

UMSL

MAGAZINE

FALL 2016

Women in Science

3 departments, 3 women chairs





Powder paint dusts the air and bodies as students get colorfully messy on the Provincial House front lawn during Paint-A-Palooza. The annual Weeks of Welcome event, hosted by the Pierre Laclède Honors College Student Association, is one of many firsts for incoming and returning students to the University of Missouri–St. Louis. See page 14.



ON THE COVER

The gold model of a molecule has the word "women" artistically added to its orbs as a representation of the integration of women and science at UMSL.

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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 95,000 and the magazine is released twice a year.



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Leading the lab Women are not only in the sciences, they're leading them at UMSL. Meet the women chairs of the departments of biology, chemistry and biochemistry, and physics and astronomy.

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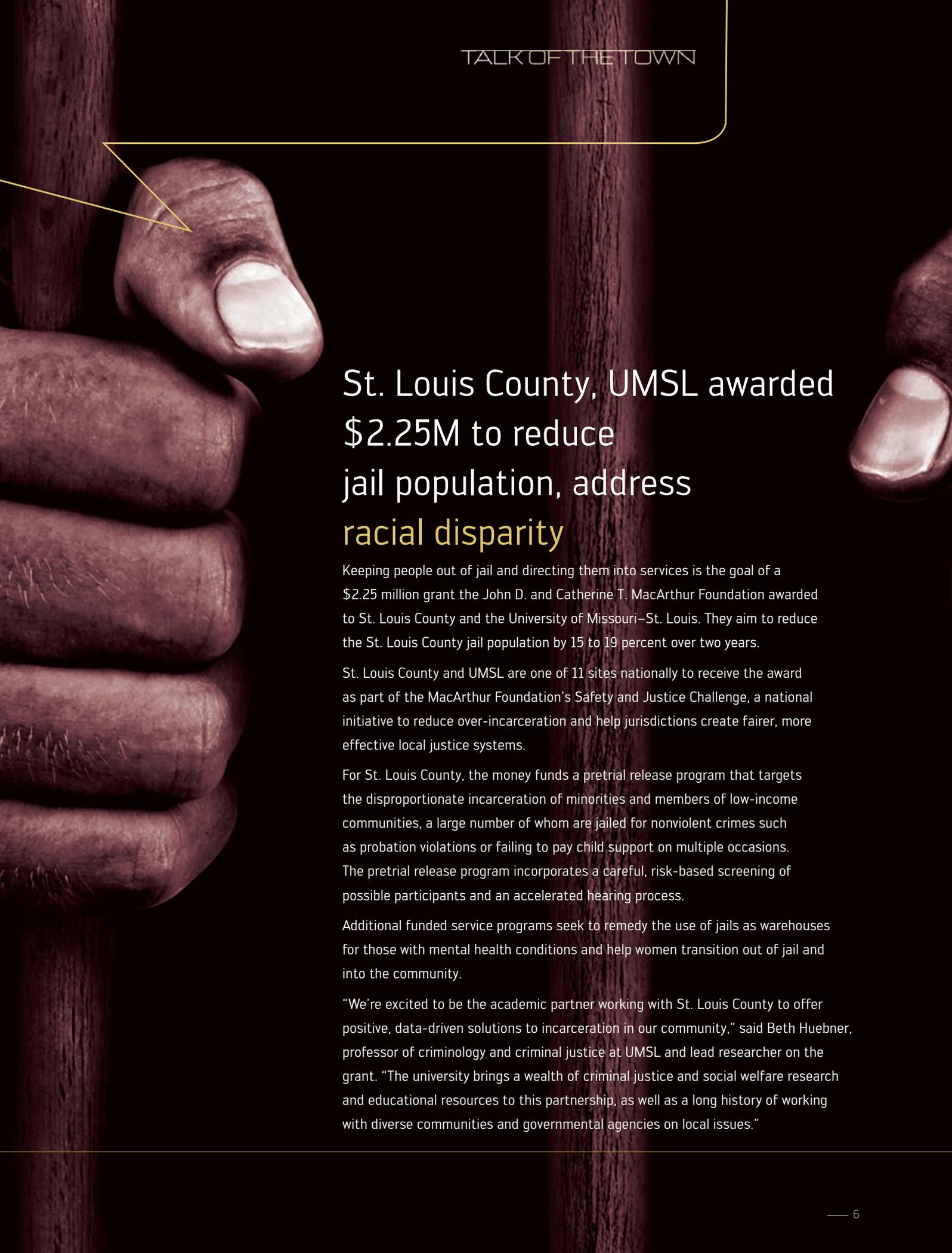
New kind of educator

The College of Education's new Teach in 12 program turns industry professionals like Jessica Ponder into teachers within 12 months.

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Five million, oh my!

Stan and Terry Freerks are the first alumni to reach the \$5 million giving milestone. Their generous gifts are brightening student futures and more at UMSL.



St. Louis County, UMSL awarded \$2.25M to reduce jail population, address racial disparity

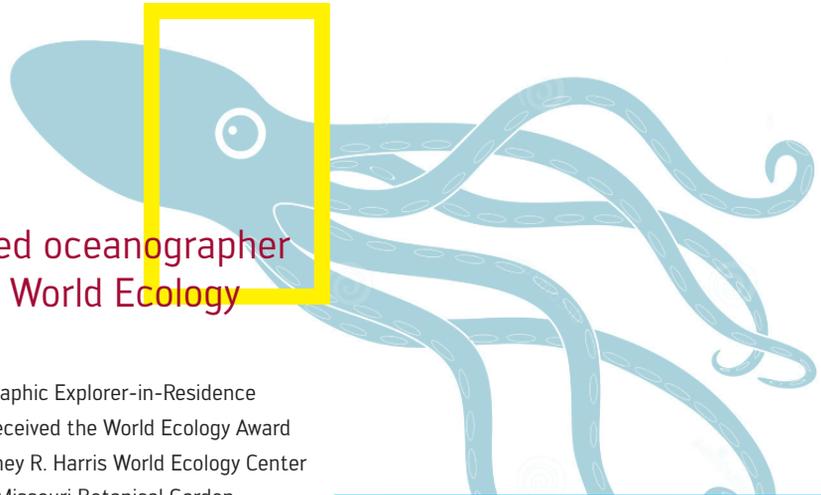
Keeping people out of jail and directing them into services is the goal of a \$2.25 million grant the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation awarded to St. Louis County and the University of Missouri–St. Louis. They aim to reduce the St. Louis County jail population by 15 to 19 percent over two years.

St. Louis County and UMSL are one of 11 sites nationally to receive the award as part of the MacArthur Foundation's Safety and Justice Challenge, a national initiative to reduce over-incarceration and help jurisdictions create fairer, more effective local justice systems.

For St. Louis County, the money funds a pretrial release program that targets the disproportionate incarceration of minorities and members of low-income communities, a large number of whom are jailed for nonviolent crimes such as probation violations or failing to pay child support on multiple occasions. The pretrial release program incorporates a careful, risk-based screening of possible participants and an accelerated hearing process.

Additional funded service programs seek to remedy the use of jails as warehouses for those with mental health conditions and help women transition out of jail and into the community.

"We're excited to be the academic partner working with St. Louis County to offer positive, data-driven solutions to incarceration in our community," said Beth Huebner, professor of criminology and criminal justice at UMSL and lead researcher on the grant. "The university brings a wealth of criminal justice and social welfare research and educational resources to this partnership, as well as a long history of working with diverse communities and governmental agencies on local issues."



Renowned oceanographer receives World Ecology Award

National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence **Sylvia Earle** received the World Ecology Award from the Whitney R. Harris World Ecology Center Oct. 16 at the Missouri Botanical Garden.

Called “Her Deepness” by The New York Times and “Hero for the Planet” by TIME magazine, 81-year-old Earle continues to dive for segments shown on the National Geographic channel. During her acceptance of the award, Earle talked about her decades-long adventures and research to preserve global marine ecosystems and thanked the audience for their support in preserving Earth’s environment.

The World Ecology Award is presented to individuals who have made significant contributions to the protection of the global environment and to a better understanding of the balance between human habitation and Earth’s biodiversity. Past recipients include John Denver, Jacques Cousteau, Jane Goodall and Harrison Ford.

The Harris World Ecology Center is a premier financial supporter of education and research ecology and biodiversity conservation efforts at the University of Missouri–St. Louis, Missouri Botanical Garden and Saint Louis Zoo. Housed at UMSL, the center underwrites activities of this unique partnership trio in myriad ways, including scholarships and public awareness projects.



— Sylvia Earle —



7 freshmen set to make most of UMSL Bridge Program Express Scripts scholarships

UMSL region's first and only NSA, DHS designated 'Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education'

The National Security Agency and the Department of Homeland Security have designated the University of Missouri–St. Louis a Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education.

UMSL is currently the only institution in the St. Louis region and only one of two institutions in Missouri to hold this rare and prestigious distinction. UMSL's Cybersecurity Program offers undergraduate and graduate certificates as well as an undergraduate minor to students.

"The NSA/DHS accreditation is the gold standard for the quality of a cybersecurity program and qualifies our students for cybersecurity positions at intelligence agencies and the military," UMSL Chancellor Tom George said.

The CAE-CDE designation is valid for five academic years, after which UMSL must successfully reapply in order to retain it.

NSA and DHS jointly sponsor the CAE-CDE program, which aims to reduce vulnerability in the national information infrastructure by promoting higher education and research in cyber defense and producing professionals with cyber defense expertise for the nation.



They may still be teenagers, but they're also future engineers, medical professionals, scientists and anthropologists. Partway through their first semester of college at the University of Missouri–St. Louis, they are a determined group of incoming students benefitting from a major investment announced by Express Scripts last fall.

Faith Ferguson, Ahriel Foreman, Jenita Larry, Barry Dorsey, Kalynn Clinton, Sarah Staples and Danielle Fedrick comprise the first cohort of UMSL Bridge Program Express Scripts Scholars.

"Each of this year's recipients represent the opportunities that are afforded to youth when we invest in their education and equip them with the necessary support services that ultimately lead to degree completion," said Natissia Small, assistant dean of students and director of Bridge, UMSL's flagship precollegiate program.

The seven UMSL freshmen are recipients of up to \$15,000 per year going toward tuition, student fees, a laptop, textbooks and a professional mentor from the university's corporate neighbor, whose \$2.5 million commitment to UMSL aims to help local youth thrive. The support bolsters and expands the Bridge Program's Saturday Academy, now annually benefitting 700 local high school students in preparation for college.

The scholarship program focuses on students from north St. Louis County school districts. Five additional recipients will be added each year through 2021.

By Ron Austin

Jacqueline Thompson

Actor and director
finds empowerment on stage
fosters healing in audiences

"What makes a good performance is heart and vulnerability," says Jacqueline Thompson, assistant professor of theater at the University of Missouri–St. Louis.

Combining artistic integrity and her passion for activism, the actor and director describes herself as an "artist."

She believes the best productions are developed with a clear message in mind. Following this conviction, she has acted in local productions of "Insidious," "Gee's Bend," "A Kid Like Jake," "Afflicted" and "Old Hearts Fresh." And as a director, she has collaborated with local and national organizations including the Theatre of the Oppressed, The Telling Project and Shakespeare Festival St. Louis to create performances that engage and heal communities.

Why is it important that a play carry a message and deeper meaning?

Singing and dancing is great, but I have to take some type of revelation from a production. "In the Blood," for example, explores classism and the exploitation of people in poverty to great effect. It examines societal measures and shows that sometimes the obvious support system fails. And it makes you think of how you can hold social workers, doctors and priests accountable to ethical standards.

What was the first acting role that personally moved you?

It was my first time being in the production "For Colored Girls." I was a student at Clark Atlanta University, coming into my own sense of womanhood. I played "Lady in Brown," and seeing my experiences being mirrored back at me through the play was empowering. It gave me a voice when I was still searching for my own and the courage to articulate what I needed to say.

Tell me about one of your recent productions with a huge community impact.

Last year I directed Shakespeare in the Street in the Old North St. Louis neighborhood. It was probably one of the most important theater productions I've done in a while. North St. Louis gets a bad rap, and for people looking from the outside in, there's fear going past the Delmar Divide. But the community I worked with was remarkably connected. During the performances, you'd look around and see people from the neighborhood crying and hugging each other. They were so overwhelmed with joy to see themselves celebrated on stage. They were able to tell the rest of St. Louis "Hey, this is who we are." The play ran for three days, and about 1,700 people came out. You couldn't ask for a better turnout. ☰





Ready. Set. Open!

Two new buildings on campus

2 stories,
48,000 square feet

32 eye exam
and treatment
rooms

10 primary
health-care
treatment rooms

4,500 visits
projected
for the year

210 parking
spaces

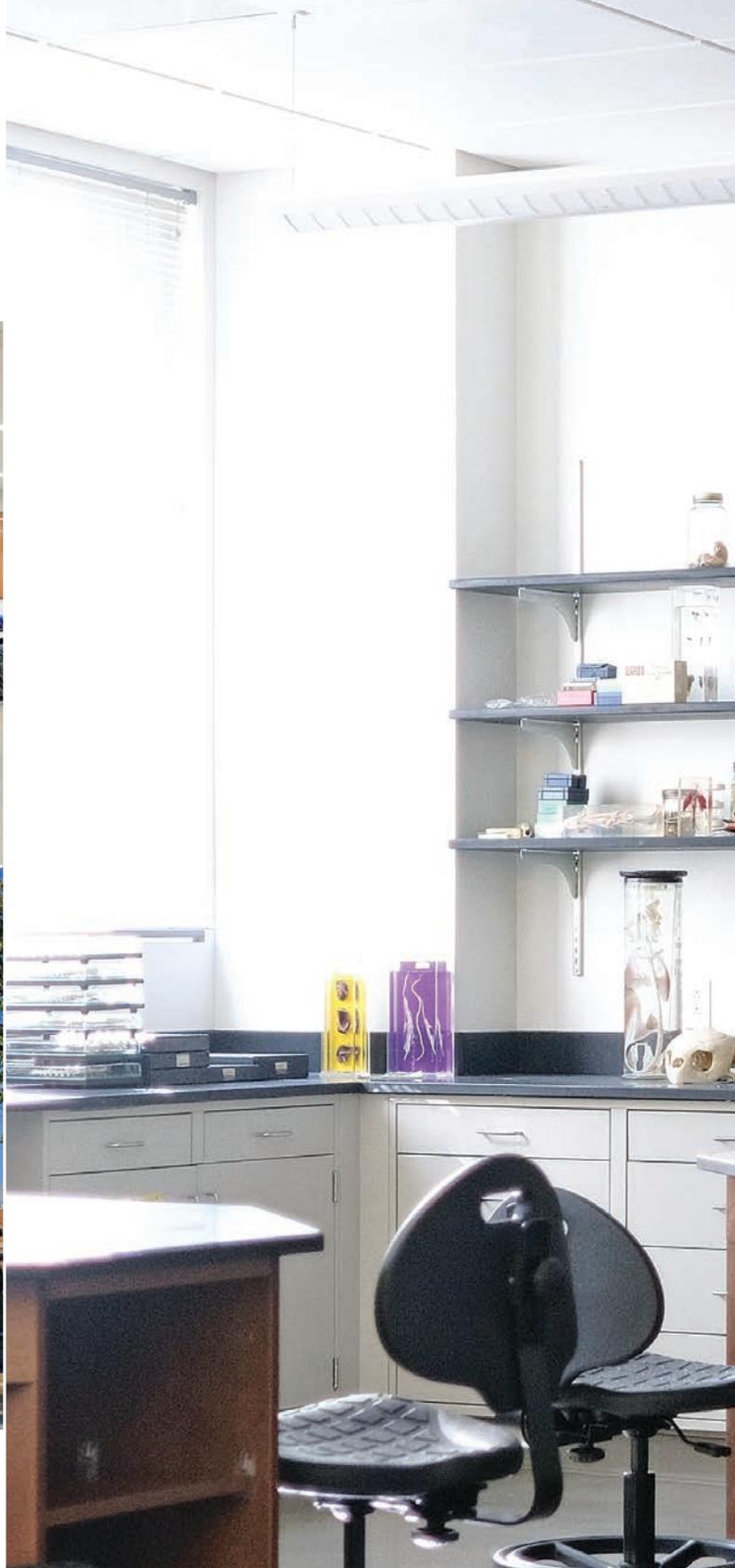
Easy access
to UMSL
South MetroLink
station

LEED (Leadership
in Energy and
Environmental
Design) certified

4 service areas:
Adult eye care
Pediatric eye care
Contact lens eye care
Primary health care



A longtime dream of the College of Optometry, the **Patient Care Center** now stands tall next to Natural Bridge Road on the University of Missouri–St. Louis’ South Campus. With its signature “eye” and sleek mirrored windows, natural light floods the center, which provides a clinical education and research facility for the college and a comprehensive eye care center for the community. The academic side of the college will remain in Marillac Hall, just south of the new PCC. Optometry students, who overwhelmingly voted in favor of shouldering a student-fee increase to help pay for the center, along with reallocations in the college and campus funded the \$17 million building, designed by HOK. St. Louis-based ICS Construction Services served as the general contractor.



The new **Science Learning Building** on North Campus opened its doors this fall to University of Missouri–St. Louis students, providing them and their instructors brand new teaching laboratories full of the latest technology and equipment. Pictured above is a general biology lab on the fourth floor of the SLB. A solarium area leading to Town Center (pictured top left) connects the new \$32 million, university-funded building extension to Benton and Stadler halls, forming the science complex. Benton and Stadler will continue to house classrooms and offices. Architects of the SLB were Christner Inc. of St. Louis. K&S Associates of St. Louis was the general contractor.



4 stories,
75,000 square feet

18 new
teaching
laboratories

7 new study
areas, including
Town Center

1 new
Simply to Go Café
by Sodexo

120 parking
spaces and
8 two-wheeler
spaces

7 additional rooms
for instruments, glass-
ware and chemicals,
including a darkroom
and a cold room

U.S. Green Building
Council and LEED
(Leadership in Energy
and Environmental
Design) certified



FIRST

my

HELLO
My name is

“I immediately felt as if I mattered on campus.”

- Sherell Adams

IMPRESSIONS

Several new students reflect
on their earliest days at UMSL

By Evie Hemphill

Transfer student Sherell Adams, a business administration major, hangs out with a friend on the giant red bean bags in the Office of Student Involvement in between classes.

Right: Kendall Buchman, a business administration major and Triton volleyball player, poses in her freshly decorated Mansion Hill apartment, which she shares with a fellow student-athlete.

Below: Adis Handanovic (center), an information systems major and native Bosnian, studies with friends in the dining area of the Millennium Student Center on campus.



A

dis Handanovic had just parked his car near Oak Hall one summer afternoon and was stepping out of the vehicle when he heard an unfamiliar voice shouting his name.

From across the lawn on the University of Missouri–St. Louis' South Campus, upperclassman Kenny Kolesa anticipated Handanovic's arrival and didn't waste a second making the incoming freshman feel welcome.

"Kenny was one of my orientation leaders during that overnight program, and he really helped me ease into school here," remembers Handanovic, now partway through his first semester at UMSL. "He had asked me for my number that weekend, and then he texted me a few days before I moved in this fall, inviting me up to his fraternity's house the night of Move-In Day."

Handanovic, who was born in Bosnia, was quickly impressed with the Sigma Tau Gamma guys.

"They genuinely care for you and everyone else around them," says the information systems major. "They love to help out any way they can to make this a better place for everyone, and I admire that about them."

Such genuine care among the UMSL campus community keeps coming up in conversation with Handanovic and others new to the university. From initial campus visits to the first days of class, many are pleased to find approachable people and a sense of comfort so early on.

For freshman volleyball setter Kendall Buchman, that welcoming experience started, as it did for Handanovic, with those she met through new student orientation over the summer.

"The student leaders and employees created a warm, friendly and fun environment, and I couldn't wait for my college experience to begin," says Buchman, who hails from a town north of Chicago. Her new teammates also made an impact, quickly drawing Buchman and fellow freshmen into the fold as the new players arrived at UMSL.





"We do a lot of things together, but one that really has made me feel at home is having team dinner," says Buchman, who is majoring in business administration and shares a Mansion Hill apartment with another student-athlete. "Being able to be with the team outside of a school or volleyball setting just adds to the excitement and helps to make me comfortable being away from home."

The natural and built environments that make up campus contribute to positive beginnings as well. Buchman is relishing her scenic walks to class, while Handanovic enjoys looking out over campus from the elevated running track inside the Recreation and Wellness Center.

"It's just beautiful," he says. "It never gets old."

The shady Quad, with its canopy of trees stretching over a cluster of tables ideal for study and refreshment, is fast becoming another of Handanovic's go-to places.

"I have favorite spots all over campus," adds Sherell Adams, who transferred to UMSL a year ago. "But when the weather starts to get cold, you can find me at the Fireside Lounge near the fireplace."

She can also be found spreading warmth all across campus – assisting fellow Mansion Hill residents like Buchman, studying with accounting classmates and helping new Tritons feel right at home.

Watching her confidently lead the traditional Serendipity Sendoff procession for new students this fall, you wouldn't suspect that her own first few days on campus were a struggle.

"I was having a few problems adjusting to the new housing and was getting ready to head over to the Triton Store to get my books," Adams recalls of one pivotal day. "Somehow I missed the shuttle, and I felt as though I was waiting forever for the next one. I was already frustrated and decided to walk to the student center. But by the time I arrived, the bookstore had closed."

At that point Adams sat down in the middle of the Millennium Student Center, overwhelmed and discouraged, and burst into tears. Moments later, Assistant Dean of Students Miriam Rocchia walked by and asked her what was wrong.

"I explained everything, and she welcomed me into her office and explained how the shuttles work faster in the fall than the summer, and she showed me the app that I could use to track them," Adams says. "She encouraged me to get involved on campus and asked me to stop by anytime to discuss how things were going. I immediately felt as if I mattered on campus."

It's those small yet enormous moments that can mean so much, Adams says.

"In return for the kindness that I have received, I try to be that person for others. We have all had those days where we don't know how things will work out, but then someone comes along and assures you it will."

Both Buchman and Handanovic are open about experiencing some anxiety and a wide range of feelings as freshmen at UMSL. Such emotions are common and normal during the college transition. But they're still difficult to encounter.

The day after moving into Oak Hall and meeting a lot of great, new friends, Handanovic remembers feeling very alone.

"I don't know what it was, but everything just hit me all at once, and it was very tough," he says. "All of my closest friends from high school went to different schools, and I knew nobody."

"I was with my parents getting food that day. It happened right when they dropped me off in front of Oak – I just totally broke down in front of them, because I was actually going to be away from them, too. I'll never forget how understanding they were, and they were crying, too. It was a very emotional day, but things got much better since then."

Adams sees the flurry of campus activities, particularly near the start of each semester, as something more than simply a bunch of stuff to do. She points to the most recent Triton Take-Off Weekend, just before the first week of class, as an example of fun-filled, purposeful events designed to help students thrive.

This year, the weekend involved a scavenger hunt. As organizers explained the plan to a large crowd of new students, Adams saw looks of apprehension on some faces.

"We had to stop off at three different locations all over St. Louis and capture photos of certain attractions using MetroLink," she says. "Many of the students who were not from St. Louis looked confused or even worried at first. But then everyone was organized into teams with leaders who were prepared to guide them on the way, and by the time the hunt concluded, most everyone was smiling and ready to make plans for the next place they wanted to visit."

For Buchman, another activity that helped ease the transition, and particularly the anticipation of classes, was spending time with the other freshman volleyball players while setting up their living spaces.

"We did a lot of shopping and decorating, which kept us busy," Buchman says. "It really was a cool experience being able to decorate our own apartments at 18 years old."

And since classes got underway, Buchman has actually been breathing easier.

"The teachers seem very open and approachable, which helped calm my nerves about college," she says. "My favorite class so far is psychology, with Dr. [Jennifer] Siciliani. The way she teaches and interacts with the class makes it very interesting and makes me look forward to attending." ≡

*Pivoting careers
and talent where
they're needed –
in the classroom*

**New UMSL education
program makes teachers out
of industry professionals
in 12 months**

By Ron Austin

Teach in 12

After completing a psychology degree at the University of Missouri–St. Louis in 2011, Jessica Ponder, like many new graduates, wasn't certain of her next step – but that all changed when her son was born.

"He's the reason I decided to go back to school and pursue teaching," she says. "He was born with Down Syndrome. I felt worried and daunted at first. But then the teachers and therapists really helped me understand some of the things he needs to progress faster. Now I want to give back and help other kids and parents."

Fulfilling her desire to nurture the development of early childhood and special needs learners, Ponder is completing her teaching practicum for the College of Education's new Teach in 12 program.

Launched last spring, the program provides students who hold bachelor's degrees an accelerated path to Missouri teaching certification. In the span of 12 months, participants complete rigorous course work and serve in schools across the greater St. Louis region.

Ann Taylor, interim dean of the College of Education, sees the program as an opportunity to help aspiring educators smoothly transition into teaching careers while also placing instructors with specialized skill sets into underserved areas.

"My colleagues and I know that schools – especially those in high-need areas – are always seeking teachers, particularly in the areas of science, mathematics, special education and languages," Taylor says. "We also knew that the population of undergraduates was declining, so in 2014 we redesigned our existing graduate level program to meet the needs of today's working professionals."

Accountants, mechanical engineers and even geologists have entered the program with an eye toward using their professional backgrounds to inspire students in the classroom, and Ponder, a former store manager, is no exception. Informed by her studies in psychology, Ponder brings a passion for people and a talent for thoughtful observation to the children at Carver Elementary in St. Louis.

"Teaching requires a lot of listening to what the kids need and trying to figure out their specific learning styles and where they're at academically and behaviorally," Ponder says. "You're always going to have a few children who struggle for the first few weeks of a term, but when they start to get it and understand what is expected of them, it's great. I love being able to say, 'Awesome, you did it!' And it's wonderful to see them excited about their progress too."

Nancy Singer, chair of the Department of Educator Preparation, Innovation and Research at UMSL, believes that Ponder's self-determination and proven ability to reach students exemplifies why Teach in 12 will help solve local teacher shortages.

"Schools lose good teachers due to burnout during the first few years. But instructors with a stronger professional background or personal motivation are more likely to have fruitful careers," Singer says. "When designing the Teach in 12 program, we thought of folks who had opted not to teach when they were undergraduates yet had the disposition and knowledge base to be very successful in a K-12 classroom."

Singer and Taylor agree that the program's commitment to preparing educators for sustained success is what attracted a strong pool of applicants like Ponder. The College of Education welcomed more than 50 students into the first Teach in 12 cohort. An additional 85 started this fall, with more incoming students anticipated in the spring.

Beyond accommodating participants with online courses and streamlined completion requirements, the Teach in 12 program will soon expand its offerings by partnering with St. Louis Public Schools to give participants the opportunity to become literacy interventionists, who focus on teaching and improving reading skills.

More than halfway through the program, Ponder intends to take advantage of every chance to grow into her new role as an educator. She hopes to make a difference in the lives of children, especially her son's.

"I always get great notes and progress reports about things that he is doing at school," Ponder says. "Once his teacher told me about how he soothes the other students when they throw tantrums. He has really learned a lot of social skills and empathy at school. And I can't describe how great that is to see." ≡



Jessica Ponder encourages young learners at Carver Elementary School in St. Louis to practice writing on their whiteboards as part of her teaching practicum for the new Teach in 12 program at UMSL. She's in her final months of the 12-month Missouri teaching certification program.



WENDY OLIVAS

“Giving greater prominence to strong role models is not just the right thing to do, but the smart thing to do.”

— President Barack Obama



WOMEN

IN SCIENCE

Three science departments, three women chairs

By Marisol Ramirez

Role models. It's a recurring theme in President Barack Obama's 2013 report on "Women and Girls in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math."

"Giving greater prominence to strong role models is not just the right thing to do, but the smart thing to do," the report says of addressing the low percentage of women in STEM fields – just 24 percent in 2009.

Faculty at the University of Missouri–St. Louis are leading by example. For the first time in the history of the university, all three science departments have women chairs – **Cynthia Dupureur** for chemistry and biochemistry, **Erika Gibb** for physics and astronomy, and **Wendy Olivas** for biology.

The odds of that happening aren't high, according to the most recent research. The 2010 survey "A National Analysis of Diversity in Science and Engineering Faculties at Research Universities" by University of Oklahoma Professor Donna Nelson presents startlingly low numbers of women STEM faculty nationally. The data from the top 100 research universities shows women made up only 13.7 percent of faculty in chemistry, 9.5 percent in physics, 15.8 percent in astronomy and 24.8 percent in biology. Many of those positions weren't tenure-track either, greatly reducing the chance for promotion to chair.

WENDY OLIVAS

Chair and Associate Professor
of Biology

BS chemistry,
Nebraska Wesleyan University

PhD biochemistry
and molecular biology,
University of Nebraska Medical Center

She's a Midwest woman and loves it here.

Garage sale microscope: Olivas' parents bought her a real microscope at a garage sale when she was a girl. She would play with a little chemistry set and concoct solutions. "I'd make my own slides and find things outside and put them in there."

Chemist and biologist. She's interested in the biological application of chemistry.

"Little machines." Olivas does RNA research, looking at how lifespans of RNA molecules regulate protein levels. "Proteins are really all the little machines that make your cells run. Producing too little or too much protein has implications for diseases such as Parkinson's and cancer."

Big on family: She and her husband have two children. "I think it's important for younger women to hear that research, teaching and family can be done. You have to make choices, and it's all about balance."

"Having three women department chairs in our sciences is a milestone UMSL is proud to achieve," Chancellor Tom George says. "Not only is it a testament to the university's diversity across campus, but it points to the opportunities UMSL affords women who want to study, research and teach in STEM disciplines."

For Olivas, UMSL's welcoming environment for women played a large role in her choosing to accept a position in the biology department in 2000. She had other offers but declined when she sensed she might be the token female.

"I saw that there were many women faculty members here and that they were in leadership roles," says Olivas, who noted that a woman, Blanche M. Touhill, was chancellor of UMSL at the time and that Des Lee Professor of Zoological Studies Patricia Parker has twice been biology chair. "We've had this record of women in leadership positions, so it's been made easier to advance because it's not odd to have women in these roles. Go around our colleges, and many deans and chairs are women."

In fact, the three chairs don't feel that being a woman had much, if anything at all, to do with their advancement.

"When it came time to fill the chemistry chair position, my colleagues asked, 'Who can do the job?'" Dupureur says. "I don't get the sense that they were really wrapped up in gender. It wasn't important. The important stuff was how do we lead the department."

A woman getting a job or raise based on skill and merit – not so shocking at UMSL. But more important for the three chairs is the influence they have on their students and the hope they represent for young women interested in STEM.

"I remember I was frequently the only girl in the advanced science and math classes in high school," Gibb says. "After that, it just became the norm. We still lose a lot of girls at that middle-school age. They start dropping out of sciences because they seem to think they're not good at it or that it's hard. I think that's very limiting. It's important for girls to be interested in everything but especially important for them to be interested in science fields that, for whatever reason, they feel pushed out of."

The Nelson Diversity Surveys show that national efforts to boost gender equality in STEM education are paying off. In 2005, women at the top 100 universities made up 51.7 percent of conferred bachelor's degrees in chemistry, 42.4 percent in astronomy, 21.2 percent in physics and 62.2 percent in biology. So the education pipeline is full, but it doesn't yet seem to translate into equal representation in faculty or field professionals.



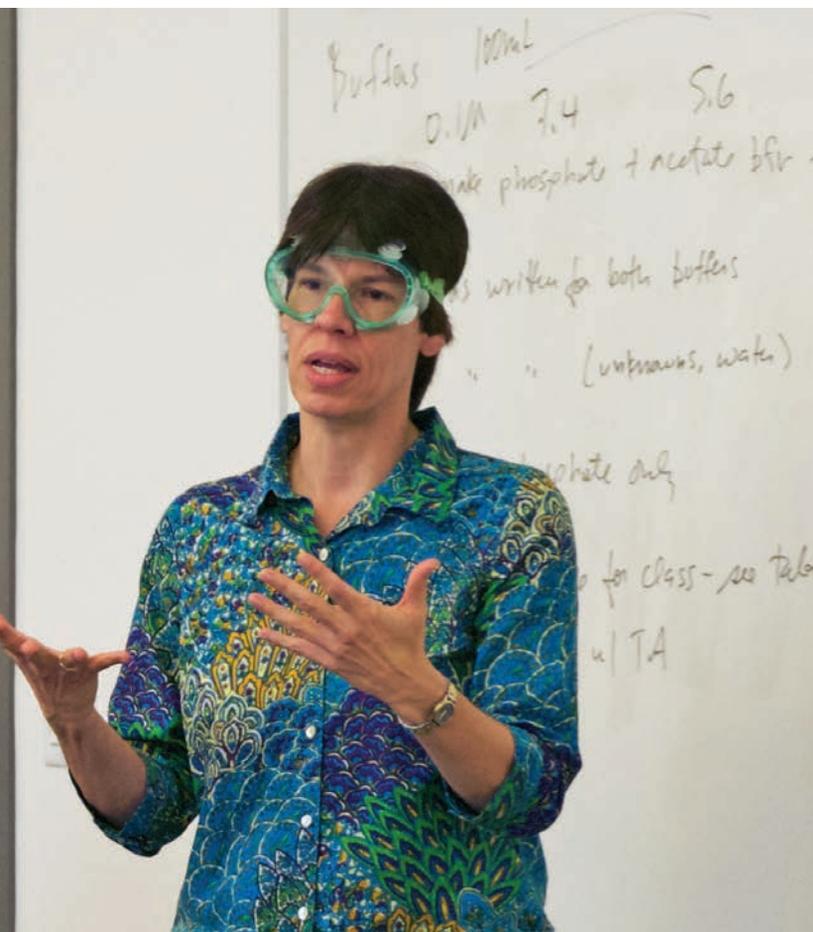
Just how did Gibb and her fellow science chairs make it? They all give versions of the same answer – stubbornness to persist because of pure love and curiosity for the science. Gibb also notes that it takes awhile to see results from diversification efforts.

“Two of the last three tenure-track hires, including myself, were women in the department,” she says. “Everybody prior had been here 20 years already and fewer women were in science back then. I think it takes a little bit longer for the demographics to catch up when tenure-track faculty could easily be in their positions for 40 years” – just another reason to celebrate the three women who beat the odds and the departments who celebrate them as leaders and, of course, role models. ≡

It's important for girls to be interested in everything but especially important for them to be interested in science fields that, for whatever reason, they feel pushed out of.”

— Erika Gibb

The Nelson Diversity Surveys show that national efforts to boost gender equality in STEM education are paying off.



CYNTHIA DUPUREUR

CYNTHIA DUPUREUR

Chair and Professor
of Chemistry and Biochemistry

BS chemistry,
Southwest Missouri State University

PhD chemistry,
The Ohio State University

Her father cut hair and her mother
worked at the local grocery store.

Why not be a doctor? As a girl, the only scientists she knew were doctors. She was thinking about becoming a nurse. Her uncle said, “Why not be a doctor?” Dupureur started a pre-med major until she fell in love with chemistry and “didn’t want to give it up.”

First science experiment: Cryptobiosis, a temporary state in which an organism dries out its body of water. Add water, and it comes back to life. Dupureur tried to dry out vinegar eels.

Research: Understanding enzymes that catalyze reactions and how molecules bind to DNA. She contributes to collaborative research on Alzheimer’s disease, diabetes and human papillomavirus.

Big-time yoga lover: She teaches a class at the Recreation and Wellness Center on campus. “I just go and I’m not ‘The Chair’ anymore.”



ERIKA GIBB

ERIKA GIBB

*Chair and Professor
of Physics and Astronomy*

*BS physics and astronomy,
Northern Arizona University*

*PhD physics,
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
in New York*

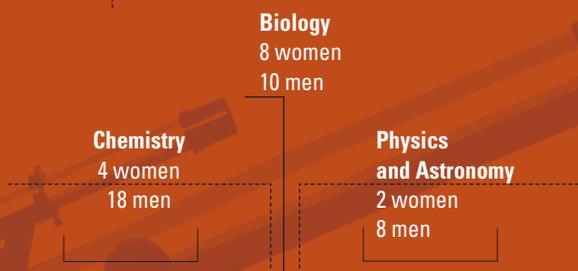
She's the only scientist in her family.

Styrofoam balls: Her first interest in astronomy came when she constructed a project on the life cycle of stars. "I used big Styrofoam balls and had different sizes to represent super giants, giants, all the way down to little beads for black holes and white dwarves."

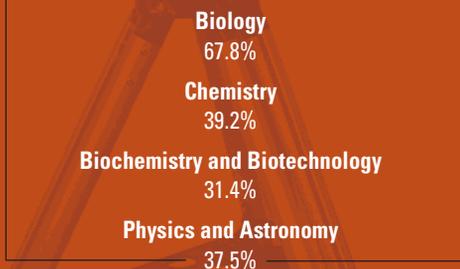
"Where did life come from?" Gibb's research focuses on a part of the answer to that question by identifying where water and organic molecules form in space. She's an expert in interstellar ice clouds, protoplanetary disks and comets and has water data on 30 comets out of the estimated 100 billion that exist in the Oort cloud. "It's not an easy measurement to make from the ground," she jokes.

Observations from Hawaii! – sort of. Gibb and her research students remotely control the Infrared Telescope Facility (IRTF) in Hawaii from their UMSL lab.

UMSL Science Faculty



Percentage of undergraduate science degrees earned by women at UMSL in 2015-16





The Freeks

pay it forward

FIRST UMSL ALUMNI
TO PASS \$5 MILLION
GIVING MILESTONE

By Bob Samples

S

Stan and Terry Freerks are not unlike most University of Missouri–St. Louis alumni. Born and raised in St. Louis, the couple stayed in the region after graduation to build their careers and lives.

Stan, MBA 1992, is the area president of RPS, a wholesale insurance brokerage firm. He came to UMSL after earning his bachelor’s degree from Cornell University.

Terry, BA history 1977 and MEd 1979, became a mental health counselor. She’s recently retired, but stays active in the community as executive director of the Clayton Shaw Park Swim Club. Terry also has a doctorate from Saint Louis University.

The Freerks live in a 1920s era home in Glendale, Missouri, that they bought 28 years ago and have since renovated. It’s a comfortable place – mature trees and a covered front porch. Like their fellow UMSL alumni, they credit much of their current lifestyle to hard work and an excellent education that was, for them, affordable.

What separates the Freerks from other alumni, however, is their continued support to ensure that students, for whom tuition is a financial stretch, have the same opportunities at UMSL to pursue pathways to success.

This year, Stan and Terry became the first alumni to pass the \$5 million milestone in gifts to the university – with a \$2 million commitment coming in the fiscal year ending June 30. That puts them in the league with corporate giants Ameren, Anheuser-Busch, Emerson and Express Scripts.

“Achieving a milestone was not our intent,” Stan says. “We were alerted there was a need at UMSL for private support. We responded.”

For their generosity, UMSL honored the Freerks with the E. Desmond and Mary Ann Lee Medal for Philanthropy at its annual Founders Dinner on Sept. 22. The celebration was held at the Ritz-Carlton in Clayton, Missouri, and attracted nearly 800 people.

UMSL established the E. Desmond and Mary Ann Lee Medal for Philanthropy in 2006

“NOT ALL GIFTED STUDENTS HAVE THE RESOURCES TO ATTEND COLLEGE. MONEY SHOULDN’T BE WHAT KEEPS THE DOOR CLOSED.” -TERRY FREERKS

to honor the Lees for their extraordinary philanthropic support and vision. Each year the award is presented by UMSL to an individual or organization whose remarkable generosity has touched the lives of its students or the university in exceptional ways.

The Freerks’ exceptional financial support extends to scholarships, capital campaigns, athletics, the arts, St. Louis Public Radio and initiatives in the colleges of Arts and Sciences and Business Administration. The couple also provides significant volunteer leadership on the College of Arts and Sciences Leadership Council, the College of Business Administration Leadership Council, and on the Chancellor’s Council.

Terry says that while proud of each contribution, she is most emotionally tied to scholarships for gifted students. She mentions by name Eric’el Johnson, a scholarship recipient now working at Boeing after graduating in May with an engineering degree.

“She spoke at an event in August,” Terry says of Johnson. “Her story. Her success. I’m proud that we were part of making that happen.”

“Not all gifted students have the resources to attend college,” she adds. “Money shouldn’t be what keeps the door closed.”

In presenting the Lee Medal to the Freerks, Martin Leifeld, vice chancellor for University Advancement, said that he is “in awe of what Stan and Terry do for UMSL. Their constant, thoughtful and generous support touches

every aspect of UMSL’s campus and more students than we can count.”

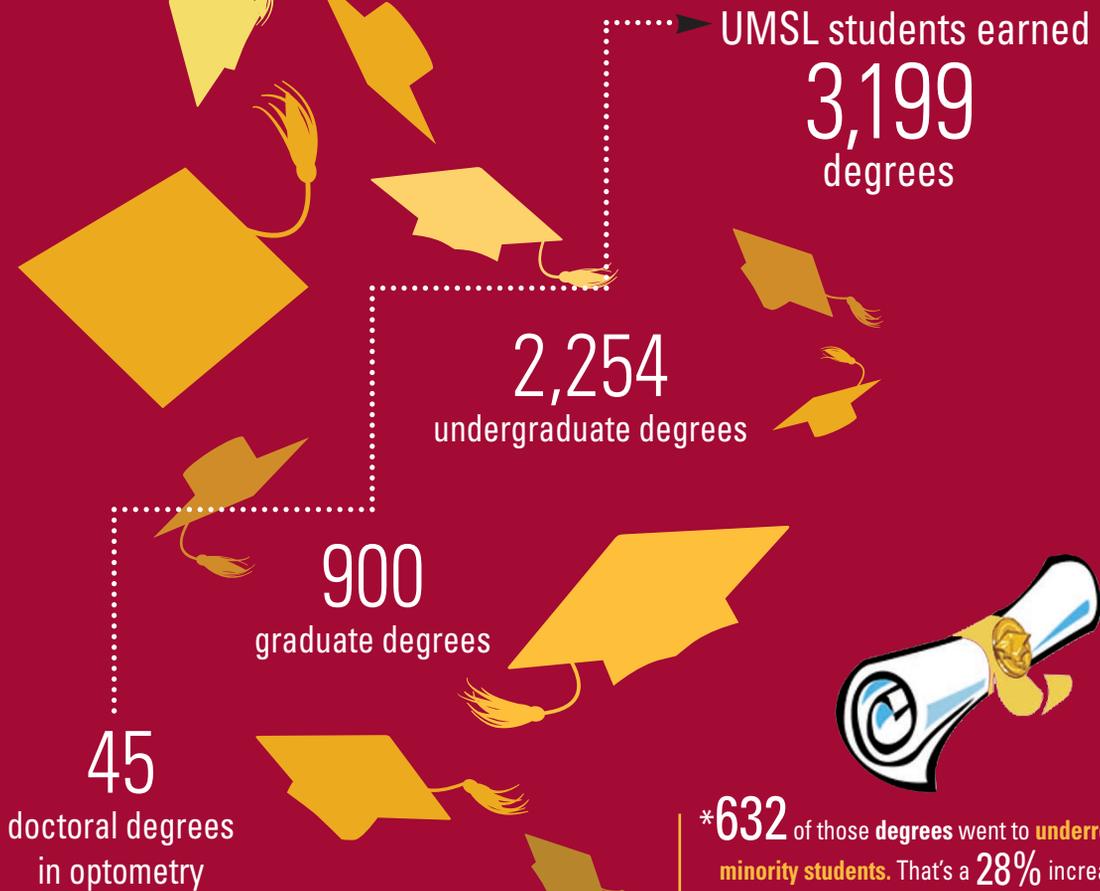


Asked to speak without advance warning, Terry followed Leifeld to the microphone. Collecting her thoughts, she peered out into the filled ballroom and explained why giving back was so important to her and her husband of 37 years.

“Many people have helped Stan and I throughout our lives. You could fill these walls with all the names of the people who have helped us along the way. We just want to be among the names other people can put on their walls.”

Hats off!

UMSL **graduated** a record number of students in 2016



Instruments from past inspire double major Dana Channell's future

By Jami Hirsch

"If something doesn't exist yet, why not make it exist?" asks University of Missouri–St. Louis junior Dana Channell.

She hopes to help create and curate a museum in St. Louis solely dedicated to housing antique and culturally relevant musical instruments. Such a position would perfectly marry the two disciplines in her unique double major: music and archeology.

This past summer, Channell found an opportunity that proved such a blend is possible.

Channell just happened to be taking a class on Native American music history from Aurelia Hartenberger who, when asked by Channell about internship opportunities, said that she herself could use some help. The adjunct associate professor of music education owns the Hartenberger World Music Collection, which is a stunning array of more than 1,500 historical instruments, many of which are on exhibit in the Sheldon Concert Hall's Gallery of Music. Hartenberger explained that her collection was growing – she'd just acquired more instruments that needed to be catalogued.

Channell jumped at the chance to assist.

She spent her summer carefully examining, and sometimes turning over in mystification, more than 150 instruments from different time periods and parts of the globe. Each one needed measurements, a description and a condition report.

"It was fascinating to try to discover what they were," Channell says. "Some of them didn't even look like instruments. At one point we opened up a package and said, 'Oh. They've just sent us a

pile of sticks.' And then we found out it was actually a type of beautiful bamboo xylophone with a stand."

Channell says some of the most interesting work occurred when she would "fall down the rabbit hole" of a Google search while looking for hints about each instrument's history. One horn was traced back to a man who was in Washington D.C. the night Abraham Lincoln was shot.

Working with the instruments, some of which will be added to the existing Sheldon exhibit, was truly a serendipitous experience, Channell says. She's considering pursuing a graduate degree in museum studies – potentially here at UMSL – so that someday she can help bring to life the local instrument museum she envisions.

"The more I learn and explore, the more I feel like there really is a field out there for me." ≡



Dana Channell holds an Appalachian bowed psaltery made of maple and walnut. The instrument is part of the zither family and is used for Appalachian folk music.

Love for St. Louis keeps Josh McNew up late

By Evie Hemphill

The music swells, cast members appear before iconic St. Louis backdrops and the host of “STL Up Late” steps on stage live at the Marcelle Theater in Grand Center. Somewhere behind the scenes is University of Missouri–St. Louis alumnus Josh McNew, executive producer of the show.

Together with co-creator Eric Christensen, McNew started “STL Up Late” in 2013 – shortly after graduating from UMSL’s media studies program.

“It wasn’t a TV show at that point – just a live theater show,” recalls McNew, who was then working alongside Christensen to produce viral video content for the local company Vat19. “We thought, ‘We can interview someone, have a band there, and we can premiere our video shorts and put them online after the shows.’”

“It went on for about two years like that, and then eventually we started taping not just the musical performances but the interviews. Then we thought, ‘Well, why don’t we try and make this a TV show?’”

That meant spending significant funds on a pilot episode and convincing a TV network to sign on – a risky move, McNew says. But about a year ago, he and Christensen took the leap, and they’ve since landed on their feet.

“We maxed out a credit card, and we rented cameras, we rented out a space, and we threw a pilot together,” McNew explains. “But we had to do that in order to shop it around to the local networks. And we finally got KMOV [Channel 4] to say, ‘All right, we’ll give you guys a shot.’ After that we raised \$38,000 through Kickstarter that October, so we were able to pay that credit card off, and our investment worked out.”

“STL Up Late” has already put to bed a full season of episodes. McNew oversees the large crew of contributors and the show’s digital presence – and is also responsible for fostering



local partnerships. He feels lucky. It’s the kind of work he always dreamed of doing, he says, adding that it wouldn’t have been possible without his experience at UMSL.

“I’m the first person in my family to go to college,” he says, “and my professors at UMSL were very helpful and really gave me the guidance I needed to help me decide what I wanted to do and then figure out how to make that happen.”

McNew’s enthusiasm for his alma mater is obvious, as is his love for St. Louis, which is a lot of the reason “STL Up Late” exists.

“We’re kind of using comedy to build an audience and then introduce that audience to cool things in St. Louis,” he says. “There are so many great things to do in this city and a lot of people doing great things – great podcasts, rock-star chefs, programs that are helping people get out there and live their dreams.” ☰

RubinBrown partner
Steven Harris:
National accounting leader
with local heart

By Ron Austin



As a kid, Steven Harris woke up early on Saturday mornings for a day on the job with his father.

"While all my buddies were going to baseball games over the summers, I was out helping with his drapery installation business," Harris says. "I got the chance to see how he built his network, how he treated people and how it all made a difference in the community. He was a guy who always made a positive impact. So a lot of the good habits I follow today, I learned from him first."

Those early lessons in disciplined work and bettering community have served Harris well in his collegiate and professional career.

He earned a bachelor's degree in accounting at the University of Missouri–St. Louis in 2000 while working full time. Never one to pass up opportunity, he also worked summer internships through the INROADS program, which aims to place underserved youth in corporate and community leadership roles. His final INROADS internship

was at RubinBrown, a St. Louis accounting firm, where he fell in love with the culture and even met his wife.

Harris is now the partner in charge of the entrepreneurial and assurance services groups at RubinBrown. He also has the recent distinction of being named chairman of the board of the National Association of Black Accountants, a role that he says helps him advance the mission of diversity in the business world.

"Creating and maintaining a standard of diversity and inclusion is a big deal across the country," Harris says. "It's not just about recruiting African American talent to your organization. It's about retaining them and building a nurturing environment. Doing this breeds success for everyone."

Staying true to the NABA's motto of "Lifting as we climb," Harris seeks to engage high school students, undergraduates, young professionals and seasoned retirees in a professional community that promotes continuous growth. He does so

through mentorship, hoping to open doors for others and provide role models for the world at large. That includes helping UMSL students trying to move up the ranks.

"I think that as an alum, you can give money and scholarships, and those things are all important, but it's really about getting off the sidelines and getting in the game," Harris says. "Our goal is to replace ourselves. You want to be in the position where you can groom the next great UMSL student and see them go on and do better things than you." That's why – beyond job opportunities – spending time with students is the greatest resource Harris believes alumni can give.

"I had the pleasure of recently attending some student conferences, and I saw so many students in their suits, looking great and looking for opportunities, and I was like 'Man, I wish there were cameras to see the positive energy in this space,'" Harris says. "That is what we need to see. That is what makes others look up and say, 'This is attainable. I could do this too.'" ☰

Compassionate care earns nursing alumna Julius Beck recognition

By Steve Walentik

Julius Beck had been a nurse at Mercy Hospital only a few months. She was still in her first week working without a preceptor on the medical-surgical floor and remembers feeling a little intimidated by it all.

But the 2015 University of Missouri–St. Louis graduate had acquired enough knowledge to be certain something was wrong.

The patient she had first started caring for a day earlier had taken a sudden – and

undeniable – downward turn. Beck noticed a facial droop and was finding it increasingly difficult to communicate with her.

Fearing that the patient had suffered a stroke, Beck contacted the resident physician for an exam. She later called the Medical Emergency Team when things only got worse. She knew the patient’s seemingly normal blood pressure was, in fact, low compared to earlier levels, and respirations were far too frequent.

It never occurred to Beck that her efforts on behalf of her patient would eventually be recognized with a DAISY Award.

Standing for Diseases Attacking the Immune System, the award was created by the nonprofit DAISY Foundation in California in honor of J. Patrick Barnes, who died in 1999 from complications of a rare autoimmune blood disorder. With the award, the foundation aims to recognize extraordinary nurses across the country.

Truth be told, Beck didn’t know what the DAISY Award was. She was only thinking of getting her patient the care needed.

“I totally attribute my ability to think through that to the Lord,” says Beck, a devout Christian.

With help from Beck and, she believes, grace from God, the patient was eventually transferred to the Intensive Care Unit. The patient died a few days later but not before family members had a chance to visit and say their goodbyes.

“Some of them flew in from out of state, and I was just happy that they could all be there,” Beck says. “That means the world to a patient and their family.”

Her innate sense of empathy might have been one reason Beck decided to go into nursing. She also points to her experience with an eating disorder as a teenager as something that heightened her desire to improve people’s health.

Beck, whose maiden name was Braungardt, grew up in Moscow Mills, Missouri. She graduated from Troy Buchanan High School and began her college studies at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Missouri. But she transferred to UMSL after being accepted into the accelerated bachelor’s of science in nursing program.

It was at the urging of her instructors and preceptors that she sought a job on a medical-surgical floor after graduation.

“Coming out of nursing school, you have this huge bank of knowledge,” she says. “But unless you really practice it, it’s not going to solidify.”

Beck moved to the labor and delivery unit this fall. She and her husband, Brandon Beck – another UMSL nursing graduate whom she married in March – hope to one day take their skills abroad to do medical missions. ☰



Distinguished and Outstanding

UMSL recognizes
five alumni who make
those words true

One of the greatest points of pride for the University of Missouri–St. Louis is its vast network of more than 95,000 alumni. A select few are honored annually at UMSL’s Founders Dinner, held Sept. 22 this year at the Ritz-Carlton in Clayton, Missouri. In front of nearly 800 members of the UMSL family, the university acknowledged five such alumni for their achievements in business, community service and social activism. Their successes reflect greatly on the university they’ve made so proud.

In the following pages, meet UMSL’s 2016 recipients of the Distinguished Alumni Award and Outstanding Young Alumni Award.

Patricia J. Amick Joe Bergfeld Sharonica Hardin-Bartley Robbyn Wahby John Waterhouse

60s

Lois Brockmeier Schoemehl, BA 1967, and **Jack Sieber**, BSBA 1967, co-chairs of the 50th reunion class of 1967, threw out the ceremonial first pitch at the St. Louis Cardinals home game Sept. 9. The pitch kicked off a year of activities leading up to the first 50th reunion at UMSL, to be celebrated during spring commencement in May 2017.

70s

Mark Keen, EdD, MEd 1970, retired after a 19-year career with the Westfield Washington School District in Westfield, Ind. Mark has since gone on to win a seat on the Westfield City Council in District 1.

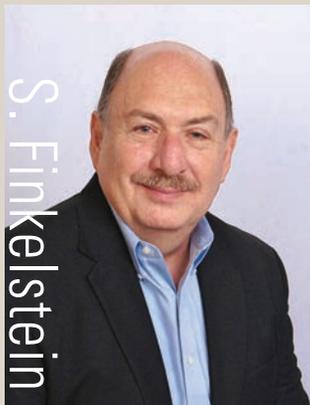


S. Schaefer

Sunny Schaefer, BSEd 1970, MEd 1980, was named one of St. Louis Business Journal’s Most Influential Business Women of 2016. Sunny is executive director of Operation Food Search in St. Louis.

James Turley, BA 1970, was appointed president of the Boy Scouts of America Greater St. Louis Area Council. James is vice president at Studebaker Energy in St. Louis.

CLASSNOTES



S. Finkelstein
Steve Finkelstein, BSBA 1972, received the 2016 UMSL Salute to Business Achievement Award for Distinguished Career Achievement on April 21. Steve is a senior partner and co-founder of Experience on Demand, a management consulting firm in St. Louis.

Gwendolyn Reed, BSEd 1972, received the Hazelwood School District Lifetime Achievement Award. Gwendolyn has served in the district as an educator for 30 years.

Ronald McMullen, BA 1973, retired after a 39-year career in health care management. Ronald was most recently president of Christian Hospital in St. Louis, a position he held for nearly a decade.

Linda Lockman-Brooks, BSEd 1974, was appointed to the Central Piedmont Community College Board of Trustees. Linda is president and principal of Lockman-Brooks Marketing Services in Charlotte, N.C.

Joseph Porter

Jr., Esq., BSBA 1976, joined Armstrong Teasdale's St. Louis office as partner in the firm's Corporate Services and Financial and Real Estate Services practice groups.



Theresamarie Mantese, Esq.

BA 1977, opened a law office in St. Louis with her brother, alumnus Gerard Mantese, in the St. Louis home in which they were raised.

Mark Amiri, BSBA 1978, MBA 1989, was appointed associate vice chancellor for finance at Washington University in St. Louis.



Gerard Mantese, Esq., BA 1979, opened a law office in St. Louis with his sister, alumna Theresamarie Mantese, in the St. Louis home in which they were raised.

James Meyer, BSBA 1979, was a finalist for the 2016 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year. James is the CEO of Italgrani USA in St. Louis.

80s



Paula Bryant, BSAJ 1980, was appointed by Gov. Jay Nixon to circuit judge for the 22nd Circuit Court, which covers St. Louis.

Leslie Johns, BSAJ 1980, was promoted to senior human resources generalist and senior associate at HOK, a global design, architecture, engineering and planning firm in St. Louis.

Joseph Keaveny, BSBA 1980, was named Workers' Compensation Administrative Law Judge in St. Louis by Gov.

Jay Nixon. Prior to this appointment, Joseph represented the 4th Senate District in the Missouri Senate since December 2009. He is also an attorney with the St. Louis firm of Weiss Attorneys at Law.



Colleen Dolan, Esq., BSAJ 1981, was appointed by Gov. Jay Nixon to a state appeals court. Colleen has been a circuit judge on the St. Louis County Circuit Court since 1999. She also served on the Missouri Supreme Court alternative dispute resolution and family committees.

Theodore Kraizer, BSAJ 1981, BSBA 1985, joined Business Bank of St. Louis as senior vice president of commercial lending.

Michael Burns, BA 1982, received the Open Doors Award from the Metropolitan St. Louis Equal Housing and Opportunity Council. Michael is the manager of housing at St. Patrick Center.



Tom Migneron, BSBA 1982, received the 2016 UMSL Salute to Business Achievement

Award for Outstanding Leader on April 21. Tom is a principal at Edward Jones.



Chris Lee Nicastro, MEd 1982, was named by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

a Pioneer in Education for her commitment and contributions to public education in Missouri. Chris served as education commissioner from 2009 until 2014.

George Paz, BSBA 1982, was the 2016 inductee into the UMSL Accounting Hall of Fame at the Salute to Business Achievement Awards Ceremony on April 21. George is chairman of Express Scripts in St. Louis.

Warner Baxter, BSBA 1983, was named board chair for the St. Louis Regional Chamber. Warner is chairman, president and CEO of Ameren Corporation.



Jeffrey Forrest, BSBA 1983, was named vice president of economic and workforce development at College of the Canyons in Santa Clarita, Calif.

Joan Steinert, BSAJ 1984, was named chairperson of Women in Nuclear at Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation in Burlington, Kan.



Patricia Holterman-Hommes, BA 1985, was named one of St. Louis Business Journal's Most Influential Business Women of 2016. Patricia is president of Youth in Need in St. Louis.



Steven Brawley, BA 1987, wrote "Gay and Lesbian St. Louis," published by Arcadia Publishing. Steven is the executive vice president of Area Resources for Community and Human Services and the founder and historian of the St. Louis LGBT History Project.



Suzanna Long, MA 1988, was named 2016 Woman of the Year by Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla. Suzanna is interim chair and associate professor of engineering management and systems engineering at Missouri S&T.

David Bell, BSBA 1989, MBA 1992, was named among St. Louis Business Journal's 2016 Chief Financial Officer of the Year winners. David is CFO of Schnucks Markets in St. Louis.

Jerry Kelly, BSAJ 1989, was promoted to lieutenant in the St. Louis County Police Department.

Guy Litteken, BSBA 1989, was appointed to the Boys Hope Girls Hope governing board. Guy is the general manager for the St. Louis division of ASP Enterprises, a site solutions company specializing in erosion-control.

Melva Pete, BSPA 1989, joined St. Louis-based SAK Construction as vice president of human resources.



Joylynn Wilson Pruitt, MEd 1989, EdD 2015, is the 2016-17 interim superintendent for the Oak Park and River Forest School District in Park Hill, Ill.

90s

Todd Kohlbecker, BA 1990, joined Cushman & Wakefield's Retail Portfolio Services Center in St. Louis as a senior managing director.



Brian Weaver Sr., BA 1990, MA 1998, was named the 2016 Jennings School District Teacher of the Year. Brian teaches social studies at Jennings Junior High School in north St. Louis County.

Kent Costello, BSBA 1992, joined Midland States Bank as a senior mortgage originator in St. Louis.

Angela Medwick, BSBA 1992, was named senior vice president and chief financial officer at Central Federal Savings and Loan in Rolla, Mo.

Debra Zand, MA 1992, PhD 1997, joined SLUCare Physician Group as a practicing psychologist.

Dominic Noce, MS 1993, joined St. Louis-based SheerTrans Solutions as executive vice president.

Amy Hunter, BA 1994, was selected for a 2016 Humanities Award by The Missouri Humanities Council. Amy is the director of racial justice for YWCA Metro St. Louis.



DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

Patricia J. Amick BS physics 1974
Technical Fellow,
The Boeing Company

Patricia Amick was the fourth woman engineer when hired at McDonnell Douglas Electronics Company in 1978. She has spent her career advocating for women in STEM fields and mentoring many women and men, including Boeing personnel, United States Air Force customers and many Boeing suppliers. For more than 38 years, she has held multiple leadership positions on engineering teams, including the F-15C Radar program and the F-15E Radar Modernization Program, and donates her time, treasure and talent to many charities. Amick is a published author of a nationally recognized handbook and numerous technical papers on electronics manufacturing, performance-based logistics and lead-free soldering. She has one patent, two patent disclosures and numerous awards from McDonnell Douglas and Boeing. She is currently a technical fellow in electronics manufacturing at Boeing Research and Technology, supporting both military and commercial aircraft, missiles and proprietary programs.



Troy Maydew, OD 1994, received the 2016 Optometrist of the Year award during the Kansas Optometric Association Annual Convention and Seminar in Topeka, Kan.

Steven Bott, BSBA 1995, was appointed treasurer for the DOORWAYS board of directors in St. Louis. Steven is the manager of treasury technology services at Ameren.

Tamela Franks, BSBA 1995, joined Opportunities for Youth, a collaborative network of youth-serving organizations, as executive director in Maricopa County, Ariz.



Julie Hiblovic, BSBA 1995, received the 2016 UMSL Salute to Business Achievement Award for Outstanding Volunteer on April 21. Julie is a certified public accountant and audit partner at Anders CPAs + Advisors in St. Louis.

Robert M. Sander, BSBA 1995, was elected chairman of the board of directors for Teen Challenge of St. Louis. Robert is the senior relationship manager at BMO Harris Bank in St. Louis.

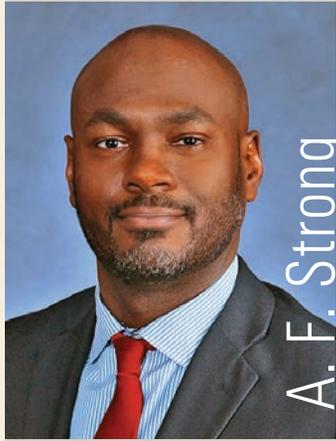
Maria Stobbe, MEd 1995, joined Tillman Elementary School in Kirkwood, Mo., as principal.



Kel Ward, BS 1995, was appointed to the Diversity Executive Steering Committee for St. Louis Children's Hospital where he is the manager of community relations.

Tiffany Anderson, MEd 1996, received an honorary doctorate from Eden Seminary for her commitment to addressing equity and justice for the underserved. Tiffany is the superintendent for Topeka Public Schools in Kansas. She was previously the superintendent of Jennings School District in north St. Louis County from 2012-16.

Antonio Strong, BSBA 1996, was promoted to Lambert-St. Louis International Airport's senior executive team. Antonio is now the deputy director of finance and administration. *The UMSL Magazine staff apologizes to Mr. Strong for the incorrect photograph that accompanied his class note in the spring 2016 issue.*



Kirk Baer, BSBA 1997, was promoted to senior associate at Lawrence Group in St. Louis.

Kathleen Houston, MSN 1997, was recognized at St. Louis Magazine's 2016 Excellence in Nursing Awards Reception on April 14. Kathleen is the manager of the pediatric nurse practitioners emergency unit at Children's Hospital in St. Louis.

Amanda Bartosch, BSAcc 1998, was promoted to vice president of administration and finance at Easter Seals Midwest in St. Louis.

Marcela Manjarrez Hawn, BS 1998, was appointed to the Boys Hope Girls Hope governing board. Marcela is senior vice president and chief communications officer at Centene Corporation in St. Louis.

Pamela Aman, BSAcc 1999, was promoted to partner at Sikich in St. Louis where she will lead the office's audit, attest and consulting services.

Art J. McCoy II, MEd 1999, PhD 2002, was appointed superintendent of the Jennings School District in north St. Louis County. Art was named to St. Louis Business Journal's 2016 class of Diverse Business Leaders.



Randall Pickens Jr., BSBA 1999, joined St. Louis Bank as senior vice president of commercial lending.

00s

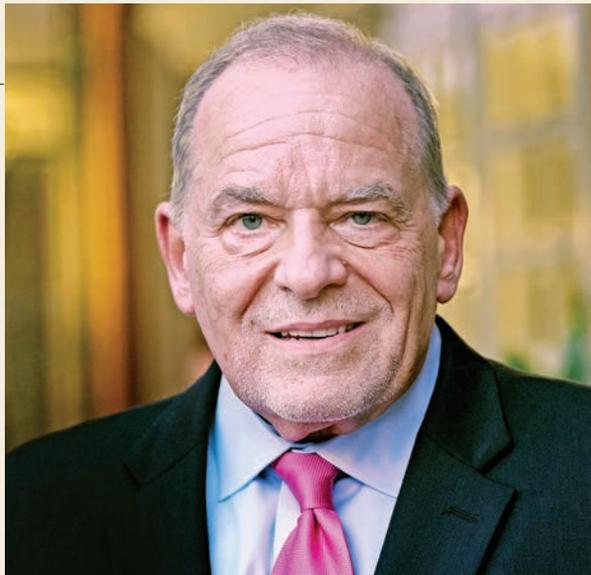
Keith Bowles, BSBA 2000, joined Moneta Group in Clayton, Mo., as director of business systems.

John Killoran III, BSAcc 2000, MS 2002, was appointed chief financial officer at Frost Electric Supply in St. Louis.



Kristin Sobocinski, MBA 2000, joined Elmbrook School District in Brookfield, Wis., as the new assistant superintendent for business services.

Dana Cojocaru-Ivoska, BSBA 2001, joined the public finance group of D.A. Davidson's Fixed Income Capital Markets Division in St. Louis as vice president, public finance banker and analyst.



DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

Joe Bergfeld

BA political science 1970
President and CEO,
Pittsburgh Pipe & Supply Co.

Joe Bergfeld established Pittsburgh Pipe & Supply Corporation in 1977 with his business partner, Bill Manser. Since that time, Bergfeld has grown the company from three employees to a team of more than 70 employees and revenues in excess of \$30 million. His industry recognitions include the Award of Excellence from the National Association of Steel

Pipe Distributors, of which he is also a past president. Bergfeld is also passionately committed to the St. Louis community and his alma mater, with a history of service ranging from membership on the College of Arts and Sciences' Dean's Leadership Council to the Forest Park Master Plan Committee.

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

Sharonica Hardin-Bartley

PhD education 2014
Superintendent,
University City School District

Sharonica Hardin-Bartley is a forward-thinking leader in the world of education and a passionate advocate for kids. She works tirelessly to ensure that all children have access to quality education. Formerly an assistant superintendent for the Ritenour School District, Hardin-Bartley is known for her excellent guidance and management – and for her community service. She has overseen hiring and professional learning, led contract negotiations with unions and played lead roles on the topic of social justice and high school students. Her service to the Ferguson Commission's Child Well-Being and Education Work Group put her in the national spotlight. In July, Hardin-Bartley became superintendent for the University City School District.



Raymond Riddle

BSEE 2001, joined the board of directors for Youth In Need in St. Louis. Raymond is the director of transmission and distribution design at Ameren Missouri.



Benjamin Severns, BSBA 2001, joined Principal Financial Group in St. Louis as a financial representative.

Orvin Kimbrough, MBA 2002, was elected to the Midwest Bank-Centre Legal board of directors. Orvin is president and CEO of United Way of Greater St. Louis.

Jason Mannello, BS 2002, MA 2004, was promoted to partner at RubinBrown in St. Louis.

Beverly Miller, MSN 2002, joined Jordan Valley Health Center in Lebanon, Mo., as a family nurse practitioner.

Haitham Al-Fannah, BSBA 2003, was promoted to CEO of Al Sulaimi Group Holding in Oman.



N. Bowman

Nicholas Bowman, BA 2003, MA 2004, received two of the highest teaching honors at West Virginia University – the WVU Foundation Outstanding Teaching Award and the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teaching Award. Nicholas is an associate professor of communication studies at WVU in Morgantown.

Tiffany McConnell, MEd 2003, joined Lucas Crossing Elementary Complex in Normandy, Mo., as building principal.



James Collard, MA 2004, PhD 2006, received the 2016 Friend of the Court Award at the annual Sovereignty Symposium hosted by the Oklahoma Supreme Court. James is the director of planning and economic development for the Citizen Potawatomi Nation in Oklahoma.

Kevin McCoy, BFA 2004, and his wife, Danielle McCoy, were selected to the Forest Park Forever Artist in Residence Program. The McCoy's project repurposed discarded plant materials into natural dyes for a textile piece depicting a topographical view of St. Louis' Forest Park.

Amy Reidel, BFA 2004, received a Creative Stimulus Award by St. Louis-based Critical Mass for the Visual Arts.

Wesley Royer, BSBA 2005, was elected to the Community Counseling Center governing board of directors to represent Madison County, Mo. Wesley is the market president for First State Community Bank in Fredericktown.

Douglas Wiles, BSEd 2005, is now the city forester for Bismark, N.D. Douglas will be responsible for supervision of planting, cultivation and maintenance of trees and the planning of new landscape designs.

Heidi Wolfe, BSN 2005, joined Total Access Urgent Care in St. Louis as an advanced practice nurse.

Brandon Dempsey, BA 2006, wrote "Shut Up and Go!: A Millennial's Guide to Figuring Out What You Want and How to Get It," published by Lioncrest Publishing. Brandon is the owner of goBRANDgo!, a St. Louis-based, targeted marketing firm.

Darcy Eldred-Smith, BSN 2006, joined the obstetrics and gynecology department at Alton Women's Health Center in Alton, Ill.

John Griffith, EDSP 2006, EdD 2015, joined Hollywood Heights Alternative School in Caseyville, Ill., as principal.

Jill McNaughton, OD 2006, joined Eyecare Specialties in Lee's Summit, Mo., as a practicing optometrist.

Michael Randazzo, BS 2006, was appointed by Gov. Jay Nixon to be the new Reynolds County prosecuting attorney. Michael has a law practice in Ironton and serves as the city prosecutor and city attorney for the communities of Arcadia, Ironton, Salem and Viburnum, and municipal judge for Sullivan, Mo.



Jacob Steingrubey, BSBA 2006, joined St. Louis-based Krilogy Financial as a financial advisor.

Arrethie Williams, BS 2006, was promoted to the rank of sergeant in the St. Louis County Police Department. Arrethie is assigned to the North County Precinct, where she has served since joining the department in 2005.



Jason Bockman, BSBA 2007, received the 2016 UMSL Salute to Business Achievement Award for Entrepreneurial Spirit on April 21. Jason is owner and co-founder of Strange Donuts in St. Louis.

David Gipson, MPPA 2007, was promoted to city administrator for the city of Wentzville, Mo.



DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

Robbyn Wahby

MPPA 1998; BSBA organizational behavior 1989
Executive Director,
Missouri Charter Public School Commission

Robbyn Wahby is the founding executive director of the Missouri Charter Public School Commission, a newly established agency with statewide authority to sponsor charter schools. Previously she served as deputy chief of staff to St. Louis City Mayor Francis Slay, providing strategic direction and advice on education and children's policy. Wahby has held a variety of leadership positions in public, private and nonprofit organizations. She also served as the director of alumni relations at the University of Missouri–St. Louis from 1996 to 2001.



Aaron Golchert, BSBA 2007, received the 2016 UMSL Salute to Business Achievement Award for Rising Star on April 21. Aaron is area director/owner of N2 Publishing in St. Louis.

Justin Marty, BSACC 2007, MAcc 2009, was promoted to manager in the tax services group at St. Louis-based Anders CPAs + Advisors.

Edin Salkic, BSBA 2007, was promoted to vice president and commercial development officer at UMB Bank in St. Louis.



Warren Morgan, MEd 2009, was chosen for the 2016-17 class of White House Fellows. Prior to this appointment, Warren served as the academic superintendent for Cleveland Metropolitan School District's turnaround schools.

Nicholas Szabo, BSBA 2009, received a 2016 Innovation Award from the St. Louis Business Journal. Nick is CEO for Swizzle, a St. Louis-based market research company.

OUTSTANDING YOUNG ALUMNI AWARD

John Waterhouse

BSEE 2006
Associate Engineer,
Ameren

At age 31, John Waterhouse is part of the Ameren Transmission Project Management Team. He is currently responsible for the construction of 10 substations on the Illinois Rivers Program. The \$1.4 billion project will bring electricity from wind turbines in Iowa to homes in Illinois and is the second largest program in Ameren's history. For Waterhouse it offers the distinct challenge of leading a very complex and diverse group of organizations – all in different locations – both internal and external to Ameren. Active in the St. Louis community, Waterhouse is a member of the board of directors for the Center for Hearing & Speech, where he chairs the strategic-planning committee. He has also served on the UMSL Alumni Association Governing Board of Directors.



In Memoriam

- 1960s | **Merel Heller**, BS 1969, on Jan. 14
- 1970s | **Lawrence Waxman**, BA 1970, on Feb. 25
Phyllis Fichter, BSBA 1971, on May 14
Conrad Schuessel Sr., BSBA 1971, on April 20
Stephen Souris, BA 1971, MA 1974, on May 31
Lawrence Jackson, BSBA 1972, on March 30
Thomas Osborn, BSBA 1972, on June 21
Franklin Lee, MA 1973, on March 17
Nancy Potter, BA 1974, on June 21
Frank Schmidt Jr., BSBA 1974, on July 9
John Berry, BA 1976, on June 7
James Wheeler, BA 1976, BM 1980, MEd 1990, on May 1
Virginia White, MEd 1977, on April 5
Jerome Hutson, BSBA 1979, on Aug. 5
- 1980s | **Randy George**, BA 1982, MA 1988, on July 2
Jean Wessel, BA 1982, on Feb. 22
Mary Opp, MEd 1987, on Feb. 16
- 1990s | **William Ekey**, BSBA 1990, on March 28
Nancy Cadenhead, BGS 1993, on March 14
Ursula Wayne, BA 1993, on Feb. 22
- 2000s | **Kimberly Allen**, MEd 2005, EDSP 2006, on May 15
Christin Cooper, BS 2005, on April 23
Jacara Sproaps, BSW 2005, MEd 2008, MEd 2010, EDSP 2011, on July 13
Rachel Bosaw, BSN 2006, on May 28
- 2010s | **Sarah Budai**, MA 2016, on July 23

Sympathy Sympathy is extended to **Ronald Morovitz, Esq.**, BSBA 1970, MA 1971, on the death of his mate of 36 years, Geraldine (Jerri) King.



10s

Christina Dancy, BSPPA 2010, was appointed chair of the U.S. Bank African American Business Resource Group for the St. Louis market. Christina is an anti-money laundering compliance officer for U.S. Bank in St. Louis.

Robert Good, PhD 2010, was named the 2016 Missouri History Teacher of the Year. Robert is a teacher at Ladue Horton Watkins High School in St. Louis.

Kenya Haney, BSN 2010, was appointed director of governance and policy for the National Student Nurse's Association.

Bryan Herberg, BSME 2010, joined St. Louis-based McGrath & Associates as a project engineer and estimator.

Melissa Alper, BSPPA 2011, received the Fritzi Lainoff Advocacy Award at the annual meeting of the National Council of Jewish Women-St. Louis Section.

Carolyn Amacher, MS 2011, joined the American Diabetes Association's St. Louis branch as a community engagement manager.

Stephanie Johnson, BSN 2011, was recognized at St. Louis Magazine's 2016 Excellence in Nursing Awards Reception on April 14. Stephanie is the clinical service line program manager at Missouri Baptist Medical Center in St. Louis.

Alycia LaMartina, BS 2011, joined MetroGistics in St. Louis as an operations manager.



Long Phan, BSME 2011, was named to Manufacturing Engineering's "30 Under 30" list for making a difference in STEM fields. Long is an applications engineer for United Grinding in Miamisburg, Ohio.

Cynthia Graham, BA 2012, wrote "Behind Every Door," published by Blank Slate Press.

Erin Lewis, MSW 2012, joined St. John Bosco Children's Center at Caritas Family Solutions in St. Louis as the director of residential services.

Keisha Mabry, MEd 2012, received a 2016 Innovation Award from the St. Louis Business Journal for her contribution to the field of education. Keisha is the director of innovation at College Bound in St. Louis.



Amber Simpson, MEd 2012, EDSP 2012, PhD 2014, was named one of St. Louis Business Journal's Most Influential Business Women of 2016. Amber is vice president of strategy and insights at U.S. Bank and founder and CEO of Vernare Learning in St. Louis.



Ryan Bowman, BSBA 2013, was promoted to wealth advisor at Mariner Wealth Advisors in St. Louis.

Jennifer Cotenne Christensen, MEd 2013, was one of nine individuals to receive a 2016 Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching from Teach for America. Jennifer is a kindergarten teacher at Prodeo Academy in Minneapolis.

Judith Reeves, MSN 2013, is a full-time nurse in the cardiovascular recovery unit at Missouri Baptist Medical Center in St. Louis as well as part-time clinical adjunct faculty for Goldfarb School of Nursing.

Susanne Rosenberg, MSN 2013, was recognized at St. Louis Magazine's 2016 Excellence in Nursing Awards Reception on April 14. Susanne is a nurse at St. Louis Children's Hospital.

Vanika Spencer, BA 2013, completed her Peace Corps service in Indonesia where she taught English in an Islamic high school and planned community development activities for her students after school.

Melanie Adams, PhD 2014, joined the Minnesota Historical Society as senior director of guest experiences and educational services. Prior to this position Melanie was the managing director of community education and events at the Missouri Historical Society in St. Louis.

Morgen S. Nelson, BA 2015, joined St. Louis-based Mosby Building Arts as an administrative assistant.

Brittany Phillips, MEd 2015, joined Brighton Agency in St. Louis as an associate account executive.

Tony Brown, OD 2016, joined Reeves & Stoppel Optometry practice in Clay Center, Kan.

Matthew Hansen, OD 2016, joined Mercy Clinic Family Medicine in Ozark, Mo., as an optometrist.

Deanna Williams, MEd 2016, joined Emporia State University in Emporia, Kan., as the new director of diversity student programs.



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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas F. George".

Chancellor

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