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Dear friends, neighbors and community members,

Winter certainly hit this month, with a beautiful snowfall and some chilly days. Yet even in these cold days of winter, there is much taking place.



Foremost is celebrating Black History Month designated to honor the contributions and

sacrifices of African-Americans who have helped shape the nation. While many events and opportunities to recognize Black history are taking place throughout February, it is essential that we reflect on and celebrate Black history throughout the year. Every day Black leaders in our region are making history and shaping the future of our communities. We highlight a few of those stories in this newsletter and will continue to do so.

In other good news, we received an update earlier this month on the economic impact of UMSL on our community and state, and are pleased to report a more than \$429 million annual economic impact in Missouri, which is an increase of nearly 20 percent since a similar study conducted four years ago. Additionally, UMSL supports 5,485 jobs, generating more than \$24 million in state and local taxes. UMSL continues to ramp up our focus on local hiring and procurement practices, and are excited to be partners in the work to revitalize our community, complementing initiatives like the development of West Florissant Avenue.

Even in the midst of winter, there are opportunities to engage, discover, and enjoy—on campus, in the community, and online. We include several in the newsletter here, and encourage you to visit our [calendar of events](#) regularly for more opportunities on campus.

Gratefully forward,

Kristin Sobolik  
Chancellor  
University of Missouri–St. Louis



## Urban League to develop 3 properties on West Florissant Avenue

KSDK, Pepper Baker, Jan. 30, 2022

New developments are coming to West Florissant Avenue through efforts led by the Urban League. "When people see vacant abandoned lots that they know used to be businesses, it adds to the thought that a community is dying," Urban League President Michael McMillan said. He believes Ferguson has come a long way since the uprisings from the Michael Brown shooting in 2014, but he says there's still more work to be done.

"When you look at St. Louis and you look at what happened in Ferguson, sadly what it did was it exposed the worst of us to the entire world, and so we will always be judged on what we did and did not do in Ferguson," McMillan said. That's why he's leading efforts to purchase and

develop three vacant properties on West Florissant Avenue. "We worked with the county, looked at the neighborhood driven plan of what they wanted to see in the area and then purchased those three lots with the help of Centene Corporation and Emerson and then now are beginning to implement what the community said they want to see," McMillan said. [Read more.](#)

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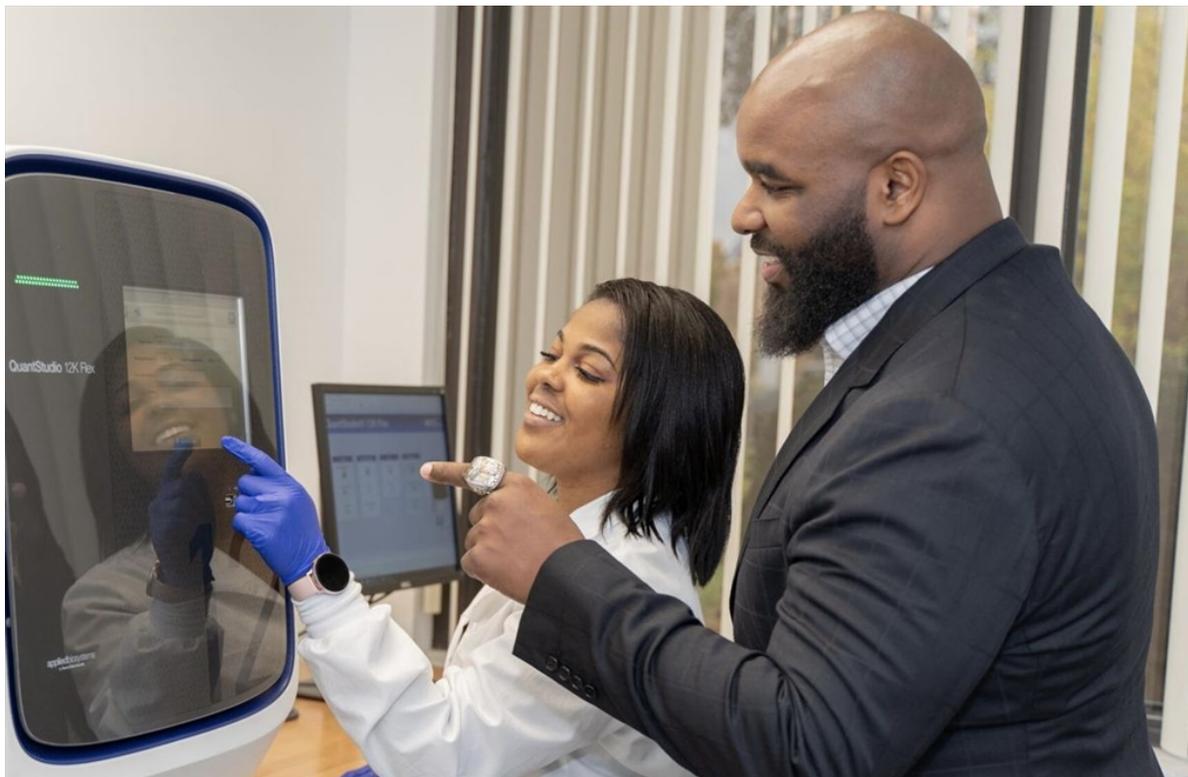


## UMSL social work students work with One West Florissant to engage community members

Lili Schliesser distinctly recalls her conversation with Pat, a St. Louis County resident who was a founding member of the St. Louis chapter of the National Association of Black Social Workers. Schliesser was awestruck as the two spoke about community engagement and the history of St. Louis – particularly the contributions of women and Black residents. Likewise, Seda Follis was inspired while speaking with a St. Louis resident who works at BJC HealthCare...These conversations were part of last semester's "Social Work Practice with Communities" class at the University of Missouri–St. Louis.

Each semester, Assistant Professor Michael Gearhart partners his class with a local organization working with communities in the St. Louis region...last semester was the start of an ongoing relationship with One West Florissant. [Read more.](#)

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## Sylvester Williams' lab new firm helping sack COVID-19

St. Louis American, Sylvester Brown Jr, Jan. 19, 2022

For many professional football players, life after sports can be difficult. Without an after-the-game-ends strategy, some find it difficult to transition to a life without the fame, glory and massive paychecks. Not so for St. Louis native and former Tennessee Titans and Denver Broncos defensive tackle, Sylvester Williams....[his] next feat was way outside the boundaries of sports.

In 2019, months before the coronavirus pandemic engulfed the globe, Williams became the proud owner of Missouri's first black-owned toxicology testing company, Quantum Laboratory in Bridgeton Missouri. He said he founded the company to serve disadvantaged communities that have been disproportionately affected by COVID. The company, he insists, is destined for success because of life's philosophy. "Personally, I bring a championship mentality to anything I am involved in," he said. That "championship attitude," Williams explained, was seeded by his father as he grew up in the Northwoods area off Natural Bridge & Lucas & Hunt. [Read more.](#)

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## UMSL's annual economic impact exceeds \$429 million in Missouri

The [University of Missouri–St. Louis](#) contributed more than \$429 million to Missouri's economy while supporting 5,485 full-time and part-time jobs, both direct and indirect, throughout the state, according to an [economic impact report](#) released last Thursday.

"This report highlights the important role UMSL plays in our state, particularly in the St. Louis region, as a driver of economic growth and development," said Chris Spilling, vice chancellor for research and economic and community development. "The university's economic impact has increased nearly 20 percent since a similar study conducted four years ago. It still represents only a fraction of what the UMSL community contributes to the state's and region's economic health and social wellbeing when combined with the work being done by our legions of alumni living and working throughout Missouri." The report, completed by nationally recognized consulting firm Tripp Umbach, found that the University of Missouri System as a whole had a \$6.5 billion statewide economic impact in Fiscal Year 2021. [Read more..](#)



## US News ranks UMSL among nation's best for online bachelor's programs

The demand for online education has been on the rise, even before the COVID-19 pandemic, with more and more students drawn to online programs because of their accessibility and flexibility. The University of Missouri–St. Louis has long been lauded for the quality of its online degree programs. U.S. News & World Report today ranked UMSL second in Missouri and No. 47 nationally out of more than 360 universities in its 2022 list of Best Online Bachelor's Programs.

Because of the profile of many students enrolled in online programs – i.e. working professionals in their 20s to 40s with some college credit and looking to advance in or change careers – U.S. News does not include measures only applicable to teenage applicants, such as high school grades or standardized test scores, when comparing schools and building its rankings. “Instead, U.S. News chose factors that weigh how these programs are being delivered and their effectiveness at awarding affordable degrees in a reasonable amount of time,” U.S. News staff members wrote in a statement explaining the methodology for the rankings. [Read more.](#)



## Missouri Bicentennial Quilt Exhibition [at UMSL]

St. Louis Community News, Jan. 26. 2022

Quilt blocks representing St. Louis and communities across the state are featured in the Missouri Bicentennial Quilt, which will be on display for a final stop in the St. Louis area at the State Historical Society of Missouri St. Louis Research Center, 222 Thomas Jefferson Library, University of Missouri-St. Louis. The quilt exhibition runs Feb.1-March 11.

Using one block from each of Missouri's 114 counties and the independent city of St. Louis, the quilt showcases the diversity of Missouri's culture, people and geography. To honor Missouri's 200 years of statehood, the State Historical Society, Missouri Star Quilt Company and the Missouri State Quilters Guild teamed up to find quilters for each of the individual quilt blocks. Quilters from across the state sent in 6.5 x 6.5-inch blocks to represent the county where they live or have a connection. [Read more](#) (p.3).

## 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!

### **UMSL Community Connection newsletter**

Received this as a forward? [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 Careers**

[Click here](#) to learn about job opportunities at UMSL. Check back regularly for new listings.

### **UMSL Contracts**

Interested in bidding on projects at UMSL?

[Procurement Bids](#)

[Construction Bids](#)

### **Community Connect**

[Click here](#) to learn about resources, services and programs at UMSL available to the community.

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## **Events & Resources**

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### **Introduction to Neighboring 101**

Monthly through 2022

Noon - 1:00 PM

Online

Being an active and engaged neighbor can help people, organizations, and communities expand participation while respecting differences and embracing diversity. But neighboring takes effort, planning and time. In these monthly Zoom classes promoted by [Creating Whole Communities](#), learn the issue of neighboring by examples across the nation where it is being done well.

[Click here](#) for more information.

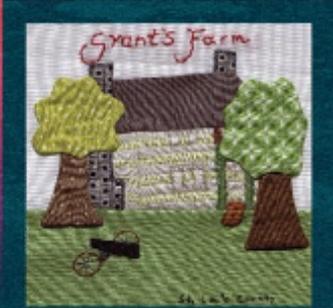
**FINAL TOUR IN THE ST. LOUIS AREA! \***

**MISSOURI BICENTENNIAL QUILT**

**QUILT EXHIBITION:**  
**FEB. 1-MARCH 11, 2022**  
 during regular visitor hours

**Opening Reception Feb. 10, 2022, 4-7 p.m.**

State Historical Society of Missouri - St. Louis Research Center  
 University of Missouri-St. Louis  
 Thomas Jefferson Library, 2nd Floor  
 Free Visitor Parking in West Drive Garage on the UMSL campus  
 Contact: 314-516-5143 | stlouis@shsmo.org



### Missouri Bicentennial Quilt Exhibition

Feb. 1 – March 11, 2022

UMSL

222 Thomas Jefferson Library, 2nd floor

Commemorate 200 years of Missouri statehood and see the Bicentennial Quilt in St. Louis before it moves to its new home at the Missouri Quilt Museum in fall 2022! [Click here](#) for more information.



**GSAC**  
SERVING COMMUNITIES THROUGH ART

presents work by  
**Davison Henry**

**WARPED:**  
 The wails inside our  
 minds can be  
 disfiguring

online at [goodshepherdarts.org](https://goodshepherdarts.org)  
 all February

Live at  
 St. Peter's UCC  
 Community Resource Center  
 1433 Stein Road  
 February 5 - March 19, 2022

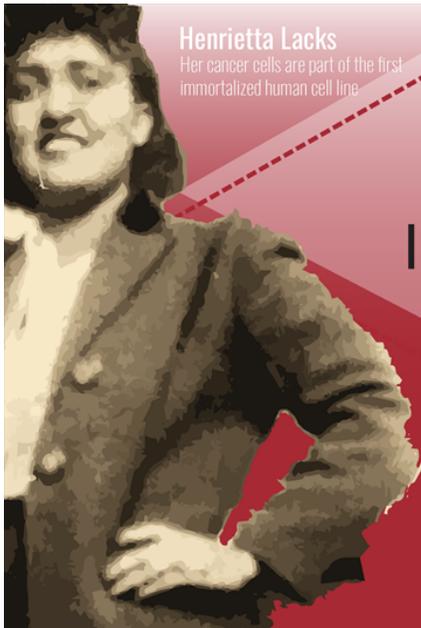
"8 Hours Down" by Davison Henry

### WARPED: The wails inside our minds can be disfiguring - Davison Henry

Feb. 5 - March 19, 2022

online

The online gallery at GSAC features works by North County local Davison Henry. "Being able to create is everything to me." Henry's pieces will be also on display at the St. Peter's United Church of Christ Community Resource Center. For viewing details, email [info@goodshepherdarts.org](mailto:info@goodshepherdarts.org) or link to the online exhibit at [goodshepherdarts.org/exhibits](https://goodshepherdarts.org/exhibits).



**Henrietta Lacks**  
Her cancer cells are part of the first immortalized human cell line.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

# THE ROLE OF BLACK NURSE ACTIVISTS IN IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF ST. LOUIS

**02.17.22**  
**6:30-7:30 PM**  
**ZOOM:**  
[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/4SBTZY5U](https://tinyurl.com/4sbtzy5u)

HOSTED BY THE COLLEGE OF NURSING,  
THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MISSOURI &  
THE BLACK NURSES ASSOCIATION OF GREATER ST. LOUIS

## Black health and wellness

### The Role of Black Nurse Activists in Improving the Health of St. Louis

Thursday, Feb. 17, 2022  
6:30 to 7:30 PM  
online

Join UMSL for a panel discussion on the role of St. Louis-area Black nurse activists. Presented in partnership with the Black Nurses Association of Greater St. Louis, panelists will discuss the closing of Homer G. Phillips Hospital in the 1970s, the 2014 Ferguson protests, and modern efforts to improve Black maternal and infant mortality and morbidity. The event is free, but registration is required at <https://tinyurl.com/4sbtzy5u>.



**Thursday, February 24th**  
**Mark Twain Building**

**Women's game starts at 5:30 pm**      **Men's Game starts at 7:30 pm**

FREE food, activities, and more will be happening in the balcony. Bring hygiene products including soap, shampoo, toothbrushes, toothpaste, menstrual products, deodorant, and body wash to benefit the Triton Pantry. Each product enters you into a raffle to win a Smart TV.

HOMECOMING 2022      UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI – ST. LOUIS



### Homecoming Pack The Stands Basketball Game

Thursday, Feb. 24, 2022  
Women's Game 5:30 PM  
Men's Game 7:30 PM  
UMSL Mark Twain Gymnasium

Cheer on the UMSL Tritons basketball teams as they take on Southern Indiana. UMSL students, Alumni, faculty, staff, and friends are encouraged to attend not only the basketball games but also homecoming activities in the Mark Twain balcony. Free food, activities, a raffle, and fun! There will be plenty of kid-friendly activities, so feel free to bring the family! [Click here](#) for additional information.

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### **Homecoming Tiny Tritons Pancake Breakfast**

Saturday, Feb. 26, 2022  
10:00 AM to Noon  
online

Join Tiny Tritons for our annual Homecoming Breakfast. Wear your PJs and come grab a stack of pancakes! Activities planned include Dr. Dan the Pancake Man from Dancakes. This event is free and is a great way to get the kids and family involved in Homecoming. RSVP at [umsl.edu/go/tinytritons](https://umsl.edu/go/tinytritons).

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### **NCI Seeks Leadership Nominees**

Nominations due Feb. 25

North County Incorporated (NCI) is seeking nominations of exemplary business, civic and community leadership for those who work in North County. Honorees will be recognized at the 45th annual leadership breakfast. For more information and to nominate a worthy candidate for an award visit [www.NorthStLouisCounty.com](http://www.NorthStLouisCounty.com).

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**Incarnate Word Academy Presents**



# Annie

**Book by**  
**THOMAS MEEHAN**

**Music by**  
**CHARLES STROUSE**

**Lyrics by**  
**MARTIN CHARNIN**

**IWA's Spring Musical: Annie**  
March 3, 4 and 5, 2022

Incarnate Word Academy presents Annie! Based on the popular comic strip, Annie tells the extraordinary story of a little orphan who spends ends up in the lap of luxury with Depression-era billionaire Oliver Warbucks.

For tickets and more information, [click here](#).



**Food & Justice Fellowship**  
**Details: Nine months**  
March - November

Join A Red Circle in collaboration with other urban growers in North St. Louis County to learn about food production, agribusiness, food justice, and more! Successful fellows will earn up to \$1800 for their participation, will receive free produce and more, and will benefit from networking and résumé support. Open to North St. Louis County residents between the ages of 19 and 26. Email [deborah@aredcircle.org](mailto:deborah@aredcircle.org) to apply today!

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Economic & Community Development  
1 University Boulevard  
341 Woods Hall  
St. Louis, MO | 63121

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