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Dear friends, neighbors and community members,

Happy New Year and welcome 2022! I hope this message finds you well and warm as we enjoy the brisk winter season.



With a recent spike in Coronavirus cases, UMSL remains focused on operating safely and encourages everyone to continue to take precautions to protect your health and that of those around you. Conscious of protecting public health, we look forward to continuing to find ways to convene and connect with you.

This year, we again invite you to join us as we start off the spring semester honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at our annual event. "Embracing the Dream in a Season of Uncertainty!" is the theme for our virtual celebration on January 17th. As we continue to struggle with uncertainty in our community due to the ongoing pandemic and civic challenges, we also celebrate the accomplishments we have made and the opportunities that greet us.

The newsletter this month includes stories of innovation, creativity, and inclusive growth taking place in our community. Partnerships, progress and new possibilities are in store for us in 2022, and we are excited to continue this journey with you!

Gratefully forward,

Kristin Sobolik
Chancellor
University of Missouri–St. Louis



Teachers make music from suitcases at STEM workshops in Ferguson

St. Louis Post Dispatch, Blythe Bernhard, Dec. 20, 2021

Teachers are showing students that they can be cool, too, with help from the Challenger Learning Center. The center's Innovator Creator Workshop series for educators lets teachers learn various technologies to take back to the classroom.

[In December], a group of teachers made speakers out of vintage suitcases at the center's maker space at STEAM Academy McCluer South-Berkeley High School. Aside from an end product that looks and sounds good, the speaker project requires teachers to use power tools, wire electronics, explore sound design and experiment with "functional repurposing" of items destined for the trash heap, said Robert Powell, Challenger Learning Center's education director. "It's a passion of mine, teaching how to be less consumers and more creators," Powell said. "We give teachers skills to turn into really fun engagement for students." [Read more.](#)



UMSL Accelerate announces plans for creative arts accelerator

Brian Owens, E. Desmond Lee Community Music Artist in Residence, brought up the topic on everyone's minds. "Is there any money in the arts or being creative?" he asked at [the] Creative Arts Lunch and Learn at the University of Missouri–St. Louis. Regional Arts Commission of St. Louis President and CEO Vanessa Cooksey answered: "There's plenty of money."

Owens' query was rhetorical. The successful 2008 music alumnus and soul musician already believes in the fiscal power of the creative arts and was there to share his vision for investing in the future of arts in the greater St. Louis area. UMSL Accelerate and Owens announced plans for an UMSL-led creative arts accelerator intended to help create a thriving arts industry in St. Louis. "This is about creating people who can create opportunities, that's what entrepreneurs do," Owens said. "We forget that when we support entrepreneurs, people create opportunities for other people. Low scale, high impact: You invest in five, six entrepreneurs, they can help thousands." [Read more.](#)



St. Louis County Wins \$18.2 Million Grant for North County Corridor

St. Louis County has been awarded an \$18.2 million federal grant to transform West Florissant Avenue into a marquee corridor. The funds will be used to rebuild 1.5 miles of West Florissant Avenue, from Stein Road to Ferguson Avenue, through the towns of Ferguson and Dellwood. "This is a transformative project that we have been working on since I took office," said County Executive Dr. Sam Page. "Thank you to our Congressional delegation, including Senator Blunt and Congresswoman Bush, for making this a priority."

The project includes road and sidewalk enhancements, providing better access points to businesses along the corridor and creating shared-use paths for cyclists and pedestrians. The work also will include upgrading traffic signals, adding crosswalks, and installing medians. Sidewalks will be made ADA compliant. "This street is more than a carrier of vehicles," Page said. "It represents what is possible. It represents history that cannot be our future." [Read more.](#)



Andrea Jackson-Jennings embraces lifelong learning as social services leader

University of Missouri–St. Louis [and Normandy High] alumna Andrea Jackson-Jennings is uniquely attuned to the needs of some of the region’s most vulnerable populations. For the past 10 years, she served as the director of the St. Louis County Department of Human Services. [In] September, she took on a new role as the managing director of the COVID-19 Regional Response Team, a group of local organizations that is creating and maintaining a centralized response network to help meet the social needs of residents who have been most affected by the pandemic in the St. Louis region.

In both her previous and current posts, Jackson-Jennings has played a leading role in coordinating support and community-based resources for residents who need them. “We have been leading the humanitarian effort as it relates to the food insecurity needs, the digital divide and ensuring that seniors and homebound individuals get the medical assistance and meals that they need,” Jackson-Jennings said. “We want to make sure that residents receive the appropriate services that they need.” [Read more.](#)



Announcing the Neighborhood Leadership Fellows 2022 Cohort

Teasha Brooks	Sharon Gladney	Melissa Nash Ph.D.
LaTasha Brown	Stephen Houldsworth	Kimberly Paige
Carol Carter	FeliceSkye Hutchinson	Dionne Peoples-Jones
Dail Chambers	Beverly Isom	Theresa Pearson
Thomasina Clarke	Karen Jamerson	Marcieta Reed
Raquel Cooper	LaTanya Ivy	Kausta Spann
Virginia Druhe	Lynne Lane	Arlice McElroy Thompson
Larry Freeman	Robin Lovings-Brown	Margie Williams
Armondo Fuqua	Damon Major	
Charlie Gentry	Kanisha Moye	

Neighborhood Leadership Fellows (NLF) is an advanced leadership training program of [UMSL](#), [MU Extension](#) and the [St. Louis Promise Zone-St. Louis Economic Development Partnership](#). The mission of NLF is to increase and amplify the voices of North St. Louis City and County residents at the civic decision-making tables in order to produce more equitable regional policies for neighborhoods. The primary geographic focus area is neighborhoods within the St. Louis Promise Zone due to the well-documented need for more targeted investment. [Learn more.](#)

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.

Events & Resources



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebrations

UMSL MLK Holiday Observance

Monday, January 17, 2022

11:00 AM

Online

"Embracing the Dream in a Season of Uncertainty!" is the theme for the virtual celebration from the Touhill Performing Arts Center at UMSL hosted by the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The community is invited to join in this free program **featuring Yamiche Alcindor**: anchor and moderator, "Washington Week"; White House correspondent, "PBS NewsHour"; Washington correspondent with NBC News. There will also be a musical performance and presentations of the **2022 MLK Scholarship recipients**.

[Click here](#) for additional information and a registration link.

STLCC-Flo Valley and NCCU MLK Celebration

Tuesday, January 18, 2022

6:00 to 7:30 PM

Online

The community is invited to join STLCC-Florissant Valley and North County Churches United for Racial Harmony and Justice to hear inspiring speeches, celebrate excellence in the community with a formal awards presentation, and more. Attend and listen virtually at www.stlcc.edu/go/fvmlkday or at 89.5 KCFV-FM.

North County Inc. 5th annual "Embracing the Dream"

Friday, January 14, 2022

Noon - 1:00 PM

Livestream

This annual event exemplifies Dr. King's teachings. Open to the community, during this celebration five unsung local heroes and numerous student scholars from the local community will be recognized.

[Click here](#) for more information or register for the virtual event at <https://www.christianhospital.org/mlk-celebration/register>.



EVOLVE NOCO Action Team Meeting

Saturday, January 15, 2022

10:00 to 11:30 AM

Save the date for the first North County Action Team meeting of the year, which will be held on Saturday, January 15th at 10am via Zoom. The special guest speaker is State Senator Brian Williams. Check the Evolve Facebook page for updated information.

<https://www.facebook.com/314Evolve/>



A Red Circle's Community Resource Fair in Pagedale

Saturday, January 29, 2022

Noon to 4:00 PM

6815 Page Avenue

Join A Red Circle's in collaboration with The Center of Hope & Peace. There will be food, books and information about jobs, rental assistance, Medicaid applications, Covid-19, and more. Participants include: Legal Services of Eastern Missouri, St. Louis County Health, Keep Pushing, Inc., Gateway to Hope, Propel Kitchens, EyeSeeMe, Turn the Page Stl, R & R Nonprofit, and Life Foundation among others. [Click here](#) for more information and free tickets to this event.



The UMSL Chancellor's Certificate in Workplace Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)
January 31 – May 27 2022
Online

Community members are invited to take part in a highly interactive, cohort-based, online professional development program that explores the concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace. This non-credit bearing program is open to all professionals in the Greater Saint Louis community.

The workshop series cost is \$450 (discounts available for UMSL employees and alumni, as well as nonprofit employees and UMSL community card holders).

Click [here](#) for more information.



A New Year, a New Opportunity for 2022 at the UMSL Recreation & Wellness Center

Is improved health and well-being part of your goals for 2022? During the entire month of January, special membership pricing is available--a 9-month membership at 10% off or a 12-month membership at 20% off. Also enjoy a Free Guest Pass Weekend for the month of January where members can bring in one free guest Friday-Sunday throughout the month.

[Click here](#) for more information

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