as one of the St. Louis Business Journal's "2011 Most Influential St. Louisans." He's chairman, president and chief executive officer of Express Scripts in St. Louis.

Rev. Donna C. Pulillo, BSN, is executive director of Deaconess Foundation in St. Louis.

Tom Reinsel, BS chemistry, is an assistant professor in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Sandra A. Van Trease, BSBA, was selected as one of the St. Louis Business Journal's "2011 Most Influential St. Louisans." She's group president of BJC HealthCare in St. Louis.

1985

John M. Nations, BS public administration, was selected as one of the St. Louis Business Journal's "2011 Most Influential St. Louisans." He's president and chief executive officer of Metro in St. Louis.

Karen M. Zelle, BA psychology, is an associate lawyer at the St. Louis office of Polsinelli Shughart PC.

1989

Barbara Bentrup, BSBA, is chief financial officer at Delta Dental of Missouri.

James Huhn, MBA, is network vice president of marketing and communications at SSM Health Care-St. Louis.

1993

Kim Gorman, BA chemistry, is the president of Paternity Testing Corporation in Columbia, Mo.

Michael McDonald, BA English, is director of constituent relations at Baker University in Baldwin City, Kan.

1994

Robert M. Young, BSBA, is a senior manager in the tax department at Schowalter & Jabouri, P.C. in Sunset Hills, Mo.

1995

Greg Mebruer, MEd, is a licensed professional counselor with Core Rehab Services, Inc. in Shrewsbury, Mo.

1996

Anene Tressler-Hauschultz, MA English, is the owner of Blackbird Creative, which specializes in corporate writing. She wrote her first novel "Dancing with Gravity" (Blank Slate Press, 2011).

1997

Thomas Meuser, PhD psychology and MA psychology 1992, is an associate professor of social work at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. He was awarded tenure this year.

LeDora Scales, BSN, works at Barnes-Jewish Hospital in St. Louis.

Dawn Shelton-Miller, BA communication, is director of consulting for fund development and mission advancement services at Zielinski Companies in St. Louis.

1998

Tammy Pavelec, PhD chemistry and MS chemistry 1995, is a professor of chemistry at Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Mo.

1999

Michael S. Kelley, BA political science, was selected as one of the St. Louis Business Journal's "2011 Most Influential St. Louisans." He's president of Kelley Group, Inc. in St. Louis.

Sandra Tricamo, BGS, is a fitness consultant at the Boeing Leadership Center in Florissant, Mo.

2000

Ricardo Delgado, PhD chemistry, is an associate professor and chair of the Department of Chemistry at Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Mo.

Matthew Lanham, BA chemistry, is a territory sales manager at Spectrum Chemical in St. Louis.

2001

Alicia Schlehber, MEd, is director of classified personnel with the Escondido (Calif.) School District.

2002

Les E. Bland, MA sociology, is an analyst for the U.S. Department of State in Washington.

Leo A. Ganahl, BS criminology and criminal justice, was named Ferguson-Florissant (Mo.) School District's 2011 Teacher of the Year.

2003

Evelyn N. Bailey, BS engineering, was profiled by The St. Louis American in October. She's the youngest female engineering manager at Boeing.

Mario Gruden, BS chemistry, is inventory manager at Monsanto in St. Louis.

Lyrice Holmes, BA music education, is an international harpist and singer. She released a music video for her single "Attention" in February. She's also a distinguished educator and founder of the first harp program at the elementary level in the state of Tennessee.

2004

Erica Douglas, BSW, is a social worker with Ackert Park Skilled Care Community in University City, Mo.

Shirley J. Jenkins, BS engineering, was selected as 2011 Test and Evaluation Engineer of the Year at Boeing.



Kelley Maher, BA communication, is account manager for AHM Financial Group in St. Louis.

Richard Muma, PhD education, is associate provost for quality assurance and accountability at Wichita State University in Kansas.

2005

Jessica Bueler, BSBA, is the owner of HSB Tobacconist in University City, Mo. She was elected president of the Loop Special Business District in February.



Lawrence "Butch" Gagnon, BSBA, is co-owner of Pacific Pest Control, Inc. in Orange County, Calif.

Lori Gwyn, PhD chemistry and MS chemistry 2003, is director of the office of sponsored programs at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford.

Maria (Curtis) Kerford, BA English, is director of community outreach and philanthropy at Solutia in St. Louis.

2006

Chelli McCurdy, BS criminology and criminal justice, is a trust officer at Edward Jones Trust Company in St. Louis.

Timothy Turner, BSBA, is lead network engineer-sales support with AT&T Mobility in St. Louis.

2007

Nathan Birhanu, BS chemistry, teaches math and science at Mantetse Secondary School in Lesotho, a small country encompassed by South Africa, for the Peace Corps.

Kristin Grupas, MBA, is assistant director of customer education at Scottrade in St. Louis. She oversees the development processes for educational resources.

Amy Haile, BS criminology and criminal justice, is a probation and parole officer for the Missouri Department of Corrections in Hillsboro, Mo.

Deborah L. Marshall, BA English, is a self-employed journalist working out of Florissant, Mo. She will chair the 2011 Missouri Writers' Guild Conference.

Ryan Montgomery, BA communication, is a sales and marketing manager at Aerofil Technology, Inc., a custom packaging, liquid and aerosol-filling resource in Sullivan, Mo.

Kim Neumann Rumpsa, BS engineering, is assistant engineer with the Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District.

Eno Veshi, MBA, is a performance analyst with Wells Fargo Advisors in St. Louis.

2008

Tanya McCaine, MEd and BA communication 2004, is a legal receptionist at Timothy F. Devereux, LLC in Clayton, Mo.

Justin Neiner, BSBA, is account manager at Document & Network Technologies, Inc. in Fenton, Mo.

Elizabeth Schelp, MA accounting, is senior auditor at Abeles and Hoffman, PC in St. Louis.

2009

Tiawana Thompson, BLS, is a data analyst in the department of oncology at Barnes-Jewish Hospital.

2010

Zak Klump, BSBA, is a financial representative at Northwestern Mutual Financial Network in St. Louis.

Anita Stevens-Watkins, MA music, serves as the director of music ministries at New Sunny Mount Missionary Baptist Church in St. Louis.



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