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Dear Neighbors and Community Partners,

December is upon us, and we at UMSL are looking forward to wrapping up the semester and celebrating the commencement of our graduates during a virtual ceremony on December 19th. We are pleased that Ferguson Mayor Ella Jones will be giving the Commencement Address. And given the rise in COVID-19 cases, we transitioned a majority of our courses to remote learning formats for the last three weeks of instruction and final exams to keep our community as safe as possible. A big thank you to our hospital systems and frontline health workers who are caring for our family members, neighbors, and friends through this difficult time.

We remain optimistic for the future as UMSL and community organizations are continuing to move forward in service and partnership with neighbors. We recently broke ground on a Nursing Learning Resource and Simulation Center which will help our community meet the healthcare workforce needs of the region. Virtual learning has presented new challenges for elementary and secondary education. UMSL's College of Education has developed a virtual literacy clinic to support families and children in their educational needs. St. Louis County Library has computers and hotspots to loan to support digital access. In the newsletter this month, we also offer information on other resources as folks brave winter and seek safe virtual entertainment this holiday season. We are happy to introduce a new segment in this newsletter where we highlight a community partner. This month we shine the light on St. Vincent's Home for Children which has been serving our community since 1850.

As we look back on the year 2020, we recognize the many challenges that it presented. As we look toward 2021, we know many of those challenges will remain. However, we can emerge stronger in the years to come if we work and tackle the future together. We look forward to continuing our community partnerships in the New Year.

Wishing you a safe and happy holiday season!

Kristin Sobolik
Chancellor, University of Missouri-St. Louis



UMSL kicks off construction on \$7 million Nursing Learning Resource and Simulation Center expansion, renovation

With the nursing vacancy rate at 10.4 percent in St. Louis region hospitals and expected to grow, nursing education has never been more critical. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed the dire shortage while adding to the already heavy burden on existing health professionals.

As one of the largest educational institutions for nurses in St. Louis and Missouri, the College of Nursing at the University of Missouri–St. Louis is driven to help address the nursing vacancy gap and ensure the stability and growth of healthcare in the region. The university took a large step toward that goal when it kicked off construction on Phase 1 of the renovation and expansion of its Nursing Learning Resource and Simulation Center during a hybrid in-person and virtual event. [Click here to read more.](#)



Applications being accepted for Virtual Literacy Clinic

The College of Education at UMSL is launching a virtual Literacy Clinic which provides tutoring to K-12 students who need support in reading, writing, and spelling. Teachers will administer literacy assessments and design personalized sessions that focus on strengthening skills. The next session will begin in January 2021 and will be held virtually. Students who are accepted will be matched with an educator for twelve (12), one-on-one or small group literacy sessions, held after school and/or in the evening.

Each instructional program is designed with students' cultural, familial, and linguistic resources and strengths in mind. Students and families in the UMSL footprint are invited to apply (e.g. Normandy, Jennings, Ferguson-Florissant, Ritenour, and St. Louis Public Schools).

To apply for this **FREE** program, complete the online application at <https://tinyurl.com/umslcoeliteracyclinic>. When a space becomes available, an email will be sent to complete the registration process.



Spotlight: Open and Accepting Referrals, St. Vincent's Home for Children Enabling a Stronger Community

By Paula Miller

There are several organizations and resources located in the communities surrounding the University of Missouri-St. Louis which are making a difference for people throughout the region. This month's highlight is on St. Vincent's Home for Children, and an interview with Executive Director Latosha Fowlkes.

“Whatever the need is, just give us a call. We are here 24-hours at the Intersection of Florissant and Natural Bridge in Normandy, Missouri,” announced Mrs. Latosha Fowlkes, Executive Director of St. Vincent’s Home for Children.

“There is a large building and it is sitting on 22 acres of land—really an unassuming building...but in that building is what’s most important. In that building are children living there. This is where they sleep. This is where they eat. This is where they get their basic needs met. This is where their families come when they need some sort of support. This is where that family unit really coexists with case management, with a therapist and a team of about 60 other dedicated employees.”

St. Vincent’s Home for Children has been a resilient source of support for at-risk youth since 1850 and has called North County home for over 100 years. According to the website history (<https://www.saintvincenthome.org/us/history/>), this important community resource came into being in 1850 during a national, as well as, a local crisis similar in impact as the current COVID-19 pandemic. [Click here to read more](#) from this interview.

St. Vincent’s Home recently published their 2020 Year End Progress report which can be found at <https://www.saintvincenthome.org/us/financial-information/2020-annual-report/>.

St. Vincent’s is open and accepting referrals. For more information, visit the St. Vincent’s Home for Children website at www.saintvincenthome.org or call (314) 261-6011.



UMSL waiving application fees for 2021, continuing to waive online fees in spring semester

The University of Missouri–St. Louis is committed to eliminating barriers that might stand in the way of pursuing higher education. To that end, UMSL announced this week that it is waiving all undergraduate admission application fees for spring, summer and fall applicants for 2021, and it will continue to waive supplemental fees for all online courses for the spring semester.

“We want to do everything possible to encourage students to pursue their academic goals and to consider UMSL as the place to advance their futures,” Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Marie Mora said. “These are challenging economic times, and anything we can do to lighten the burden on our students will help them

move forward on their path toward a degree and success after graduation.” [Read more...](#)



UMSL Magazine is now available.

The University of Missouri–St. Louis publishes UMSL Magazine for alumni and friends. The magazine highlights excellence at the University. Circulation is 106,900 and the magazine is released twice a year.

Check out the latest edition at <http://www.umsl.edu/marketing/news/magazine.html>.

Here are a few of the feature stories in the fall 2020 publication:

- [Kristin Sobolik sees UMSL as integral to fostering inclusive prosperity in the region](#)
- [‘Knowledge through a different lens’: College of Nursing teaches LGBTQ+ care through an innovative module](#)
- [Sharonica Hardin-Bartley works to close opportunity gaps in University City](#)
- [Ken Smith searches for patterns in genetic data for Alzheimer’s detection](#)
- [Triton Pantry and Triton Emergency Fund providing help during the holidays](#)



Arbor Day Celebration

UMSL alumna and staff member Aubri Adams planted a plum tree as Grounds Supervisor Gregory Ward looked on during the annual Arbor Day celebration on South Campus in early November. Adams was part of a small group of students and staff members who took part in the event, organized by Ward, and they planted more than a dozen trees on the campus.

Share with Us

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

[here](#). Thank you!

COVID-19 Resources

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

UMSL Community Connection

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

UMSL Community Card

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

UMSL Contracts

Interested in bidding on projects at UMSL?

[Procurement Bids](#)

[Construction Bids](#)

Announcements and Activities



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Observance

SAVE THE DATE

January 18, 2021 at 11 a.m.

The University's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Observance is scheduled for Monday, January 18, 2021 at 11am. The event will be a live-broadcast from Touhill's Youtube page. Watch for details as they become available at

<https://www.umsl.edu/services/odei/news-events/mlk/index.html>.



Spire Small Business Pandemic Relief Program Applications

Open - 12/14

Spire has designed the Small Business Pandemic Relief Program to support active Missouri small businesses. To review eligibility requirements and to complete an application, go to the Spire Small Business Pandemic Relief Program website at <https://www.spireenergy.com/small-business-pandemic-relief-program>.



St. Louis County Library Offering Chromebook & Hotspot kits for Check Out

St. Louis County Library is now offering Chromebook & Hotspot kits for check out. Each kit contains everything needed to connect to the internet at home, including a Chromebook and a Wi-Fi hotspot. The kits can be requested through the SLCL catalog and picked up curbside at any SLCL branch. An adult library card in good standing is required to check out a kit. The check out period is two weeks. [Read more...](#)



A Christmas Carol: A St. Louis Virtual Holiday Reading

Registration required and at No Cost or with a Donation to MTC to receive a link to view the performance.

Metro Theater Company presents a special virtual event for families this December to help keep the community connected during a holiday season that has been transformed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

MTC's *A Christmas Carol* brings together artists, athletes, civic leaders, media personalities, and first responders, for a streamed

reading of Charles Dickens's holiday classic.
Ages 6+ / 60 minutes
[Click here](#) for more information and to register.



The Touhill Performing Arts Center Presents, "The Nutcracker" Virtual Performance

Beginning mid-December, enjoy a complimentary streaming of a new, fully-produced *Nutcracker Extravaganza* that includes favorite Saint Louis Ballet dances and scenes from years gone by, interspersed with newly-set Nutcracker performances from 2020-2021 dancers, plus behind-the-scenes interviews and Nutcracker fun only to be found from the comfort of home. [Click here to register](#) for a complimentary ticket for the whole family to enjoy!



The RCW Pool is Open

Current pool hours are:
Monday-Friday: 7am-2:30pm
Saturday: 9am-1pm
Sunday: 11am-3pm
For more information and to confirm RCW open times, [click here](#).



Get Warmed Up by Donating New Winter Wear- UMSL

partnering with Citizens for Modern Transit

To help commuters stay toasty on transit this winter – while spreading a little holiday cheer – Citizens for Modern Transit, Metro Transit, St. Clair County Transit District, AARP in St. Louis, University of Missouri–St. Louis (UMSL), MetroLink Police Officers and Metro Transit Public Safety will be handing out socks and hats to riders at select Transit Stations the first day of winter (Monday, Dec. 21).

This event will also kick-off a winter-long effort allowing MetroLink Police Officers and Metro Transit Public Safety to distribute new, winter gear items as needs are identified on the system.

Help is needed collecting socks, gloves, coats and hats! Due to COVID-19, only new items are accepted. Donations can be dropped off in the UMSL Millennium Center in designated boxes in the MSC main hallway across from the Triton Book Store, or at Citizens for Modern Transit (911 Washington Ave., Suite 200, St. Louis, MO 63101) anytime Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. If alternative arrangements need to be made, please contact mbox@cmt-stl.org. All donations must be received by Tuesday, Dec. 15.



Winter Heating Assistance

All income-eligible St. Louis County residents can receive one-time assistance for their primary heating utility (gas or electric) through May of 2021 without a disconnect notice.

Call 314-446-4420, and leave a mailing address to get an application sent or click the link here: <http://www.caastlc.org/wpsite/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/2018-19-EA-1-Application-for-the-Low-Income-Home-Energy-Assistance-Program.pdf>





Public Comment Sought for St. Louis County Housing Investment Strategy

St. Louis County's Draft 2021-2025 Housing Investment Strategy is now available for public comment. This document will guide the Housing Resource Commission, new Affordable Housing Trust Fund, and the overall County's spending for affordable housing and homeless services.

Members of the public can give feedback via direct comment to housinginvestments@stlouisco.com until December 18. To download the plan or for additional information, visit <https://stlouiscountymo.gov/st-louis-county-departments/human-services/>.

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