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Dear friends, neighbors and community members,

April is a time of anticipation. The sprouts of plants are peeking above the ground, and a bloom or two is visible. However, we know in a few weeks the flowers will be abundant and our trees will be green with new life. Spring is the promise of growth. At UMSL, we are bursting with anticipation as we have begun the initial phases of transforming the physical structure of our campus. Be sure to [watch the video](#) of the construction taking place inside the Patient Care Center for a behind-the-scenes peak.

As we aim to do in every edition of this newsletter, this month we celebrate people and places making a difference in our community—from educators and culinary experts providing innovative experience in local schools to long-serving businesses committed to providing jobs and service in the area. I hope you enjoy these features and that you take some time this month to reflect on the beauty of nature and our connections.

Gratefully forward,

Kristin Sobolik

UMSL Community Connection newsletter

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Community Connect

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

STL Community LAB

[Click here](#) to learn about community development trainings and programs.



How a James Beard-nominated chef is inspiring local high school students

KMOV, Mar 8, 2023

Normandy High School culinary students are learning from Chef Rob Connoley. News 4 was on hand as the chef and owner of Bulrush StL taught kids the art of plating. “Here we are playing with Twinkies and Ding Dongs, but this can easily transfer into fine dining pastry or other parts of the meal,” explained James Beard-Nominated Chef Connoley. “So, coming in here is important because I’m looking five years down the road, 10 years down the road of what the industry will look like in St. Louis.

Junior Alexandria Belton, an aspiring chef herself, said she looks forward to Chef Connoley’s classroom visits. She told News 4 they give her hands-on experience and help her to learn more about the restaurant industry. After the lesson, Chef Connoley has the students put what they learned to the test with a competition for the golden spoon. But, for Chef Connoley, it’s about something else. “It’s these small little techniques and tricks we can give them to inspire them to make

Events & Resources



The Greater St. Louis Jazz Festival

April 20 - 22, 2023

Blanche M. Touhill

Performing Arts Center

The 2023 Greater St. Louis Jazz Festival welcomes Terreon Gully and Reggie Thomas in Trio Nexus. The festival supports area school music programs by inspiring students and band directors through the experience of receiving professional feedback from clinicians and adjudicators, and providing an opportunity to experience performances from world class jazz musicians. Throughout the past 16-year history of UMSL hosting the Greater St. Louis Jazz Festival, more than 565 schools have participated, reaching over 12,600

something a little nicer than what they had been doing,” he said. Read more [here](#).



Education graduate Tiffany Patton seeks to revitalize instructional coaching in Riverview Gardens School District

After Tiffany Patton graduated from Gateway STEM High School in St. Louis, she continued on the STEM path, enrolling at the University of Missouri–Columbia to study computer programming. She spent her first year of college trying to connect with the coursework, but despite her best efforts, computer programming never clicked....Patton returned to St. Louis, and upon reflecting, she decided to pursue education – a field she’d always admired but had been initially hesitant to explore. Patton transferred to the University of Missouri–St. Louis, where her academic and professional career took off.... Over the course of her successful career in education, she has served as a teacher in multiple school districts, school leader at KIPP St. Louis and principal in the Hazelwood School District.

In February, the Riverview Gardens School District appointed Patton as its new director of professional development. In the new role, Patton oversees professional development for all staff to ensure the district’s practices comply with Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education guidelines. She will also manage the development of instructional coaches and a new teacher mentor program. “This role feels like everything that I love about teacher development, which is a passion of mine,” she said. “I love teaching students, and trust me, I could do that forever. But I know that more of an impact can be made if I move out of the classroom. Because I am a teacher at heart, though, I just look at this as the ability or capacity to teach adults, and so this role connects to what I love to do, which is develop and teach.” UMSL is where she began to discover that passion. Read more [here](#).

students. General admission \$25. For more information, click [here](#).



St. Louis Ballet: Swan Lake
April 28 - April 30, 2023
Blanche M. Touhill
Performing Arts Center

Saint Louis Ballet’s most popular program is now enhanced by the lush sounds of live music. The story of the princess, turned into a swan by an evil sorcerer’s curse, is an achingly beautiful tale – now a staple in every major ballet company’s repertoire.

First performed by the Bolshoi Ballet in Moscow in 1877, the ballet is performed to a magnificent Tchaikovsky score that drives the emotional and tragic love story of Siegfried and Odette. “Moonlit” dances fill the stage with varied and difficult choreography and a live symphony orchestra. For more information and tickets, click [here](#).



Electronic Recycling Drive
Friday, April 28, 2023
9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.



Andy Wurm Tire & Wheel Company celebrates 50 years in business

St. Louis County Community News, April 5, 2023, p. 3

Brothers Joe and Andy Wurm are owner-operators of the Andy Wurm Tire & Wheel Company at 201 South Florissant Road in Ferguson. They are both proud of and thankful for the opportunities they have had over the years to serve their community....

Over the years, the relationships they built kept the customers coming back. The hard work and dedication of the employees have helped make Andy Wurm Tire & Wheel the success it is. "Longevity in business is hard to attain, we are appreciative of the employees that kept the business running efficiently, there are some great individuals here," Joe stated.

The company operates today in the same spirit and under the same business plan. The 201 location is a state-of-the-art automotive facility. The Wurm family hopes that the public comes to share in the 50-year celebration on April 15 from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. "One of our favorite things about working here is seeing over the years the generations of families. Some families knew my mom and dad and then we knew their kids and now their kids, it's been great seeing the families grow up," said Joe. Read more [here](#).



Ameren Pledges \$1 Million to Beyond Housing's Once and for All Effort

UMSL south Campus Parking Lot

Head to UMSL to get rid of old computers, electronic accessories, and appliances at this drive-thru Electronics Recycling event. Coordinated by UMSL Sustainability, services are provided by J&C E-recycling. Click [here](#) for more information and updates on location.



Neil deGrasse Tyson- An Astrophysicist Goes to the Movies III

Wednesday, May 10, 2023
7:30-10:00 p.m.
UMSL Blanche M. Touhill
Performing Arts Center

Neil deGrasse Tyson was born and raised in New York City where he was educated in the public schools clear through his graduation from the Bronx High School of Science. Tyson went on to earn his BA in Physics from Harvard and his PhD in Astrophysics from Columbia.

Over the years, Tyson has attracted one of the world's largest online followings through his insights into science and our universe. Now, Tyson invites us to go behind the scenes of his public fame by unveiling his candid correspondence with people across the globe who have sought him out in

Ameren recently announced that it is pledging \$1 million to support Beyond Housing's [Once and for All](#), an effort to invest in the St. Louis region's most under-resourced communities to move all of St. Louis forward. A longtime partner of Beyond Housing, Ameren's increased commitment is born from both organizations' belief that investing in the region's most under-resourced communities is the key to addressing the area's longstanding challenges—from school accreditation challenges to troubling crime rates, slow economic growth and steady decline in prosperity and national prominence.

“Addressing the high concentrations of poverty in our under-resourced communities is the most direct path to improving the well-being and success of the entire region,” says Gwen Mizell, vice president and chief sustainability, diversity & philanthropy officer for Ameren. “Doing that effectively requires us all to think more strategically. We are focusing our philanthropic resources on organizations that are creating real movement at scale where our customers need it most.” Read more [here](#).



TransformUMSL renovations underway

The first phase of TransformUMSL is in full swing at the Patient Care Center on Natural Bridge Road with the second floor remodel. The area will serve as a learning space and practice hub for students in the College of Optometry. Excitement is high for this initial TransformUMSL project set to be completed this summer. There has been significant progress since renovations began in January. Check out the status and hear Dr. Elder's insight on what this space means to UMSL on her [UMSL Patient Care Center Second Floor Walkthrough](#).

Share with Us

search of answers. In this handpicked collection of one hundred letters, Tyson draws upon cosmic perspectives to address a vast array of questions about science, faith, philosophy, life, and, of course, Pluto. For ticket information, click [here](#).



Biz Smart Start for New Business Dreamers

Friday, April 21, 2023

(applications due)

Beyond Housing is looking for dreamers who are hungry to start their own businesses! Ten residents will be invited to win \$500 cash and participate in a new program called Biz Smart Start. The goal is to create a safe place for participants to learn to develop their dream! [UMSL Accelerate](#) is partnering with Beyond Housing on this new initiative. The deadline to apply is April 21. Click [here](#) to learn more.

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!

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