

UNMSL

MAGAZINE

FALL 2017



An international canvas

A look into
the life of
students from around the globe





SHUTTER STOP

As three University of Missouri–St. Louis international students look through Donald Judd’s Untitled 1969 sculpture at the Saint Louis Art Museum, campus photographer August Jennewein captures the symbolic moment. Much like their experience moving to the States for school, the sculpture of open aluminum boxes with blue Plexiglass interiors can at first seem chaotic, puzzling and strange. But stay awhile, and what was unfamiliar becomes familiar, and a new perspective settles in at the end of the tunnel. See page 22.

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ON THE COVER

International student Annie Mbale, from Malawi, takes in the blurred layers of "January," one piece of Gerhard Richter's 1989 diptych displayed at the Saint Louis Art Museum. The local attraction is one of the many things Mbale has come to enjoy, including new friendships and quality academics, after choosing to study at UMSL.

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Fresh faces, motivated teaching

Ana Barrios is one of the many young UMSL alumni on a mission to improve local education through inspired teaching. She and four others tell their philosophies.



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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 98,000 and the magazine is released twice a year.



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Into the international

From the initial fear of leaving home to learning U.S. culture and higher education, several international students share their experiences at UMSL and in St. Louis.

The Richters receive UMSL's top philanthropy award

It all came full circle for Maureen Richter, BSEd 1974, at the grand opening of Anheuser-Busch Hall at the University of Missouri–St. Louis. As she prepared to take her first steps into the new business education building, she did a double take at the person greeting attendees at the door.

The former sixth grader she once knew from teaching 34 years at Holy Child School in Arnold, Missouri, was now a UMSL student enjoying the donor-funded facility for which Maureen and her husband, Kirk, were among the lead contributors.

"It was quite a connection," Maureen said. "It's great to see kids that I taught, who are now doing the same things I did as a student."

That it happened at Anheuser-Busch Hall made it even more poignant. Kirk, a 1968 accounting alumnus and former executive at Sigma-Aldrich Corporation, was influential in realizing the completion of the building. He also provided significant leadership within the UMSL Alumni Association, Chancellor's Council and College of Business Administration.

This type of connection is precisely why the Richters give back to their alma mater.

In the last year, the Richters' lifetime giving level to the university surpassed \$5 million. Their donations extend to scholarships, the UMSL Alumni Association endowment, Anheuser-Busch Hall and its planned Phase II addition.

UMSL recognized the Richters for their commitment and generosity with the E. Desmond and Mary Ann Lee Medal for Philanthropy on Oct. 5 at the university's annual Founders Dinner at the Ritz-Carlton in Clayton, Missouri. The prestigious medal is presented annually and reserved for individuals or organizations whose contributions have touched the lives of students in exemplary ways.

"It's been fun to see UMSL grow up over the years," Kirk said. "But we've only finished the first 50 years. We have the next 50 to look forward to."

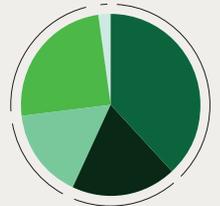


Chancellor Tom George (at left) presented Kirk (center) and Maureen Richter with the E. Desmond and Mary Ann Lee Medal for Philanthropy during the university's Founders Dinner Oct. 5, at the Ritz-Carlton in Clayton, Missouri.



FY2017 SOURCE OF GIVING

| | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|---|
| Individuals | \$10,045,007 |  |
| Corporations/Foundation | \$4,906,750 |  |
| Planned gifts | \$4,257,621 |  |
| Contracts and grants | \$6,503,969 |  |
| Other (Gifts-in-kind and matching) | \$6,503,969 |  |



Donor support enhances UMSL's ability to serve students, community

The University of Missouri–St. Louis has received more than \$110 million in private gifts, grants, contracts and pledges over the past four years – greatly enhancing the way in which it helps students succeed.

UMSL booked \$26.2 million during the fiscal year that ended June 30. Among the top giving categories was \$3.5 million for annual and endowed scholarships. These funds – directed for merit and need-based scholarships – have burnished UMSL's national reputation for student access and success.

UMSL recently ranked first in Missouri and 53rd nationally among public colleges and universities offering upperclassmen the

most need-based financial aid, according to data compiled by The Student Loan Report. The university's average need-based financial aid for upperclassmen is \$7,712 annually.

"We enroll a large population of non-traditional students who are heavily dependent on financial aid," said Alan Byrd, UMSL's vice provost of enrollment management. "We realized a few years ago that we had a growing population of seniors who were exhausting their financial aid before they finished their degrees."

Among the strategies to help students, UMSL created the Finish Your Degree Scholarship program with funding from private donors and the UMSL Alumni Association and the institution-funded Senior Degree Completion Program. Byrd said the funding is helping drive up UMSL's graduation rate.

A number of Tritons
studied abroad **last**
year

Citizens of the world



UMSL Study Abroad has sent **1,300+ STUDENTS** on study abroad programs since 2009, including 213 students from 2016-17.

1,400+ CREDITS EARNED toward UMSL student degrees during study abroad programs **SINCE 2016.**

Financial aid already received through UMSL is applied to financing study abroad. Additionally, **140 students have received STUDY ABROAD SCHOLARSHIPS** from UMSL since 2016.



"Some of the best and most memorable experiences were the spur-of-the-moment decisions I made that I would never have thought of or followed through with back home prior to my study abroad experience. Attending a poetry reading by Irish writers at the Galway City Museum's café with friends from the creative writing module or accompanying a new friend to the Crane Bar (famous for its pub sessions and storytelling) as he brought along a guitar to join in, let me delve into the unfamiliar and love every minute of it."

Dana Channell, an anthropology and music double major who studied in Galway, Ireland



70 UMSL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS with international universities in more than **40 DIFFERENT COUNTRIES**

YEAR, SEMESTER OR 2-4 WEEK OPTIONS. 70% of students choose short-term, faculty-led programs during winter intersession or summer.



UMSL students have studied (and eaten) in **South & Central America**, all over **Europe, South & Central Africa, East Asia**, the **United Arab Emirates**, as well as **Australia** and **New Zealand**.



Michael Acid, an international business major who studied in Guyana

IN THE SPOTLIGHT



“I love Dr. B. He’s very caring, very genuine. He’s someone who wants the best for his patients and truly wants to help. To me, that says everything about a person.” –Tommy Pham

SEE THE HIT THE BALL

Optometrist Ed Bennett treats Cardinals outfielder Tommy Pham

By Jami Hirsch

Ed Bennett's love of Cardinals baseball started with the 1964 World Series.

"Mike Shannon hit a home run, the Cardinals beat the Yankees, and I was crying," says the University of Missouri–St. Louis professor of optometry, who confesses he was then a Yankees fan. "But within a year or two, I was a Cardinals fan. All the way."

Bennett couldn't have known then that more than five decades later, a Cardinals outfielder would rely on him for help with his game, yet that's exactly what fate had in store.

These days, should Tommy Pham find himself having trouble seeing any of the details inside Busch Stadium, Bennett is his go-to guy.

Pham has keratoconus, a condition that, over time, warps the smooth, curved surface of the cornea – the part of the eye most responsible for sight. The distortion causes a scattering of light, corneal scarring and, for some patients, loss of vision.

Though a treatment procedure several years ago helped stop the progression of the disease, Pham still needs assistance with contact lenses and the monitoring of his condition. When the Cardinals are in St. Louis, Bennett steps in.

"I love Dr. B.," Pham says. "He's very caring, very genuine. He's someone who wants the best for his patients and truly wants to help. To me, that says everything about a person."

As Bennett has treated Pham, the two have begun to work together to build awareness about keratoconus.

In September, Pham received the first-ever Ambassador Award from the National Keratoconus Foundation. It was Bennett who helped present the honor.

"He's worked so hard and been such a wonderful role model, especially for kids," Bennett says. "He'll make a wonderful ambassador."

One story, Bennett adds, specifically illustrates why.

On a sweltering day in July 2016, baseball fans nationwide were enjoying the All-Star game. But somewhere between Missouri and Iowa, Pham and Bennett were on the road together, driving toward a potential new pair of contact lenses.

During conversation Pham shared which books he likes to read.

"Without exception, every one was a self-improvement title," Bennett says. "I was fascinated. It struck something in me. I said, 'Well, you know, I teach a communications course to my second-year optometry students. It's built around a self-assessment tool called the StrengthsQuest.'"

Pham turned around and pulled a copy out of his bag. He'd already done the test.

"That's the heart of Tommy Pham right there," Bennett says. "I've never seen anybody more dedicated to self-improvement. No excuses, plays every game like it's his last. It's really quite remarkable. All I want to do is help keep that dream going." ☰





By
Marisol Ramirez

Lions, tigers and alumni zoo administrators... **oh my!**

Jeff Ettling and Kevin Hertell each became the leader of a zoo this year

The University of Missouri–St. Louis caught a bit of zoo fever in 2017 as two alumni stepped into executive roles at U.S. zoos.

In May, Jeff Ettling became executive director of Sedgwick County Zoo in Wichita, Kansas, only three months after Kevin Hertell had been named zoo and interpretative services manager at Micke Grove Zoo in San Joaquin County, California.

Half a country away, neither knew of the other UMSL alumnus.

Ettling and Hertell inherited distinct zoos, different in size, animal species and stage of development. But they share an understanding of zoo management – one guided by their biology degrees and a scientific approach to care and preservation of wildlife.

Both will tell you today's zoos are a far cry from the early menageries of exotic animals collected for kings. The Association of Zoos & Aquariums and educated animal experts like Ettling and Hertell have transformed a zoo's purpose into one of wildlife conservation.

SEDGWICK COUNTY ZOO Wichita, Kansas

Jeff Ettlting, executive director, PhD biology 2013



Right: Sedgwick County Zoo Executive Director Jeff Ettlting stands along the fence of the new elephant exhibit, which is five acres and boasts the world's largest elephant pool at 550,000 gallons.

Far right: Kevin Hertell, zoo and interpretative services manager of Micke Grove Zoo, holds a Western screech owl. A rescue, like many of the zoo's animals, an eye injury diminished her chances of survival in the wild. (Bea Ahbeck/Lodi News-Sentinel)

Every day, **Jeff Ettlting** walks Sedgwick County Zoo, visiting the animals and remembering the greater purpose of his work.

He wants to ensure that future generations have the same opportunities to experience wildlife as he had growing up.

"We know that a child is more likely to develop pro-environmental behaviors if they're nose to nose with a tiger," Ettlting says. "To do that, we need to get young people to the zoo and make that connection and inspire them to care about wildlife and wild places."

Conservation is one of the two main goals for the new executive director, who partners with programs locally and internationally to study and protect wildlife. His other goal is renovation.

"We're going back and looking at things built in the first decade of the zoo's existence and breathing new life into those exhibits," says Ettlting, who foresees a new, expanded habitat for their Amur leopards and a renovated reptile and amphibian building. "It's all about animal welfare."

Built in 1969, Sedgwick County Zoo stands on 247 acres on the west side of rapidly growing Wichita.

Over the years, the zoo has made upgrades resulting in the Slawson Family Tiger Trek, Koch Orangutan & Chimpanzee Habitat and a revamped rainforest exhibit.

The biggest renovation came in 2016 with a new elephant exhibit – the third largest in the U.S. It attracted 710,000 visitors the year it opened, surpassing the Wichita metropolitan population by about 80,000 people.

"Sedgwick County Zoo is the top tourist attraction in the state of Kansas," says Ettlting, who calls it "the hidden jewel of the plains."

Ettlting spent the majority of his zoo career as herpetology and aquatics curator for the



Saint Louis Zoo, although his time in St. Louis was briefly interrupted for a four-year curator stint at Sedgwick County Zoo in the early '90s.

An endowed partnership between Saint Louis Zoo and the university, through UMSL's Whitney R. Harris World Ecology Center, allowed Ettlting to pursue the PhD he always wanted. He studied Armenian vipers' spatial ecology and holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

In August, Ettlting celebrated three decades of working in zoos.

"If someone had told me 30 years ago that this would be my journey I would have never believed it," he says, "but it has been absolutely wonderful!"



Kevin Hertell calls Micke Grove Zoo “a little gem” just south of Lodi, California.

Established in 1957, the zoo sits on five acres of Micke Grove Regional Park, named after local philanthropists William and Julia Harrison Micke, and has 170 animals of 49 different species.

It’s all Hertell’s to oversee now as the new zoo and interpretive services manager.

“For local school children, adults and students from two nearby universities, this is their zoo,” says Hertell, who notes that Micke Grove is the only zoo between Fresno and Sacramento.

But before Hertell took over, Micke Grove had gone through tough times, losing AZA accreditation and operating without a manager for three years.

“I did my homework,” Hertell says, “and I saw a situation that could be helped and moved forward.”

His reinvigorating leadership and some new funding has spurred improvement projects aimed at gaining back accreditation. Zoo-goers can experience a new playground and look for an expanded enclosure for the snow leopard – the zoo’s biggest animal.

Micke Grove also has an unusual inhabitant – a fossa. A relative to the mongoose and unique to Madagascar, fossa are found in only three or four zoos across the U.S.

Like some, Hertell didn’t always enjoy the zoo.

“A lot of times, I would come away feeling sad after seeing the animals,” says Hertell, who recalls the old practice of stealing animals from the wild for display. “But that’s not the way it is anymore.”

MICKE GROVE ZOO

San Joaquin County, California

Kevin Hertell, zoo and interpretive services manager, MS biology 1992

Zoos like Micke Grove, participate in the AZA’s Species Survival Plan program, helping animals in need and preserving those on the edge of extinction.

Take Micke Grove’s golden eagle, for example. Her damaged wing would have prevented her survival in the wild.

Hertell lives for this type of work and credits his UMSL master’s degree with granting him greater opportunities to do it. He also holds a bachelor’s degree from Missouri State University.

Hertell’s 38-year career with animals – wild and domestic – exposed him to more than 300 species and took him to several states for animal care and environmental specialist work before he ended up at Micke Grove Zoo.

His leadership has good timing too. Micke Grove Zoo just celebrated its 60th anniversary this August. ≡

The College of Business Administration realizes longtime dream of centralized home thanks to alumni support

By Sara Bell

IT'S 1964, A YEAR AFTER the University of Missouri–St. Louis opened its doors, and accounting major Kirk Richter descends the stairs of the old Bellerive clubhouse to visit Emery Turner, the first dean of the College of Business Administration, during office hours. The company and conversation are great, but the backdrop – a converted basement shower room – is less than ideal.

More than five decades later, Richter is now an alumnus, and his route to meet with Charles Hoffman, the current dean of the business college, is a much different one.

Rather than taking a bleak staircase in a dated facility, he walks past the first-floor advising offices in the new Anheuser-Busch Hall to catch an elevator headed to the second floor of UMSL's first business education building. When the doors open, he turns the corner and is greeted by an array of natural light and a small plaque welcoming him to the "Office of the Dean, a gift of Kirk A. and Maureen A. Richter."

Since the early years, Richter has stayed active on numerous boards across the university and has seen UMSL's business college come full circle. From Turner developing and recruiting faculty from the ground floor to the grand opening of Anheuser-Busch Hall in August, he's witnessed each step of the process.

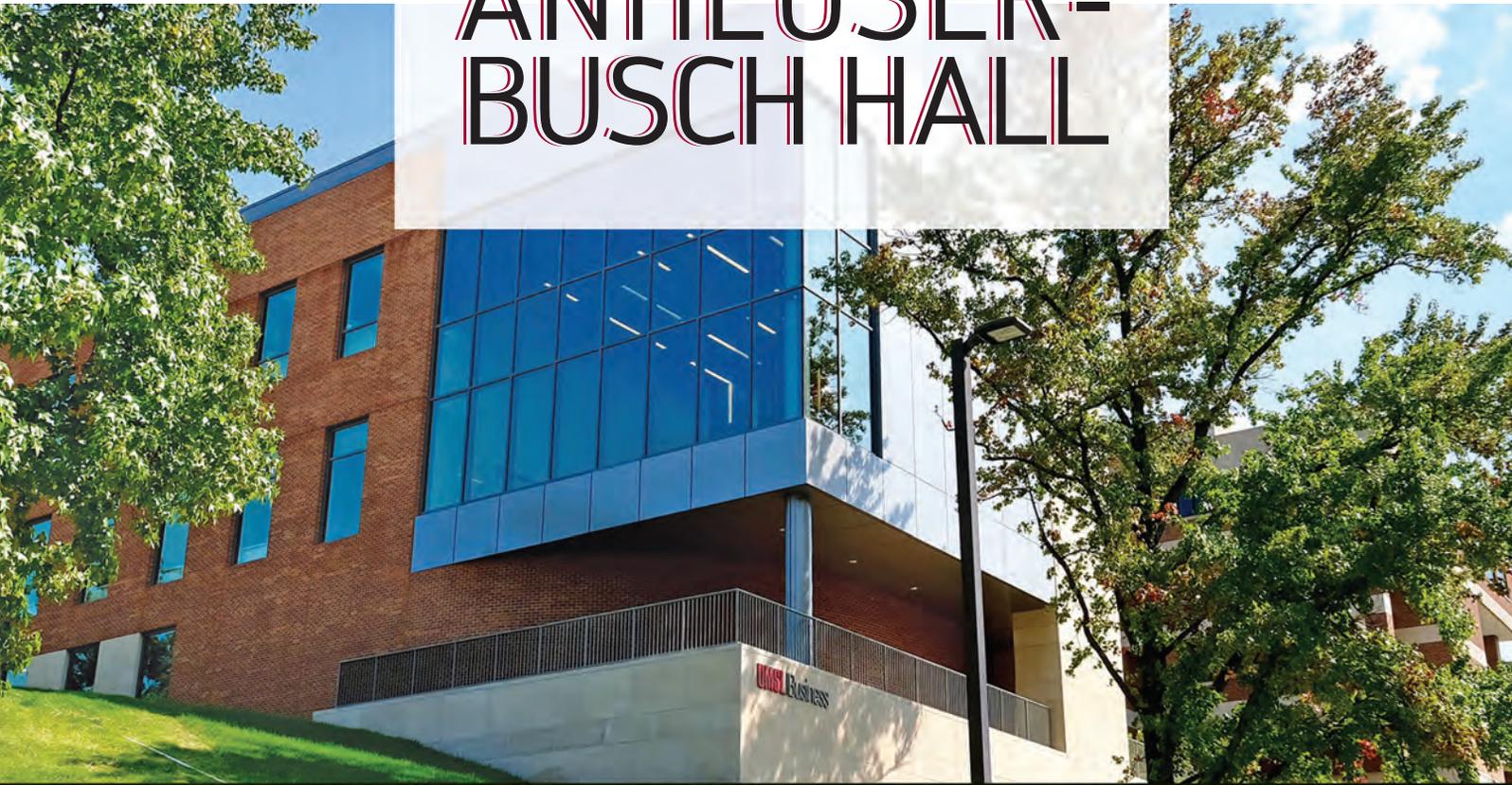
These recollections fueled his contribution to the \$20 million building project, which was fully funded by 725 private and corporate donors along with a matching gift from the state of Missouri.

"I think the fact that they have a modern facility now with all of the technology is going to be a real benefit to the way the instruction is presented," says Richter,

whose career led him to treasurer and vice president roles for Sigma-Aldrich Corporation. "Plus, they have a place they can call home. We never had a place we could call the business college. There were a couple rooms here and there, but there really wasn't a home, and students were scattered all over."

*From 11
Ground Floor
11 to*

ANHEUSER-BUSCH HALL



6

SIX CLASSROOMS

3

THREE CONFERENCE ROOMS

2

TWO SEMINAR ROOMS

LEED GOLD

LEED (LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN) CERTIFIED

51,000/3

THREE STORIES, 51,293 SQUARE FEET

32

32 FACULTY OFFICES

2

TWO STUDENT STUDY/ COLLABORATION SPACES



The three-story building located on North Campus offers first-floor advising areas, six classrooms, two seminar rooms, student social spaces, 32 faculty offices, as well as the dean's suite, all of which are wired with high-grade technology.

Consolidating these spaces into the 51,293-square-foot facility has provided significant improvement for students, faculty members and administrators alike.

"The big thing is the faculty are working more with each other," says Hoffman, who is also a business college alumnus. "The Tower and Express Scripts Hall weren't conducive to spending a lot of time in the office. Anheuser-Busch Hall is so much more open, and each department is learning from the others as far as their involvement and presence."

He adds that the student experience has also enhanced accessibility to advisers,

open classroom settings, top-of-the-line technology and spaces for student collaboration.

Accounting and finance major Luke Walker has already noticed a difference in his education in the few months that he's studied in the space. His favorite feature, the Trading Room, houses eight Bloomberg Terminals and a real-time financial stock ticker. Prior to the fall semester, he had never used a Bloomberg Terminal, but now he returns to the room often, as he is impressed by the power and research capabilities of the software.

"When I first walked into the building, I remember feeling like it was almost unreal," Walker says. "The classrooms are modern, and I like how they are set up for group collaboration and modularity. I also like the lounge areas. I utilize them between classes all the time to sit down with other students and compare notes."

Another highlight for many students is the Dave Ganz Room, a 50-seat, tiered classroom named after the beloved emeritus assistant professor of accounting. An initiative to acquire naming rights for the room was announced in 2010, which resulted in \$1 million in donations from 143 alumni and friends.

Sandra Van Trease, an accounting alumna and advocate for the project, says the longtime professor influenced thousands of students not just in his instruction, but also in his genuine interest in others. She is delighted to see Ganz' 51 years of service to UMSL commemorated through a classroom, a space representative of where he initiated his impact.

"I'm excited about the university's investment in this new facility and that this particular area in Dave's honor is going to be available to students of the future," says Van Trease, a group president for BJC Healthcare. "Students may not have access to Dave as an educator, but I'm confident that the school and the faculty will continue inspiring students."

Hoffman shares this goal as well and hopes the new building will serve as a catalyst for continued growth. Opportunities for development include enhancing curriculum to match industry trends and promoting a second building phase.

The proposed Phase II project would connect Anheuser-Busch Hall to an additional 81,000-square-foot space that would house the remaining business faculty offices and provide more classroom and collaboration areas.

While working toward these changes, Hoffman maintains the vision of the college's first leaders – providing a transformative education through expert faculty.

"We've always been known for the quality of our programs," Hoffman says. "It was certainly the case in the early years and continues today. But we should always be evolving – there's always room to improve." ≡



Next generation

TEACHERS EDUCATING the St. Louis region

Meet five young, inspired teachers influencing local youth after graduating from UMSL's College of Education

By Marisol Ramirez



TO TEACH

TRACE THE ETYMOLOGY of the verb “to teach” to its Old English form “tæcan,” meaning “to show, declare, warn, persuade,” and it immediately becomes clear – there’s more to teaching than imparting specific skill sets. ✨ University of Missouri–St. Louis alumni Ana Barrios, Kaylan Holloway, Samantha Maxvill, Chinara Meeks and Michael Zitzer all shape their students’ knowledge and understanding of the world. They guide students and challenge them. They encourage and support them. They show students the possibility their futures hold. ✨ Only five of the more than 3,000 alumni to earn degrees and certificates from the College of Education since 2012, Barrios, Holloway, Maxvill, Meeks and Zitzer are among the many who stay in the St. Louis region. ✨ They teach across a wide variety of age groups, subject areas and districts, but they all have a shared goal – inspiring students to think critically, act kindly and believe in their potential.

Kaylan Holloway

MEd secondary education 2016

*Central Visual and Performing Arts High School
History*

Holloway knows his Central Visual and Performing Arts High School students need him for more than just a history lesson.

“Sometimes I’m a chef, giving a hungry student a sandwich,” Holloway says. “Sometimes I’m a father figure. Sometimes it’s 11 p.m., and a student calls because he’s about to make a stupid decision and just needs someone to talk to.”

Holloway grew up in north St. Louis and attended St. Louis Public Schools. He’s familiar with some of the struggles his students face, which is why he requested Teach for America place him in SLPS while he earned his certification and master’s degree at UMSL.

His approach to history focuses on a culturally relevant and responsive curriculum.

“My students should be able to pick up a textbook and see the beauty of people that look like them instead of 10 pages of just slavery,” Holloway says.

He embraces the opportunity his subject area offers, blending history lessons with current social justice, political and economic topics.

“We challenge policies,” Holloway says. “We critique the constitution and different laws. I don’t take sides, but it’s my job to facilitate those discussions.”

At CVPA, Holloway started Kings of Distinction, a male leadership program, after noticing a certain population of boys that seemed lost, serving suspensions and not making the honor roll. He’s since seen them hold each other accountable to show up to class, do their homework and stay out of trouble.

Holloway was the 2017 St. Louis Public Schools Teacher of the Year and received a Fox 2 News Tools for Teachers Award.

“Sometimes I’m a chef, giving a hungry student a sandwich, Sometimes I’m a father figure. Sometimes it’s 11 p.m. and a student calls because he’s about to make a stupid decision and just needs someone to talk to.”

—Kaylan Holloway, MEd UMSL



Michael Zitzer

Michael Zitzer

MEd secondary education 2014

MEd educational administration 2016

Maplewood Richmond Heights Middle School
8th-grade math

Zitzer’s math class isn’t about right and wrong answers – it’s about the journey to a solution.

“If you figure out the problem in one try, that day was kind of a waste for you because your brain wasn’t extended,” Zitzer says. “The kid that screws up five times, but eventually gets there, has had the most important day.”

Zitzer implements inquiry-based learning, so that his eighth-grade students at Maplewood Richmond Heights Middle School discover concepts instead of being given steps.

It’s an approach he honed during the last six years teaching math at Hazelwood East Middle School, where Teach for America assigned him while he completed his certification at UMSL and earned two master’s degrees. This year, he switched districts to expand his teaching experience.

While at Hazelwood, Zitzer inspired his students’ critical thinking and confidence – and not only in math.

“I understood that I taught black children, who needed their voices heard, who needed to know that they were important and that the things they were learning in math class could translate to action in their community,” he says.

Zitzer’s approach, shared with other teachers, helped MAP test scores jump 34 percent in the district. He was named 2017 district Teacher of the Year. But Zitzer says the success belongs to the students.

“No one has more persistence and grit than kids growing up facing adversity every day,” he says. “I’m so proud of those kids for what they accomplished for themselves.”

TO
DECLARE



Ana Barrios

Ana Barrios

MEd secondary education 2012

MEd candidate educational administration

Gateway STEM High School

Algebra, Honors pre-calculus and AP calculus

Barrios challenges the stereotype of who can pursue math, not only as a woman, but also as a daughter of immigrant parents from Guatemala and El Salvador.

“The images we get of mathematicians, scientists and engineers are of old white men,” Barrios says. “I want to impact those systems and biases that really influence whether or not a student pursues STEM.”

Barrios came to St. Louis through Teach for America and earned her certification at UMSL, later completing a master’s degree. She’s returned to campus for a second master’s in educational administration.

Barrios has taught at Gateway STEM High School for eight years, recently assuming the role of math department head.

One of her goals is to address the gender gap between honors pre-calculus, which currently has an even gender split, and AP calculus, where only two of 14 students are girls this year.

“We’re going to be thinking about who we’re recommending for honors math,” she says.

In partnership with Vashon High School, Barrios has brought the study abroad Show Me Costa Rica Project to Gateway. For many of her students, it’s the first time they’ve traveled outside the country, been on a plane or even seen the ocean.

“It opens their eyes,” she says. “They come back understanding that there’s more to life than what they know here.”

Chinara Meeks

BSEd elementary and special education 2017

KIPP Wisdom Academy

3rd grade

A drive-by shooting that resulted in the death of Meek's youngest son inspired her to do two things – continue her education and teach in an inner-city school in St. Louis.

"Education has always been something that's helped me overcome things, and I want to do that for other kids," Meeks says. "Because the truth is, these terrible things happen a lot in our city, and kids still have to come to school and perform."

Freshly graduated from UMSL, Meeks teaches third-grade math at KIPP Wisdom Academy, a charter school in south city.

"It's better to reach them early," says Meeks, who also just loves the elementary age group.

It's only been a few months, but she's already making a difference.

"I have conversations, like 'Look, life's hard. I understand that. I'm here for you, and we can work together,'" Meeks says of supporting kids through tough circumstances.

Alongside the standard lessons on multiplication and division, she also teaches character education – a schoolwide initiative.

"We have to teach our scholars how to be great people in society," Meeks says. "Learning to never give up, to be happy about working hard."

In every classroom hang seven guiding principles: zest, grit, optimism, self-control, gratitude, social intelligence and curiosity. Her scholars can tell you what each means.

"I'm always exhausted when I leave here," Meeks says. "But outside of being a parent, I've never done more rewarding work in my life."



Chinara Meeks

TO SHOW



Samantha Maxvill

Samantha Maxvill

BSEd elementary and special education 2017

Fort Zumwalt Mid Rivers Elementary School

Kindergarten

Crayon posters, number charts, an ABC rug and a little library in alphabetized buckets are only the start to all there is to look at and learn from in Maxvill's kindergarten classroom.

"I wanted it be colorful, warm and inviting," says Maxvill, who teaches at Fort Zumwalt Mid Rivers Elementary School. "For some kindergartners, this is their first classroom setting if they haven't gone to preschool before. Many don't read or write yet."

She teaches them letters, numbers, shapes and colors – the foundation for everything to come. Kindergarten is often the first time the 5- and 6-year-olds learn alongside other students as well.

"Probably 80 percent of kindergarten is teaching them to be social," says Maxvill, whose teaching style prioritizes positivity and encouragement. "I have to teach them to be good people and build that character. At 5 and 6, they can do a lot more than people think. You have to hold them accountable and put the responsibility on them."

It's Maxvill's first teaching job after graduating from UMSL this spring, and she couldn't feel any more blessed to be doing what she loves. ≡

"I always knew I wanted to teach the little ones. I remember my kindergarten teacher, who still comes to mind immediately. I want to be able to have that influence on another young child."

—Samantha Maxvill, BSEd UMSL

TO
PERSUADE

LYDA KREWSON ST. LOUIS' FIRST WOMAN MAYOR, SECOND WITH UMSL DEGREE

After breaking the glass ceiling, Krewson aims to bring the city's revitalization successes to new areas

By Steve Walentik



Several reminders of the history Lyda Krewson made last spring hang on the walls of her second-floor office overlooking Market Street at City Hall in downtown St. Louis.

Among them are the invitation and program from inaugural ceremonies on April 18 and a framed page from the April 13 edition of the St. Louis Metro Sentinel topped with the headline: "A message from the city's first female mayor."

That message was a simple thank-you to the citizens of St. Louis, who voted her into office with more than 67 percent support after she emerged from a tightly contested Democratic primary the previous month.

The significance of breaking through the gender barrier is not lost on Krewson after 45 men held the job before her.

"I think it's great," Krewson says one morning in early September after sipping from the cup of coffee in front of her on the round marble table inside her office. "You model what you see, so it sort of demonstrates to little girls and young women everywhere these opportunities are open to them too."

But she's quick to add: "I think this day and age most people know that – as opposed to 40 years ago when I started out in my working career."

Indeed, opportunities for women seemed harder to come by when Krewson was trying to break into the accounting field in 1977.

She remains grateful to the University of Missouri–St. Louis for the bachelor's degree that helped her do so and prepared her for her career.

Krewson – the second St. Louis mayor to graduate from UMSL after Vince Schoemehl, who served three terms from 1981 to 1993 – had already earned one bachelor's degree in psychology and special education at Northeast Missouri State when she enrolled in UMSL's accounting program. She took classes at night while working during the day at St. Vincent's Psychiatric Hospital.

"I had good enough grades to get a really good job," Krewson says of landing a position at the firm Touche Ross & Co. – now Deloitte – not long after her December 1976 graduation. "I will say that UMSL has been integral to my success. It was a serious education that enabled me to really launch my career in accounting, and I sincerely appreciate that opportunity."

Krewson worked at Touche Ross until 1984, when she moved to PGAV Destinations. In 33 years there, she moved up the ranks to become vice president of finance.

She tried to get involved in her Central West End neighborhood and ran unsuccessfully for school board in 1989, but she hardly seemed on a path that would lead to the mayor's office.

That changed in 1997, when – two years after watching her husband, architect Jeffrey Krewson, shot and killed in an attempted car-jacking – she decided to run for the 28th Ward seat on the Board of Alderman. "I wanted to



Lyda Krewson peers out the window of her office overlooking Market Street at City Hall in downtown St. Louis.

make my neighborhood better,” Krewson says, by way of explaining her decision to enter city politics. “It wasn’t too much more complicated than that.”

Krewson has tried to do that over the past two decades, working on behalf of the Central West End and the Skinker-DeBaliviere neighborhoods, helping bring the city together with Forest Park Forever in a public-private partnership to secure funding and maintenance for the park and leading the successful push for a citywide smoking ban.

She didn’t envision someday making a run at the mayor’s office until five or six years ago, and even then, she knew she wouldn’t launch a campaign while longtime Mayor Francis Slay – a Krewson ally – was still around.

But when Slay announced in the spring of 2016 that he would not seek a fifth term, Krewson decided to go for it. She was motivated by the same desire to improve neighborhoods that propelled her run for alderman 20 years ago.

The city’s challenges are well known. Krewson in particular would like to work to improve public safety, address the high rate of vacancy prevalent in some parts of the city, improve service delivery to all residents and help bridge the racial gap while trying to lead the city toward racial equality.

She’s also a believer that the city and county need to come together in some fashion to be able to better address big issues and push the region forward.

“I didn’t look at the job as daunting. I don’t look at it as daunting today,” Krewson says. “I think about a lot of the good things that are happening in the city today – NGA, Cortex, our medical centers, our financial institutions, our cultural institutions, which are really second-to-none, and they’re free. The quality of life we have here. You look at what’s happening in many of our neighborhoods – Cherokee Street, South Grand, old North, Hyde Park, the Loop, the Grove. I hope to build off of those to expand that success across St. Louis.” ☰



A look into the lives
of **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**
who choose UMSL

Several international students share their experiences at an American university in a Midwest city

By Steve Walentik



Nkazimulo Sibanda has a hard time squaring the kind greetings he regularly receives around the University of Missouri–St. Louis campus with the perceptions he had of the United States when he arrived here last winter.

They'd been shaped by many of the American news reports that have circulated around the globe in recent years – images of racial strife, violence and political rhetoric seemingly unwelcoming to outsiders.

If Sibanda is being honest, those things almost kept him away. He sparred with the same concerns that many others have apparently been feeling at a time when nearly 40 percent of U.S. colleges and universities have reported seeing a decline in applications from international students.

"I feel like coming to the U.S. was scary," says Sibanda, whose family hails from Zimbabwe and who grew up in Botswana in southern Africa. "It felt scary.

"There's a little bit of anxiety when you go anywhere new, but coming here specifically, I felt like there were a lot of things that I was going to encounter inevitably – things like racism and so on and so forth."

Still, Sibanda decided his fears shouldn't deter him from pursuing the offer of a scholarship to study on this side of the Atlantic.

He's one of the roughly 900 current international students who've chosen UMSL, and their presence enriches the campus as they work to better their own futures.



Not alone UMSL's international student population includes individuals from six continents and more than 70 countries.

International students don't always expect to find that level of diversity when they imagine what it will be like to study in the United States. They often develop fast friendships with one another.

"I feel it brings people together," says Nino Obanor, a junior information systems major from Serbia. "Everyone who comes here from

a different place – it's not from here. So that helps you relate, whether it's from South America or Africa or whatever. People relate just based on not being familiar with the culture here, not being born here."

Obanor, who began his time at UMSL as a member of the Tritons men's basketball program, attended a prep school in Los Angeles before beginning college, so he got a head start acclimating to the United States and its culture.

It is almost always a challenge for students living abroad for the first time, away from family and friends and the routines of daily life.

Getting involved is the surest way to get over any initial homesickness.

"UMSL has a very welcoming atmosphere for international students," says Prachi Talwar, a junior information systems major from New Delhi, India. "You have so much to do. You never get bored on campus. You can join clubs and organizations and it's not just academic stuff."

Talwar's involvement has run the gamut from membership in finance and accounting clubs to joining a group for board-games enthusiasts. They are good ways to meet people and build a network of friends.

Left: The International House at UMSL serves as a home base for many international students. Here a group of them and their American peers gather for a group shot during an early fall semester barbecue.

Below left: Nursing student and soon graduate Qinyi Sharif takes advantage of UMSL College of Nursing's vast network of clinical opportunities. She's completing the BSN's clinical component at Missouri Baptist Medical Center.

The adjustment Establishing a support system becomes all the more important because international students inevitably will have moments of adjustment where they could use a little help.

From an academic standpoint, it could be understanding the importance American professors tend to place on homework assignments or the need to take advantage of extra credit opportunities – extra credit being a foreign concept in some countries.

Away from class, they might need help knowing how to format a resume or to apply for an internship.

The International House is a place international students can turn to when they need questions answered.

Annie Mbale, a graduate student from Malawi, is one of the International Student Leaders living there this year. She has made it a point to try to share wisdom she's acquired since beginning as a student at Jefferson College in 2011 and coming to UMSL in 2014.

"I know it's a struggle," Mbale says. "I was lucky enough that I had an American family to show me. But I remember many mistakes. I didn't even know that people had to do taxes – things like that that you would expect people to know, I didn't know.

"There are things that they look simple, but we don't know, so whenever I can help, I try to help as much as I can."

The I-House, as it's commonly called, also exists to help facilitate cultural exchange, both among fellow international students and their American peers, with regular events designed to highlight a particular country and its customs.

"You see Americans learning from international students and international students learning from Americans," Mbale says.

"That's why we always encourage Americans to be here because they're the ones who are going to teach people things like, 'We eat a hot dog like this.'"

The exchanges go both ways.

"I don't think people typically understand the pressure I guess that there is to make local friends – the need," Sibanda says. "I wanted to. It's really what I wanted coming here. Going all across the world and then to not know the people that live here would be very frustrating, and I think it would be for a lot of international students."

Academic pursuits Culture is never the only thing international students are studying.

Mbale earned a bachelor's degree in international business last spring and is now pursuing her MBA with an eye on helping women entrepreneurs build their businesses when she returns to Malawi.

Obanor came to UMSL intent on pursuing a health-related degree, perhaps physical therapy. But he decided to change majors after a friend exposed him to coding.

"I took an information systems class and found out there's so many opportunities in technology," Obanor says, "so I kind of fell in love with that."

Obanor has taken advantage of UMSL's proximity to the growing tech scene in St. Louis. He recently gained valuable experience working as an intern for British startup company WIFIPLUG through the Ameren Accelerator, an energy-focused incubator created through the partnership of Ameren, UMSL Accelerate and Capital Innovators. It's housed in Cortex, the innovation and technology district that resides in the city's Central West End and Forest Park South neighborhoods.

Qinyi Sharif has pursued an academic path a bit less common for students arriving from overseas: nursing.

"I came here and my first major was biology; I wanted to be a doctor," says Sharif, who arrived from China in the winter of 2012. "But then I wasn't sure what I wanted to do after I graduated because the specialty degree to become a doctor is still a long time."

Sharif met her husband that summer at UMSL, and he and his family suggested she look into the BSN program, pointing out the job prospects it could provide. She is currently in her final semester and completing her clinical work at Missouri Baptist Medical Center. She expects to hit the job market in St. Louis – now her home – this winter.

Below right: Information systems major Nino Obanor (far left) gained experience in the St. Louis tech scene through an Ameren Accelerator internship he had with British startup company WIFIPLUG.





Left: It's selfie-taking time for Annie Mbale (left) and Prachi Talwar, who found friendship as part of the UMSL international community and as students in the university's College of Business Administration. The two pose in front of Joan Mitchell's 1992 piece "Ici" at the Saint Louis Art Museum, a place they frequent in the city's iconic Forest Park.

Living in St. Louis The surrounding communities play an important part in the experience international students have at UMSL, whether they eventually settle here or return home.

Obanor likes visiting the Bevo neighborhood and dining at one of its Bosnian restaurants because of the similarities the food has to what he grew up eating in Serbia.

It can be hard for many international students to find authentic cuisine, as Sibanda has discovered. But he's become partial to eating at a local Mexican restaurant.

Talwar has a couple Indian restaurants she enjoys, but she's also developed a taste for Imo's Pizza, the local standby known for its Provel-cheese-topped St. Louis-style pizza.

The MetroLink, in particular, makes it easy to experience places in downtown St. Louis or the Delmar Loop. And it's not just dining.

Talwar and her friends have grown fond of riding the train down to the Gateway Arch grounds and hanging out together there, chatting as they look out at the Mississippi River.

Not long after he arrived, Sibanda joined a group of people on a visit to Tower Grove Park to go geocaching, an outdoor treasure hunting game using GPS-enabled devices. It remains one of the experiences he remembers most fondly since arriving here.

Mbale doesn't like to spend too much time sitting. So when she has a break from class during the week, she might head to Forest Park, either to get lost in one of the galleries at the Saint Louis Art Museum or simply to explore the outdoors.

She usually keeps her camera app open so she can take pictures and send them to her younger sisters back home.

"There's always something happening," Mbale says. "There are always free events to attend. I'm very outgoing, and I like that the city offers me those opportunities." ≡

PAT TILLMAN SCHOLAR HEATH McCLUNG

sets sights on next-generation prosthetics

By Evie Hemphill



From Legos to engines, tinkering with things has always been a source of joy for Heath McClung. Now the University of Missouri–St. Louis upperclassman is applying that interest in a field that can vastly improve lives.

It's not a career path that the Army veteran anticipated. He was injured while serving in Afghanistan in 2011, and the years of recovery that followed changed everything. After enduring more than a dozen surgeries, he made the difficult decision to have his lower left leg amputated. He also decided to earn a degree in engineering.

"I was making a conscious decision to rely on a certain technology the rest of my life. I thought, 'I want to learn everything I can about this,'" recalls McClung, who started his UMSL coursework just two weeks after the operation in 2014. A few months later, he received his first prosthesis and surprised classmates by moving from a wheelchair one day to walking the next.

One of about two million amputees who live in the U.S., he notes that the population is expected to grow with the rise of Type 2 diabetes among aging baby boomers. He hopes his skills and unique perspective can help address some of the challenges amputees face.

In fact, McClung's already gaining experience in the field as he finishes his degree and looks toward a graduate program in prosthetics and orthotics at Northwestern University next summer.

"I get brought in to see newer amputees and amputees that are struggling – and anybody that just has questions – because I live it," McClung says of his job at P&O Care in St. Louis. "It's one thing to be educated in the technology and understand its limitations, but it's another to depend on it every day."

Alongside all of these endeavors, the UMSL student has also managed to earn a prestigious national scholarship. He's one of two Missourians among this year's Pat Tillman Scholars – a cohort of 61 people selected from a pool of thousands.

"It's very humbling," McClung says of the recognition and the related leadership summit he attended

in July. "Ryan Barrett, the first-ever UM System Tillman Scholar [in 2016], was kind of my mentor when I came to UMSL. And the thing that I love about the Tillman Foundation is that everyone is there to do something greater than themselves – helping their community and making a big impact in whatever their area is."

As interested as he is in the science behind prosthetics, McClung says it's the chance to directly help people with their health and activity levels that he finds most rewarding. He loves putting a smile on others' faces – and is known to do exactly that among classmates and fellow veterans at UMSL. It's just how he operates.

"I do what I need to do and try to lead by example and help other people through their recovery process, too," he says. "There's no other veteran amputees on campus, but every veteran comes with something. Every person does." ≡



JENNIFER McKNIGHT'S new class pairs design students with dementia patients

By Evie Hemphill

Every course that Jennifer McKnight teaches at the University of Missouri–St. Louis demands a lot from her graphic design students, and the one she piloted over the summer was no exception. They faced an especially tall order: making a difference for people living with dementia.

In collaboration with local retirement community Brooking Park and visiting Belgian designer Andrea Wilkinson, McKnight connected each class member with a different memory-care resident, asking students to create positive, interactive experiences.

“Graphic designers are trained to problem solve and test their solutions,” says McKnight, an associate professor in the Department of Art and Design. “And they’re creative about how they do that, which means many populations find those skills useful.”

She recalls how one student, after a long struggle to communicate with his assigned partner, eventually found a way to help the resident.

“He realized her best moments were when she could engage her intellect to critique certain images,” McKnight explains. “She seemed to derive joy from it, from the way the patterns worked. And while she wasn’t able to make art with her hands anymore, she still had this huge breadth of knowledge.”

He reached out to the patient’s family to learn who her favorite artists were. Then he showed her works by those artists to see which ones elicited the most delight before creating a bound book for her to keep. It’s filled with conversation prompts and visuals.

“Now a caregiver or family member who isn’t from the art world can help her to this moment of pleasure,” McKnight says. “I loved what this did not just for her but for my student, who really put himself out there and collected a lot of data in order to do this.”

Other projects included a guide to doing art projects with older audiences and a jigsaw puzzle featuring one patient’s most cherished aspects of his life. All of the designs demonstrate the intelligence and thoughtfulness of McKnight’s students, who have become one of her greatest joys.

“I cannot get enough of it,” she says. “Watching them come into the program and become masters of material they thought was possibly too hard – and learn over and over that hard things are not things to be scared of – it’s so exciting. They go off into the rest of their lives confident about exploring other new areas.”

She hopes to offer the Design and Dementia class again soon. It resonated on multiple levels for McKnight, whose own mother was among the participating dementia patients.

“As a family member, I tend to pay attention to what’s missing instead of what’s there, and there’s quite a bit there,” McKnight says, emphasizing how one of her students helped remind her of that. “We often think of dementia as depressing. But what we found in this class are people who are very alive and full of resources and skills. They have so much to offer the rest of us.”

SYNERGY PHARMACEUTICALS CEO GARY JACOB'S new drug helps keep you regular

By Marisol Ramirez

What began as Gary Jacob's research into colon cancer at Synergy Pharmaceuticals turned into TRULANCE, a drug approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in January to treat a different, albeit discomfiting, gastrointestinal concern – chronic idiopathic constipation.

Jacob traces his start all the way back to his 1969 University of Missouri–St. Louis bachelor's degree in chemistry. He earned a PhD in biochemistry from the University of Wisconsin–Madison before working as a research scientist at Monsanto and breaking into drug discovery with the company's acquisition of G.D. Searle in 1985.

His journey to TRULANCE began in 2000, a year before Synergy Pharmaceuticals had its name and when Jacob left Monsanto/G.D. Searle to accept a position as the biotechnology company's chief scientific officer. By 2003, he had risen to CEO.

In collaboration with Synergy's Chief Scientific Officer Kunwar Shailubhai, Jacob developed plecanatide, the compound branded as TRULANCE. It has similar structure and functions to the GI peptide uroguanylin that plays a key role in fluid transport in the small intestine and inflammation in the bowel.

Early results showed that when uroguanylin was down-regulated in polyps and colorectal cancer tissue, people were at greater risk of developing colon cancer.

However, Jacob and his team knew that developing a prophylactic agent to prevent colon cancer would be too large an undertaking for a small biotech company and would delay further benefits of plecanatide from reaching people sooner.

"It can take tens of thousands of patients and many years of clinical trials to prove an agent can reduce the chance of developing colon cancer and market it for that purpose," Jacob says. "So we morphed our goal.

"FDA approval of plecanatide for a therapeutic target could happen much quicker and was a more attractive approach for a small biotech company."

He and his team decided to develop plecanatide to treat chronic idiopathic constipation and irritable bowel syndrome with constipation, which, in itself, is a tall order.



Clinical trials have involved thousands of patients, lasting more than seven years. And since Synergy went public in 2008 and was listed on the Nasdaq Stock Market in 2011, Jacob has raised more than \$750 million in capital to advance the plecanatide drug development program.

Such investment provides hope for the 40 million people in the U.S. that suffer with CIC and IBS-C. Neither GI disorder has a cure. "The business I'm in really matters to people," Jacob says. "That's what is really rewarding – that the work you do can directly benefit people."

Now with FDA approval of TRULANCE for the treatment of CIC in hand, Jacob and the Synergy team are chasing down a second approval of the drug to treat IBS-C. They expect the FDA's decision in January 2018. ☰

DOCTORAL STUDENT MATT AUSTIN tries to unlock mystery behind bumblebee populations

By Steve Walentik

Matt Austin's search for clues has carried him from the Dunlap Cognitive Ecology Lab at the University of Missouri–St. Louis into the fields at Shaw Nature Reserve and even to some of the nation's leading natural history collections.

The puzzle the third-year doctoral student is trying to solve is why some species of bumblebees are in increasing danger of dying off at a time when others are thriving.

Everyone, ultimately, has a stake in learning the answer.

"Bumblebees are not only major pollinators of a lot of agricultural crops, but also our wildflowers in North America," Austin says. "In addition to promoting global food security, they maintain the integrity of our native ecosystems."

The decline in bumblebees has been linked to human-induced environmental changes such as the loss of habitat, climate change and the spread of pathogens, pesticides and invasive species, but not all 250 of the world's bumblebee species are responding to these changes in the same way.

Austin's work is focused on the seven species that can be found natively in the St. Louis area. Four of them – *Bombus fraternus*, *Bombus fervidus*, *Bombus pensylvanicus* and *Bombus auricomus* – have been declining while the others – *Bombus impatiens*, *Bombus griseocollis* and *Bombus bimaculatus* – are stable or even increasing.

"It likely indicates that there are species-specific traits that determine their response to human-induced environmental changes," Austin says. "I'm trying to uncover those."

Right now, the only species about which much is known

is *Bombus impatiens*, the most commonly studied bumblebee in the eastern half of North America.

Austin is hoping to gain insights about the others by observing their behavior.

He's also attempting to glean more by studying pinned collections at the Illinois Natural History Survey in Champaign, the Field Museum in Chicago and the Smithsonian Institute in Washington. He's measured phenotypic traits such as body size and head width to see if there is a link that could explain the population trends.

"I like that he has an enthusiasm for combining pretty hardcore science with these conservation questions," says Aimee Dunlap, an assistant professor of biology at UMSL.

Austin, a Kirkwood, Missouri, native, worked with Professor Carl Gerhardt, researching gray tree frogs and their communication, while

earning his undergraduate degree in biology at the University of Missouri–Columbia in 2014.

His work with bumblebees has earned him recognition in the form of the Mickey Scudder Scholarship in Field Biology from the Webster Groves Nature Study Society, which helped fund his research last summer, and the TWA Scholarship from the University of Missouri System. He has also received a research grant funded by Terracon and the Terracon Foundation and awarded through the Whitney R. Harris World Ecology Center at UMSL.

Austin expects bumblebees to remain his focus, not only for the dissertation he'll soon begin plotting but also the career of teaching and research he plans to launch after completing his degree. ≡





Opal Jones is a woman pulled in many directions. Since becoming the president and CEO of DOORWAYS in 2012, she hasn't had two workdays that played out quite the same way. Any given morning, she could be focused on fundraising for the St. Louis-based HIV/AIDS housing and support services organization only to be interrupted suddenly by a number of more pressing administrative matters.

By Sara Bell

OPAL JONES

works to house
St. Louisans
with HIV/AIDS

Five years into the top leadership role, the University of Missouri–St. Louis alumna embraces the uncertainty of her daily responsibilities by channeling the enduring spirit of her clients, support of colleagues and the business acumen she acquired at UMSL.

"It's very interesting work that's always evolving," says Jones, who received a BSBA in management in 2000 and an MBA in August. "I've also enjoyed the complexity. I love to have my mind challenged and to be a problem solver, which you have to be in a nonprofit environment."

There are nearly 6,000 people living with HIV/AIDS in the St. Louis area, many of whom face financial, physical and emotional obstacles. In 2016, Jones and her DOORWAYS team served 1,700 clients as well as 1,240 family members through comprehensive housing programs ranging from rental and utility assistance to 24-hour care. The nonprofit organization is also focused on providing holistic programs that address generational poverty, mental health and substance abuse.

DOORWAYS is the only organization of its kind in the region, so Jones finds her work critical to improving the quality of life and health outcomes for Missourians and Illinoisans impacted by the disease as well as preventing further spread.

Having previously served as director of DOORWAYS' residential programs, Jones misses the daily visits to properties spread across the city. However, she is still very much exposed to the distressing realities of HIV/AIDS from her desk in the Central West End.

Directly above the organization's administrative office is the Cooper House, which offers 36 private rooms with baths, 24-hour protective oversight and nursing care, dining services and recreational areas to DOORWAYS clients, many of whom are transitioning out of homelessness.

"I've seen grown men walk in our doors 6 feet tall and 80-something pounds in a dire situation," Jones says. "Today, they're here looking as healthy as you or me. When you witness lives transform in that way and watch residents re-engage with their families – that's a big deal. To see those individuals thrive, despite their circumstances, is the fulfilling part of what we do."

She adds that many clients and children impacted by the organization's mission have gone on to pursue higher education – an opportunity which wasn't a certainty in her own life.

"My education opened a lot of doors for me," Jones says. "I was a child who really didn't understand anything about higher education and didn't come from a highly educated family, but I knew I needed to go to college to have options. I'm glad UMSL is there to meet people's needs by meeting them where they are – similar to how we are with our client population." ☰

60s



Kirk Richter, BSBA 1968, received the 2017 UMSL Business Dean's Medal at the Salute to Business Award Ceremony on May

4. Kirk is retired from Sigma-Aldrich and served as president of the UMSL Alumni Association.

Robert Lindsey, BA 1969, was awarded the Elmer Belsha Leadership Award by North County, Inc., on May 19. Robert is editor and publisher of Independent News in St. Louis.

Donald Pearline, BA 1969, was honored by the Kol Rinah Men's Club for 25 years of service including a successful merger of the men's clubs of BSKL and Kol Rinah.



Dennis Reagan, BSBA 1974, received a 2017 UMSL Salute to Business Award on May 4. Denny is president and CEO of the Mundy Theatre in St. Louis.

Joseph Gorder, BSBA 1979, was named vice chairman of American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers. Joseph is chairman, president and CEO of Valero Energy Corporation in San Antonio.

70s

Patrick Gadell, BA 1973, received the 2017



Outstanding Volunteer Award presented by the UMSL Alumni Association at the annual IGNITE! conference.



Linda Brown Reed, BA 1976, was named a 2017 Trailblazer by UMSL in celebration of the diverse and exceptional

accomplishments of women. Linda is a practicing attorney and president of the African American Chapter of the UMSL Alumni Association.

80s

John Bookstaver, BA 1980, was named vice president for Academic Affairs & Enrollment Management at St. Charles (Mo.) Community College.



Diann Gross, BSBA 1980, received a 2017 UMSL Salute to Business Award on May 4. Diann is senior partner at Ernst & Young in St. Louis.

Mary Edwards, BM 1974, was inducted into the St. Louis Media Hall of Fame. Mary is a producer for St. Louis Public Radio.



M. Edwards

Gwendolyn Hooks, BSEd 1976, was honored at the 48th NAACP Image Awards Ceremony in the category of Outstanding Children's Literary Work for her book, "Tiny Stitches: The Life of Medical Pioneer Vivien Thomas," published by Lee and Low Books.

Daniel Sheffield, BSBA 1977, joined Jazz St. Louis as chief financial officer.

Joseph Curtis, BSBA 1978, MBA 1984, was appointed chief credit officer at Bank Star in Pacific, Mo.

Margaret Kruse, BSBA 1978, MAcc 1988, wrote "Old Jamestown Across the Ages: Highlights and Stories of Old Jamestown, Missouri," published by CreateSpace Independent Publishing.



Dale Oberkfell, BSBA 1978, was appointed president of St. Louis' Midwest BankCentre. Dale was also named among St. Louis

Business Journal's 2017 Chief Financial Officer of the Year recipients.

David Tuberty, BA 1981, BSBA 1991, joined the City of Hazelwood, Mo., as director of finance.

Steven Grant, BM 1982, received a Doctorate of Ministry degree from Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pa.

Joseph Wallington, BSBA 1982, was named president of Jones' Natural Chews in Rockford, Ill.

Warner Baxter, BSBA 1983, was named the 2017 Man of the Year by Variety the Children's Charity of St. Louis. Warner is president and CEO of Ameren.



Sara Foster, BA 1983, was appointed by the Missouri Board of Education to serve on the Normandy

Schools Collaborative Governing Board. Sara is executive vice president for Commerce Bancshares, Inc., in St. Louis.



Making UMSL proud! 2017 Distinguished Alumni and Outstanding Young Alumni awards

Each year UMSL recognizes six alumni for their extraordinary commitment to making the world a better place through service to others. The university presents its Distinguished Alumni Awards and its Outstanding Young Alumni Award at its annual Founders Dinner, held Oct. 5 this year at the Ritz-Carlton in Clayton, Missouri.

Distinguished Alumni

Rita Swiener

BA 1970, professor, licensed clinical therapist and founder and executive director of Santa's Helpers, Inc., an organization she began in 1968 while still a student at UMSL

Joe Stieven

BSBA 1982, MBA 1985, founder of Stieven Capital Advisors, recognized by American Banker as the top sell-side research analyst for the Midwest

Brian Owens

BM 2008, a singer and songwriter with a social conscience, a St. Louis Symphony artist in residence, a UMSL community artist in residence and founder and CEO of LIFE Arts Inc.

Sandra Marks

BSBA 1981, senior vice president at Clayco and founder of Marks & Associates, a leader in the development of minority and women-owned businesses and community programs nationwide

Gary Jacob

BS 1969, chairman and CEO of Synergy Pharmaceuticals and co-inventor of Synergy's flagship drug plecanatide, branded as TRULANCE

Outstanding Young Alumni

Antionette Carroll

BS 2009, MA 2012, founder and CEO of Creative Reaction Lab, a social enterprise that educates and challenges cities to co-create solutions with black and Latinx populations



Bliss

Joe Freund, MAcc 2007, to Kristin Wheeler on Aug. 12.
Randall Lewis, BSEE 2010, to Kalin Cobb on May 28.
Michael Seiter, BSBA 2010, to Jessica Wall on June 10.
Dean Streed, BSEd 2011, to **Deaven Omohundro**, BSEd 2013, on July 22.
Jacob Cooper, BS 2013, to Danielle Johnson on April 15.
Bryan Gerau, BSBA 2013, to Darby Reynolds on April 28.
Brittany Maass, BA 2013, to Tim Cummins on April 29.
Samantha Zumsteg, BSN 2014, to Joshua Wissmann on May 27.
Jennifer Gerlomes, MA 2015, to Matthew Medel on July 15.
Amanda Little, BSN 2015, to Dylan Biondo on May 20.
Andrew Prouty, BSBA 2015, to Amanda Schaffner on April 22.
Adrienne Weber, BES 2015, to Mark Mikecin on July 8.
Carly Farris, BS 2016, to Hunter Hebron on May 7.
Paul Luong, OD 2016, to Jennifer Tenholder on May 27.

Donald Mueth, BSBA 1984, received a 2017 UMSL Salute to Business Award on May 4. Don is chief operating officer at Asset Consulting Group in St. Louis.



Teri Murray, MEd 1987, was re-elected to serve as board treasurer for the American Association of Colleges of

Nursing. Teri is dean of the School of Nursing at Saint Louis University.

Melissa Rodgers, BS 1987, joined Compass Health medical group in Sullivan, Mo., as a doctor of osteopathy.



Ann Riley, MA 1984, was appointed to vice provost for libraries and university librarian at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Bryan Hollenbach, BSBA 1985, was named to the New North Board of Directors in Green Bay, Wis. Bryan is executive vice president at Green Bay Packaging.

Floris Homan, BS 1985, PhD 1989, joined Alnylam Pharmaceuticals in Albany, N.Y., as senior director of quality control.

Susan Goldberg, MBA 1986, joined the Barnes-Jewish Hospital Board of Directors.

Renee Hardin-Tammons, BSAJ 1986, was appointed by Missouri Governor Eric Greitens to fill the position of Associate Circuit Court Judge for the 21st Judicial Circuit, which covers St. Louis County. Renee is a provisional municipal judge for the City of Berkeley and the City of Woodson Terrace.

James Mack, BSBA 1986, was promoted to lead budget analyst of the technology operations business unit of AT&T in St. Louis.

Douglas Williams, BSBA 1986, joined Thomas Industrial Coatings in Pevely, Mo., as chief financial officer.

Joanne Kearbey, BSBA 1987, was named principal of Brown Smith Wallace Insurance Advisory Services in St. Louis.



Patricia Bedborough, BSBA 1988, was named among St. Louis Business Journal's 2017 Chief Financial

Officer of the Year recipients. Patricia is CFO of the Parkway School District in St. Louis.



Elizabeth Lawson, BSBA 1988, was named vice president of finance for Barnes-Jewish St. Peters Hospital

and Progress West Hospital, both in Missouri.

Jean Anderson, BSW 1989, joined Prairie View, a mental health center in Wichita, Kan., as a licensed clinical social worker.

Barbara Bentrup, BSBA 1989, was named among St. Louis Business Journal's 2017 Chief Financial Officer of the Year recipients. Barbara is CFO and corporate counsel at Delta Dental of Missouri.

Mark Hingtgen, MPPA 1989, was appointed vice president for Johns Hopkins Medicine and chief financial officer for the School of Medicine in Baltimore.



M. Hingtgen

Kathy Kristof-Chapman, BSBA 1989, joined WILsquare Capital as controller.

90s



Audrey Katcher, BSBA 1990, was named a 2017 Trailblazer by UMSL in celebration of the diverse and

exceptional accomplishments of women. Audrey is partner in RubinBrown's business advisory services group in St. Louis.

Joseph Keifer, BSBA 1990, was appointed by Missouri Governor Eric Greitens to the Missouri State Employees Retirement System Board of Trustees. Joseph is managing partner and co-founder of Cornerstone Wealth Management in St. Louis.

Gregory Lukeman, MBA 1990, was selected to participate in the 2017-18 cohort of FOCUS St. Louis Impact Fellows. Gregory is the national development director at The Oasis Institute in St. Louis.



Laura Conrad, BSBA 1991, was named among St. Louis Business Journal's 2017 Chief Financial Officer of the Year recipients. Laura

is CFO of Lawrence Group in St. Louis.

Laura Stobbs, BSBA 1991, joined Grace Hill Settlement House in St. Louis as associate vice president of human resources and administration.



First graduating class celebrates 50th reunion

Members of the class of 1967 gathered May 13 to rejoice in a walk down memory lane during the spring commencement ceremony for the College of Arts and Sciences. Donning golden robes and red stoles, nearly 20 members of the first graduating class processed with a 50th reunion banner held by Lois Brockmeier Schoemehl, who earned a bachelor's degree in English and became the first alumni director at UMSL in the summer of 1967. Jack Sieber, a business alumnus and the first UMSL Alumni Association president, brought up the end of the line. Greeted with cheers from the crowd, they made their way to the front of the ceremony. At the Chancellor's Luncheon afterwards, classmate and business alumnus Irwin Loiterstein remarked on the poignant experience. "I looked to my left at the students getting ready to graduate," he said, "and I saw myself 50 years ago."

Patrick O'Brien, BSBA 1993, joined Cedar Lake Cellars in Wright City, Mo., as winery kitchen manager.



Rollo Dilworth, MEd 1994, received the faculty award for creative achievement from Temple University in Philadelphia,

where he is chair and professor of music education and music therapy in the Boyer College of Music and Dance.



Daniel Isom, BS 1994, MA 2003, PhD 2008, joined the Concordance Academy of Leadership Board of Directors. Daniel was also

named general manager of Regional Justice Information Service in St. Louis and continues to serve as faculty in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at UMSL.

Jason Specht, BSBA 1994, joined Woodard Cleaning & Restoration in St. Louis as area construction manager.

Anne Cafferty-Turnbough, MS 1995, PhD 1997, joined American Vanguard Corporation in Newport Beach, Calif., as vice president of regulatory affairs.



Nancy Hawes, BA 1995, was named a 2017 Women of Distinction honoree by the Missouri Athletic Club. Nancy is a

shareholder at Polsinelli in St. Louis.



Julie Hiblovic, BSBA 1995, was named a 2017 Trailblazer by UMSL in celebration of the diverse and exceptional

accomplishments of women. Julie is a CPA and Audit Partner at Anders CPAs + Advisors in St. Louis.

Jonathan Lycan, MBA 1995, was promoted to senior manager at Schowalter & Jabouri in St. Louis.



Robert Mastis, BSBA 1995, received a 2017 UMSL Salute to Business Award on May 4. Bob is founder and principal at Digital

Intersection in St. Louis.

Sharon Holbrooks, BGS 1996, was selected to serve on the 2017 Better Family Life PeaceFest committee. Sharon is director of children's programs at Monsanto YMCA in St. Louis.

Steven Albart, MPPA 1997, was named president of Enterprise Bank and Trust's south region.

Jeannie Aumiller, BA 1997, was promoted to general counsel and senior vice president of real estate at McBride & Son Homes in St. Louis.

James Duffy, BA 1998, MA 2006, joined the division of University Advancement at the University of South Carolina Beaufort as an alumni and annual giving officer.



Marcela Manjarrez, BA 1998, was recognized by the St. Louis Business Journal as a 2017 Diverse Business Leader.

She was also appointed to the Art and Education Council Board of Directors. Marcela is senior vice president and chief communications officer at Centene Corporation in St. Louis.

Grant Bourzikas, BSACC 1999, was appointed chief information security officer of McAfee in Plano, Texas.



Jason Jan, BSBA 1999, was recognized by the St. Louis Business Journal as a 2017 Diverse Business Leader. Jason is an operating partner of FroYo in St. Louis.

Night at the Ballpark

Alumni Association President Stacy McMurray, BSBA 1990, enjoys a moment with Fredbird on Busch Stadium's Jumbotron before throwing out the ceremonial first pitch during UMSL's annual Night at the Ballpark. More than 750 UMSL alumni, students, faculty, staff and friends attended the Sept. 8 event and filled five sections along the third base line. Before the game, attendees gathered in Cunningham Corner to reconnect with friends, pick up this year's limited-edition UMSL-branded St. Louis Cardinals ball cap, try their luck at a few raffles, enjoy a performance by UMSL student vocal group VoiceDance and grab a hotdog and soda. It was a great night to be a UMSL Triton and a Cardinals fan, especially with a 4-1 win over the Pittsburgh Pirates.

Anchalee Thanavaro, MS 1999, PhD 2003, was promoted to senior scientist at STERIS Corporation in St. Louis.



William Kruse, BSBA 2001, was promoted to senior scientist at STERIS Corporation in St. Louis. William is the regulatory compliance officer at Gallup in Washington, D.C.

00s



Theresa Galakatos, MSN 2000, was appointed to the St. Andrew's Charitable Foundation Board of Directors.

Theresa is an assistant professor of nursing at Maryville University in St. Louis.

Nancy Werner, BSBA 2000, was promoted to vice president, account director at Epsilon in St. Louis.



Eric Madkins, BA 2001, was recognized by the St. Louis Business Journal as a 2017 Diverse Business Leader. He also joined the Myrtle

Hilliard Davis Comprehensive Health Centers Community Advisory Board in St. Louis. Eric is vice president and Midwest community affairs manager for Regions Bank.



LaShanda Boone, MEd 2002, was made head of school at La Salle Middle School in St. Louis.

Aaron Schmeerbauch, BSMIS 2002, was appointed to the Lutheran Foundation of St. Louis Board of Directors. Aaron is director of IT project management at Cushman & Wakefield in St. Louis.

Kunwar Shailubhai, MBA 2002, was appointed CEO of Rasna Therapeutics, headquartered in New York City.



Haitham Al-Fannah, BSBA 2003, was recognized by Oman Economic Review as one of the

100 Most Influential CEOs in Oman. Haitham is CEO of Al Sulaimi Group Holding.

Charles Hinderliter, BA 2003, joined St. Louis Realtors as director of government affairs.

Corrine Hinton, BA 2003, MA 2007, was named a 2017 Dole Caregiver Fellow by the Elizabeth Dole Foundation to support military and veteran caregivers in Texas. Corrine is an assistant professor of English at Texas A&M University-Texarkana.



Dayna Stock, MPPA 2003, PhD 2012, was selected to participate in the 42nd Leadership Class through FOCUS St. Louis.

Dayna is vice president of regions and special initiatives at United Way of Greater St. Louis.

LaNesha DeBardelaben, MA 2004, received a 2017 Michigan Chronicle 40 Under 40 award. LaNesha is senior vice president of education and exhibitions at the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit.

Crystal Patterson, BS 2004, MA 2006, wrote "We Forgot about God," published by Page Publishing.

Jennifer Yackley, MA 2004, was selected to participate in the 42nd Leadership Class through FOCUS St. Louis. Jennifer is city administrator for the City of Rock Hill, Mo.

Robert Barron, BA 2005, joined Missouri Analytical Laboratories in St. Louis as an analytical chemist.

Juan-Diego Garcia-Dominguez, BSEE 2005, joined CannonDesign in St. Louis as a senior electrical engineer.

Rebecca Cornatzer, MEd 2006, joined S. M. Wilson & Co. in St. Louis as director of human resources.

Kimberly Peery, MSN 2006, joined the Family Medical Center in Mattoon, Ill., as a nurse practitioner.

K. Shailubhai



In Memoriam

Sympathy

Sympathy is extended to **Mary Lindsey**, BSEd 1969, on the passing of her husband.

Sympathy is extended to **David Hahn**, BSBA 1977, on the passing of his wife.

Sympathy is extended to **Thomas Counts**, BSBA 1979, on the passing of his wife.

Sympathy is extended to **Kathleen Baragiola**, BSBA 1983, on the passing of her husband.

Sympathy is extended to **Sandra Valli**, BSW 1983, on the passing of her husband.

Sympathy is extended to **Kenneth Schark**, BSBA 1993, on the passing of his father.

Sympathy is extended to **Nicole Colbert-Botchway**, MBA 2002, on the passing of her sister.

Sympathy is extended to **James Flynn III**, BSBA 2003, on the passing of his father.

- 1970s **Edward Schmidt**, MEd 1970, on June 1.
William Baragiola, BSBA 1971, on Aug. 15.
David Peters, BSBA 1972, on June 29.
Armetta Whitmore, MEd 1973, on Aug. 11.
James Mueller, BA 1974, on June 10.
Lois Atnip, EdD, BSEd 1975, MEd 1989, on April 16.
Gloria Murphy, BA 1975, on Aug. 14.
Janet Gianino, BSAJ 1976, on Feb. 26.
Richard Knaup, BA 1976, on April 13.
Marilyn Vocker, BA 1976, on July 11.
Dorothy Kemp, BSEd 1977, on July 11.
Carol Malone, BSW 1977, on March 23.
Robert Toland, BA 1977, on May 11.
Elнора Buhlig, MEd 1978, on March 1.
Raymond Crownover, BA 1978, MEd 1988, on May 12.
Sally Zwibelman, BSW 1978, MEd 1983, on May 13.
Carolyn Eakin, MEd 1979, on March 28.
Hubert Hoosman Jr., BSAJ 1979, on July 3.
- 1980s **Sharon Downer**, MEd 1980, on March 20.
Dorothy Haines, BA 1981, MS 1994, on March 5.
Patricia Busch, BSBA 1982, on July 13.
Roger Lahr, Esq., BGS 1982, on July 12.
Darline Schroeter, MEd 1983, on March 26.
Kathleen Adams, MEd 1984, on April 23.
Douglas Murphy, BSBA 1984, on June 23.
Jerry Diekroeger, BSBA 1985, on May 12.
Nancy Heinsz, BS 1986, on June 10.
Janet Kelty, BA 1987, on May 20.
Judith Van Dyke, BGS 1989, on March 12.
Susan Williams, BSEd 1989, on June 18.
- 1990s **Susan Eifert**, BSBA 1990, on March 20.
Larry Lazerwitz, BSBA 1990, on Feb. 21.
Patricia Wallis, BSEd 1990, on March 13.
Eugene Carroll, BA 1993, on March 4.
Vernon Milonas, BA 1995, on May 1.
- 2000s **Jason Williams**, BSBA 2002, BSAcc 2006, on May 27.
Ralph Muzny Jr., MSW 2005, on May 16.
- 2010s **Lauren Rolby**, BSBA 2011, on Sept. 1.
Andrew Jeffress, BS 2017, on May 6.
Taylor Savage, BS 2017, on March 4.
Ryan Walsh, BA 2017, on Aug. 20.



Kimberly Casey, MA 2007, PhD 2009, was elected president of the Great Plains Political Science Association.

Kimberly is an assistant professor of political science at Northwest Missouri State University in Maryville.

Johnathan Cunningham Sr., BS 2007, was promoted to sergeant in the St. Louis County Police Department.



Robert Dixon, BA 2007, was appointed by Missouri Governor Eric Greitens to serve as the state's acting director of economic development.

Tori Gillespie

BSME 2007, joined KAI Design & Build in St. Louis as a mechanical designer.



Rokas Juodeska, BS 2007, joined Lonza in Basel, Switzerland, as a senior scientist of quality control.

Bradley Indelicato, BSAcc 2008, was promoted to supervisor of the tax and business valuation department at Abeles & Hoffman PC.



Lea-Ann Morton, PhD 2008, joined University Advancement as director of corporate and foundation

relations for the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville.

Holly Pope, BA 2008, BS 2008, joined the Pierre Laclède Honors College at UMSL as an admissions representative and adjunct professor.

Stuart Ashby, MBA 2009, joined Slalom in St. Louis as a solution architect in the company's Technology Enablement practice.



Isaac Butler, MBA 2009, was appointed vice president of diversity and inclusion at St. Louis College of Pharmacy.

Antionette Carroll, BS 2009, MA 2012, was named one of the "Woke 100 Women" in the May issue of Essence magazine. Antionette is founder, president and CEO of the St. Louis-based nonprofit Creative Reaction Lab.



Warren Morgan II, MEd 2009, was appointed executive director for Teach for America-St. Louis.

Sneha C. Ranade, MS 2009, PhD 2012, joined the Wadhvani Research Centre for Bioengineering at the Indian Institute for Technology in Bombay, India, as a project manager.



Luigiewege, BSBA 2009, received a 2017 UMSL Salute to Business Award on May 4. Luigi is CEO of Vivier and Co. in South Carlonia.



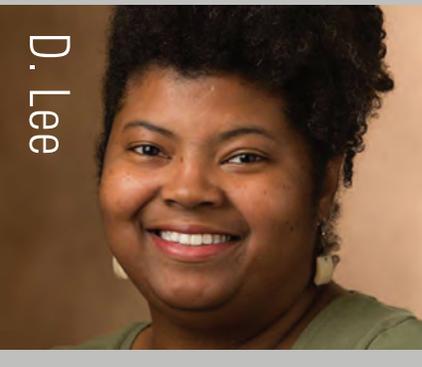
10s

Shelly Beckemeier, MBA 2010, was appointed director of workplace strategy at St. Louis-based Arcturus.

Christina Dancy, BSPPA 2010, was selected to participate in the spring 2017 cohort of FOCUS St. Louis' Diversity Leadership Fellowship Program. Christina was also promoted to assistant vice president AML officer at U.S. Bancorp Community Development Corporation in St. Louis.

Alison Dreith, BA 2010, was selected to participate in the 42nd Leadership Class through FOCUS St. Louis. Alison is executive director of NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri.

Danielle Lee, PhD 2010, was named by the National Geographic Society to its 2017 class of Emerging Explorers. Danielle is an assistant professor in the Department of Biological Sciences at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.



D. Lee

Pushkar Shejwalkar, MS 2010, PhD 2013, joined Anant Pharmaceuticals in Mumbai, India, as a research scientist. Pushkar is also an assistant professor of chemistry at Ramnarain Ruia College in Mumbai.

David Taylor, BSBA 2010, joined Maryville Technologies in St. Louis as the director of product management.



Anthony D'Agostino, MPPA 2011, was selected to participate in the 42nd Leadership Class through FOCUS St. Louis.

Anthony is executive director of Criminal Justice Ministry in St. Louis.

Benjamin DeClue, BA 2011, was promoted to assistant city administrator for the City of Lebanon in Missouri. He received an outstanding service award from the Missouri City/County Management Association at its spring conference.

Alex Elmestad, MA 2011, was selected for the Fall 2017 Class of Emerging Leaders through FOCUS St. Louis. Alex is the director of learning and engagement at the St. Louis Contemporary Art Museum.

Brian G. Geen, BSBA 2011, joined Enterprise Bank and Trust's south region team as a commercial banking officer.



Orinthia Montague, PhD 2011, was named president of Tompkins Cortland Community College in Dryden,

N.Y., by the State University of New York Board of Trustees.

Christina Nguyen, BS 2011, joined BJ Services in Houston as a research scientist.

Jo Pang, MS 2011, joined the Delivery Leadership practice of Slalom in St. Louis.

Joe Wilson, MS 2011, PhD 2014, was promoted to full professor at St. Louis Community College where he teaches chemistry and physical science at the Forest Park campus.

Karen Boston-Kemple, MEd 2012, joined the English Valleys School District in North English, Iowa, as a special education teacher.

Anna Curran, BSBA 2012, joined Moelis & Company in New York as a private funds advisory associate.

Courtney Boddie, MEd 2013, was named director of counseling services at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.



Natascha Harried, BLS 2013, joined Fontebella Maternity Home in O'Fallon, Ill., as program director.

Natasha Dupee, MEd 2014, was selected to participate in the Coro Fellows Program in Public Affairs through FOCUS St. Louis. Natasha is a biology teacher in the Riverview Gardens School District.

Alberto Friedmann, PhD 2014, is an instructor of physiology and exercise science at Indiana State University in Terre Haute.

Sean Fruin, BSME 2015, joined KAI Design & Build in St. Louis as a mechanical designer.

Chelsea Mayo, BSW 2015, was named the 2017 Jamala Rogers Young Visionary from the Youth Council for Positive Development. Chelsea is a psychosocial rehabilitation program specialist at Barnes-Jewish Hospital in St. Louis.

Maria Van Der Walt, PhD 2015, joined Westmont College in Montecito, Calif., as a professor of mathematics.

Derrick Wiggins, MEd 2015, was named Teacher of the Year for Kansas City (Mo.) Public Schools. Derrick is a third-grade English and science teacher at Carver Dual Language School.



D. Wiggins

Lev Guter, MEd 2016, received the Thomas S. Duncan Award. Lev is an eighth grade teacher at Mary Institute and St. Louis Country Day School.

Tyler Hannegan, MBA 2016, received a 2017 St. Louis Business Journal 30 Under 30 award. Tyler is manager of Strategic Initiatives and Children's Urology at Mercy Clinic in St. Louis.

Kerrine Nelson, BSIS 2016, joined Slalom as a consultant in its Information Management and Administration practice.

Tira Wilkerson, BSBA 2016, joined WGU Missouri as an enrollment counselor.

Shelby Bruner, OD 2017, joined Carthage Vision Clinic in Carthage, Mo., as an optometrist.

Rachel Gann, BSBA 2017, joined Missouri Baptist University as an accounts payable specialist.

Alexander McClure, OD 2017, joined Mercy Eye Care in Washington, Mo., as an optometrist.

Victoria Soriano, OD 2017, joined Carthage Eye Care in Carthage, Mo., as an optometrist.

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