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Dear friends, neighbors and community members,

May is one of the most exciting months at our university, and we are happy to be holding commencement activities in person again this weekend, May 13-15. New graduates are ready to transform lives as they join thousands of alumni who are making a difference in our community and throughout the world.

Other exciting activities are on the horizon as well. As UMSL enters its 60th year of serving the St. Louis region, we are poised to make a significant impact on workforce and business development in North St. Louis County with the transformation of UMSL North and South campuses. From our own backyard to the broader world, UMSL is committed to building the region's top metropolitan public university, aimed at serving students and the community well into the future. As we take the steps necessary to reinvest in our commitment to provide transformative change for all, I invite you to take a few minutes to enjoy our new Transform UMSL video.

We are excited about UMSL's future, as well as the work of the community partners featured in our newsletter who are addressing health care and education needs in the community, including Affinia Healthcare's expansion of services and new literacy supports in the Normandy Schools Collaborative. We are also including area celebrations and educational events that present opportunities to enjoy time with neighbors and friends throughout the community.

As we head into the summer months, and march toward the year ahead, UMSL looks forward to collaborating with our neighbors to embrace—and build upon—all the greatness that North County has to offer.

Gratefully forward,

Kristin Sobolik
Chancellor
University of Missouri–St. Louis





Transform UMSL

It is such an amazing time to be at the University of Missouri St. Louis. Approaching the 60th anniversary of its founding next year, UMSL is setting course toward a renewed and reimagined future that will serve the university campus, region and far beyond for decades to come. UMSL is in the process of renewing its academic core, moving units onto the north side of campus. South Campus renovations include an expanded nursing simulation lab and further build out of the Patient Care Center for the College of Optometry as well as a partnership to establish an express clinic to meet the needs of the local community.

From alumni and donors UMSL will create a new Welcome and Alumni Center, renovate its University Libraries, and establish a new home for the UMSL Accelerate. The university is also removing buildings on South Campus to pave way for a 35 acre North County Workforce and Business District. This district will improve job access and growth, build the workforce, bolster research and economic development, and enhance inclusive prosperity in north St. Louis County.

To ensure that our community remains up to date, a new [Transform UMSL](#) website that outlines these efforts has been launched. The website will be updated regularly as the many moving parts come together, so people can visit the site often to learn the latest on the progress – and to take heart in the incredible future being built. Check out the new Transform UMSL video [here](#).



Affinia Healthcare to bring much-needed health care services to north St. Louis County

St Louis Public Radio, Chad Davis, May 4, 2022

Affinia Healthcare will start construction soon on a 15,000-square-foot health center in Ferguson, thanks in part to a \$2 million federal grant. The center will be located on Pershall Road, adjacent to the Emerson YMCA. The comprehensive health center will include family medical, obstetric, pediatric, dental care and behavioral health services. It will provide more health care options for an area that has lacked sufficient access to health care services, said Dr. Alan O. Freeman, president and CEO of Affinia Healthcare.

“We realized very quickly in Ferguson and in that area around the YMCA, there were particular opportunities to serve people in need and to provide greater access to care,” Freeman said. Affinia leaders said talks to create the center started more than a year ago. Freeman expects the facility will cost about \$5.5 million to construct and open in fall 2023. [Read more.](#)



Birthing center, postpartum retreat coming to Ferguson for expectant Black mothers

KMOV, Caroline Hecker, Apr. 11, 2022

Expectant mothers in the St. Louis community will now have another option for childbirth and postpartum care. JAMAA Birth Village, in Ferguson, works with Black expectant mothers to ensure they receive the prenatal care and education needed to ensure a healthy pregnancy and birth. It focuses on affordable, Black-led midwifery and doula care, along with social support services and prenatal care.... JAMAA founder Okunsola Amadou said many Black mothers have negative experiences within a traditional hospital setting and often times don't seek the medical consultations and prenatal education they need as a result.... Amadou announced JAMAA's plan to be part of the solution, unveiling its expansion plans, which include a 5,000 square-foot Birth Center and Postpartum Retreat. It will be located on a vacant lot at the corner of Cunningham and Hereford Avenue in Ferguson. [Read more.](#)



Normandy school to become home of seventh Believe Project literacy lab

St. Louis County Community News, Apr. 27, 2022

The Normandy Schools Collaborative will become the newest home to a Believe Project literacy lab, an initiative of the St. Louis Black Authors of Children's Literature organization that's dedicated to improving reading proficiency in elementary students....The lab is designed to improve reading proficiency, especially in students in grades K-3. Research shows if students are not strong readers in third grade, they are four times more likely to drop out of school. Ninety percent of the characters or authors featured in the reading space will be people of color. [Read more](#) (p.7).



Sky is the limit for Ferguson-Florissant Red Tail Cadets

St. Louis American, May 2, 2022

The courage and skill of the Tuskegee Airmen, a group of primarily African American military pilots and airmen who fought in World War II with the 332d Fighter Group and the 477th Bombardment, is honored and takes flight through the Red Tail Cadet Program in the Ferguson-Florissant School District.

The six-member class, which was announced April 21, 2022, at the Elite Aviation Flight School includes, Cadet Capt. D.J. Beal, Steam Academy junior; Cadet Anyah Brown, McCluer High School sophomore; Cadet Jalen Reynolds, McCluer H.S. junior; Cadet Tyrese Walker, Steam Academy sophomore; Cadet Grace Ford, Steam Academy sophomore; and Cadet Micah Riggs, McCluer H.S. junior. The six-week program, in its second year, introduces students through classroom instruction, flight simulator training, in-aircraft flight training, financial literacy seminars, leadership training, and life skills development. Its goal is to put cadets on a runway to aviation careers. [Read 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



UMSL Commencement for Spring and Summer 2022 graduates

May 13-15, 2022

UMSL will recognize nearly 1,800 students earning degrees in either May or August as it celebrates commencement with six ceremonies this weekend. Commencement weekend will begin at 2 p.m. Friday with a ceremony celebrating graduates of the College of Optometry and will feature five more ceremonies – three Saturday and two Sunday – at the Mark Twain Athletic Center on the UMSL campus. Doors will open 90 minutes prior to the ceremony's scheduled start time. The community is welcome, and there will likely be increased traffic as visitors find their way onto campus to celebrate the graduates. For more information as well as a list of commencement speakers, [click here](#).



**Citizens for Modern Transit Ten Toe Special Walk:
Featuring Ferguson Brewing Company**

Thursday, May 19, 2022
10:15 a.m.

Walkers at this event will visit with the Ferguson Brewing Company on-staff brewer to learn more about the brewing process that takes place in their snug yet efficient brewery space with a 20 barrel system, which has the capacity to maintain 8 year-round selections and their rotating seasonal beers. For more information [click here](#).



Life Line Screening

Thursday, May 26, 2022
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
New Awakening United Methodist Church
8000 Natural Bridge Rd., 63121

A package of five screenings to identify cardiovascular disease and other chronic conditions will be offered:

- Carotid artery ultrasound
- Abdominal aortic aneurysm ultrasound
- Heart Rhythm Screening (AFIB)
- Peripheral Arterial Disease Screening
- Osteoporosis Risk Assessment-Ultrasound

To register [click here](#).



Ready Readers Block Party

Saturday, June 4, 2022
11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Bella Fontaine Park

Celebrate the start of Ready Readers' next one million books with a community celebration! This fun, festive block party is open to all! With a focus on literacy, the event will include book

give-aways, engaging storytimes and storytelling, hands-on activities for kids, free food and more! For more information, [click here](#).



North County Uncorked

Friday, July 8, 2022
Doors open at 6:30 p.m
Marriott St. Louis Airport
10700 Pear Tree Lane

The Board of Directors of North County Inc. invite the community to a roast and toast celebrating their anniversary. The event includes a five course dinner, wine pairings, silent auction, and celebration. For more information and registration, [click here](#).



Ferguson Farmers Market

Saturdays (May-October)
8:00 a.m. to Noon
Plaza at 501

Summer food and fun is here. Founded in 2002, the award-winning Ferguson Farmers' Market brings the community live music, a festive family atmosphere, and a wide variety of edible delights, including homemade jelly, farm fresh eggs, cheese, honey, spices, and organic meats. Connect with Farmers and choose local, sustainably grown foods as well as fresh cut flower bouquets, bedding plants and more. This can be your Farm Fresh Destination every Saturday morning! For more information, [click here](#).

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

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