Stay connected
We want to hear from you! Share your news, photos and follow us on social media.

Let us know what you’re up to!
Send class notes and life updates to alumni@umsl.edu.

CLASS NOTES

1960s
Gwen Moore, BA 1969, received a Distinguished Alumni award from the Broom School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis. Gwen is the curator of urban landscape and community identity at the Missouri History Museum.

1970s
John Dohe, BSBA 1974, MBA 1982, received the Salute to Business Achievement Award from the UMSL Business Alumni Chapter.

Cheryl Templeton, MEd 1978, welcomed grandson Kaiden John Templeton in January. Kaiden’s father, Spencer Templeton, is pursuing his PhD in physics at UMSL.

1980s
Warner Baxter, BSBA 1983, was elected vice chairman of Edison Electric Institute.

Kenneth Marx, BSBA 1983, MBA 1992, was named chief financial officer of Summit Electric Supply in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Marc Katz, BSBA 1987, was named interim chief financial officer of Tuesday Morning Corporation.

Steve O’Loughlin, BSBA 1989, received the Salute to Business Achievement Award from the UMSL Business Alumni Chapter in September.

1990s
Toni Douaihy, BA 1991, was elected president of the UMSL Alumni Association Governing Board of Directors.

Jean Evans, BA 1991, has been chosen to lead the Missouri arm of the American Federation for Children, a pro-school choice education advocacy organization.

Michael Aufdembrink, MS 1992, MBA 1995, was named chief information officer for Summit Electric Supply in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Jim Walls, BS 1992, was named to the board of directors at Hope Creates in St. Louis.

Stephen Kiger, BA 1986, was named president of the Rotary Club of New Albany.

Allison Aden, MBA 1987, was named chief financial officer of Canon Industries.

Dave Reffersnyder, BSBA 1988, was elected second vice president of the UMSL Alumni Association Governing Board of Directors.

Dave Scott and Jim Irwin climbing into the first lunar module. Jump ahead two years to Apollo 15, you have Dave Scott and Jim Irwin climbing into the first lunar rover and driving more than 17 miles. They explored and conducted science over an area half the size of Manhattan. They climbed hundreds of feet up the side of a mountain as big as Kilimanjaro. All told, the crews of the last three missions drove more than 56 miles on the moon in what was essentially a 1969 General Motors product. The rover changed everything about Apollo. Why a book about the lunar rover? Because it’s a compelling story, with strong characters and lots of action and surprises along the way. On Apollo 11, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin never ventured more than 65 yards from their lunar module. Jump ahead two years to Apollo 15, you have Dave Scott and Jim Irwin climbing into the first lunar rover and driving more than 17 miles. They explored and conducted science over an area half the size of Manhattan. They climbed hundreds of feet up the side of a mountain as big as Kilimanjaro. All told, the crews of the last three missions drove more than 56 miles on the moon in what was essentially a 1969 General Motors product. The rover changed everything about Apollo.

How did you prepare for your journalism career while at UMSL?
I arrived planning to stick around for two years, get a slew of survey courses out of the way, then transfer to journalism school. But my first day on campus, I sought out the offices of The Current, and walked out with a story assignment. By the time I got my second, I knew that I’d found my people. I got my first training as a reporter and forged lifelong friendships on the paper’s staff.

Before long, I landed a job at the St. Louis Globe-Democrat that led to my getting the Globe’s summer reporting internship. That, in turn, convinced me that perhaps I didn’t need to go to journalism school – that the wiser course might be to learn about the world I’d be covering, rather than the mechanics of covering it. I decided to stay at UMSL, and major in political science. It turned out to be a good call; when I graduated, the Globe offered me a full-time reporting job.

How do you find your inspiration and decide on a topic for a book?
My inspiration is that I like to eat: it’s unromantic to put it so plainly, but writing is a job like any other – if you require some mystical form of inspiration to do it, you’re going to go hungry. Inspiration does visit but almost always when you’re already elbows-deep in the work.

As for the topics I choose, I write the kind of stories I like to read. If I’ve thought the ideas through to the extent I should, others will want to read them, too.

Why a book about the lunar rover?
What does UMSL mean to you?
UMSL offered whatever I asked of it – the community there gave me the room and encouragement to aim as high as I chose to, but success or failure was up to me. That was a real gift: you had to motivate yourself if you hoped to maximize your experience. I’ve worked with really smart, well-educated colleagues over the years but few who knew less to work as hard as I did at UMSL.

Over time, that’s proved a real advantage, a linchpin to my career. When it comes to telling you just how grateful I am to be an alum, I can’t find words big enough.

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The UMSL Alumni Association 2021 Distinguished Alumni Award winners reflect the tremendous diversity and amazing abilities, talents and leadership of UMSL alumni. The 2021 award winners are leaders in the fields of education, veterans’ health and nurse leadership, chemistry, and equity and inclusion. Their work transforms lives locally, nationally and globally as they work to change and improve the world around them.

The honorees for 2021 are: Melanie Adams, PhD 2014; Rajiv Banavali, PhD 1981; Jennifer Cobbina, MA 2006, PhD 2009; Patty Hendrickson, DNP 2020; and Amy Hunter, BA 1992; LaVell Monger, BA 2016, received the Outstanding Young Alumni Award.

The honorees were celebrated during the Founders Celebration on Oct. 7 at the Blanche M. Touhill Performing Arts Center.

Paul Yorke, MBA 1992, retired as pricing support manager from BP after 35 years of service. He began his career in St. Louis with Amoco Petroleum Additives Company as a financial analyst.

Lorri Edinger Richardson, BSED 1993, MEd 1995, was honored with the Emerson’s Emersion in Teaching Award. Lorri is an eighth-grade U.S. history teacher at Bryan Middle School.

Amy Hunter, BA 1994, received a Distinguished Alumni Award at the 2021 UMSL Founders’ Dinner. Amy serves as the vice president of diversity, equity and inclusion at Caleres in St. Louis.

Diane Brown, ISDN 1995, was named director of Health Services for Parkway Schools.


Dorfitia Adams, MEd 1998, was named principal at Barbara C. Jordan Elementary School in University City, Missouri.

Joseph Blanner, BSBA 1998, became past president of the UMSL Alumni Association Governing Board of Directors. Saujagi Hammond, BSBA 1998, was promoted to executive director of human resources at Bayer.

Kesha Strong, BA 1998, was named a St. Louis Business Journal 2021 HR Award honoree.

Art McCoy, MEd 1990, PhD 1995, was named to the board of directors of Mental Health America. Natasha Small, MEd 1999, MEd 2005, EDP 2016, is one of the honorees of the St. Louis Business Journal’s 2022 class of Champions for Diversity and Inclusion.

20005 Eric Mulskin, BA 2001, was named to the board of directors at FOCUS St. Louis. Christine Figge, BSSci 2002, MAsc 2003, received the Salute to Business Achievement Award from the UMSL Business Alumni Chapter.

Darrell Carter, MBA 2003, was hired as vice president for strategic marketing at Stephens College.

Deitra Colquitt, BSED 2003, MEd 2010, ME 2016, ESOP 2020, was one of eight educators selected for EdSurge’s inaugural Voices of Change Writing Fellowship.

Deitra is the co-principal at Pershing Elementary School.

John McFarlin, BA 2004, has been named deputy commissioner by the Arkansas Securities Department.

Cassandra Kaufman, MSW 2005, became executive director of the St. Louis Mental Health Board.

Jennifer Cobbina, MA 2006, PhD 2009, received a Distinguished Alumni Award at the 2021 UMSL Founders’ Dinner. Jennifer is an associate professor in the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University.

Sarah Janier, MPA 2006, was named to the 2021 class of St. Louis Business Journal’s Most Influential Business Women.

James Young, BM 2006, was named the 2022 Missouri Teacher of the Year. James is a sixth-grade musical theatre teacher at Johnson-Wabash Sixth Grade Center.


Carol works at Maryville University as an assistant professor of nursing.

Eric Brooks, BIS 2007, DOL 2011, MS 2013, was featured on the cover of ADA Focus, the magazine of the American Optometric Association, and in a feature story, “Optometry’s Reflection,” which examined racial and ethnic diversity within the profession. Erin is an associate clinical professor at UMSL.

David Gipson, MPA 2007, was chosen as the 2021 Jay T. Bell Professional Management Award recipient by the Missouri City/County Management Association. The award recognizes outstanding commitment to the profession of local government management and is the association’s highest honor for members.

Maggie Lauer, MBA 2008, was named vice president and chief financial officer of Switch, a St. Louis marketing agency.

Chris Peoples, BSCE 2008, was named senior project manager at Great Rivers Greenway, where he will work with other staff members, partners and communities to fulfill the agency’s mission of connecting the St. Louis region with greenways.

If you’re an UMSL graduate, you’re a member of the UMSL Alumni Association – more than 105,000 alumni strong. From networking and connecting on social media to getting involved in a committee, there is something for all UMSL graduates in the Alumni Association.

Take advantage of membership benefits including:

- Discounted membership to the Recreation and Wellness Center
- Discounts at the UMSL Eye Care center
- Access to the University Libraries • UMSL license plates (Missouri residents)
- Much more!

You Belong

Follow us on social media @UMSLalumni

Start an affinity group or chapter in your area

Get involved with a local chapter

Attend a class reunion

Contact alumni@umsl.edu to connect, engage and inspire.
Clyde Bailey and Lynn Bailey, née Scott, BA 1980, met on registration day in the fall of 1972 and married later that year. Years later, their daughter Evelyn Bailey Moore, BSEE 2003, earned her degree while working full time. She is now director of engineering and chief engineer at Boeing.

‘UMSL is sentimental to me because my parents met at registration day in the fall of 1972 and married later that year. It was the best course of action for me and my family. I would not be where I am today without the Joint Engineering Program and my family support system.’
— Evelyn Bailey Moore

A look at some family legacies tells the story of the unique opportunities that UMSL provides for traditional or non-traditional students and life-long learners. It includes parents and children studying at the same time, multi-generational legacies, siblings, parents inspiring children and children inspiring parents.

Are you part of a family legacy? Share your story with us! Email us at alumni@umsl.edu.

Calling all UMSL legacies

Pearlina Boyd, MPFA 2008, joined the Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations as early resolution human rights officer.

Erika Cameron, PhD 2009, was appointed provost and vice president for academic affairs at Palo Alto University in California.

Lauren Collins, BA 2009, joined Kraft, Bischoff, Buckley & Collins, the in-house litigation department of the Automobile Club of Missouri.

Matthew Hefli, BSacc 2009, Macc 2010, was promoted to partner at Ruben Brown.

2010s

Julie Hoff, MBA 2010, was named vice president of human resources at Soren Bio.

Laura Ribeiro, MSW 2010, became an assistant professor of social work at Missouri Baptist University.

Jeremy Brown, BSed 2011, started as the new principal at Central High School in Springfield, Missouri.

Gabrielle MacAloon, BS 2011, MPFA 2013, was appointed to assistant city manager of University City, Missouri.

David McGraw, BA 2011, BS 2013, MA 2013, ME 2016, was elected secretary of the UMSL Alumni Association Governing Board of Directors.

Oritthia Montague, PhD 2011, was appointed president of Volunteer State Community College in Gallatin, Tennessee.

Sandy Olive, BSed 2011, BA 2012, MA 2014, appeared on three episodes of “Jeopardy!” which she was a two-day champion and won more than $50,000 in prize money.

Cordaryl Patrick, MPFA 2013, was elected treasurer to the UMSL Alumni Association Governing Board of Directors.

Keyne Quirgo-Anana, BLS 2011, was named a recipient of the St. Louis Business Journal’s inaugural Business of Pride Award. Those honored are outstanding LGBTQIA+ leaders who are successful in their careers, active in their communities and are advocates for inclusion and equality.

January Realista, MBA 2011, received the Salute to Business Achievement Award from the UMSL Business Alumni Chapter.

Will Werner, MA 2011, is the new director of UMSL’s National Security and Community Policy Collaborative.

Caryl Gorka, BSBA 2012, started as senior marketing automation and production associate with Hinge Health.

Jon McMiller, BSBA 2012, and his brother, Willie, had their pilot, "Flip it to the Macs," greenlit by HGTV. After years of working in construction for their father, Jon and Willie decided to start their own real estate and renovation business focused on transforming rundown properties in their hometown of St. Louis.

Elizabeth Eikmann, BA 2013, received her PhD in American studies from Saint Louis University and accepted a postdoctoral fellowship in the study of St. Louis and the American story at Washington University in St. Louis.

Samuel Freiberg, PhD 2013, MBA 2017, has joined the UMSL Alumni Association Governing Board of Directors. Samuel also became director of Human Resources for Behavioral Health Response.

Adam Layne, MEd 2013, was appointed treasurer for the City of St. Louis.

Gary Mudd, MBA 2013, is a recipient of the St. Louis Business Journal’s inaugural Business of Pride Awards. Those honored are outstanding LGBTQIA+ leaders who are successful in their careers, active in their communities and are advocates for inclusion and equality.

Brittany Pompey, BA 2013, BS 2013, was hired as a behavioral health clinician with HCA Healthcare.

Melanie Adams, PhD 2014, received a Distinguished Alumni Award at the 2021 UMSL Founders Dinner. Melanie is the director of the Smithsonian’s Anacostia Community Museum in Washington, DC.

Toni Austin, MS 2014, became a counselor for Lewis and Clark Community College.

From the spring 2021 issue:

What was your most memorable date while in school?

“I recall my wife and I regularly attending current movie screenings on campus for just $1.00. UMSL showed some lesser-known movies, which introduced us to many films we otherwise might have never seen.

It was back in the mid-’80s when I was working on my BGS degree while working full-time. Who knew the bargain prices would provide such priceless memories!”

— Russ Sternberg Jr., BGS 1996
The Alumni Association celebrated baseball, UMSL and America with alumni in Denver when the St. Louis Cardinals visited the Colorado Rockies in a Fourth of July game. Alumni, family, friends and staff enjoyed the game in a private suite at Coors Field. On Aug. 14, the Alumni Association tailgated with Kansas City-area alumni before the Cardinals and Royals game at Kauffman Stadium and wrapped up the baseball celebration along I-70 with the return of UMSL Night at the Ballpark on Sat. 10 with more than 500 alumni and students as the Cincinnati Reds played the St. Louis Cardinals at Busch Stadium.

Anna Lulamondier, BSBA '17, became a financial analyst with Ascension. Joel Richardson, BSICSE '17, accepted a civil engineer position with Castle Contracting in St. Louis as part of its Design Build team. Gavin Schiffres, MED '17, was an honoree of the 30 under 30 ChangersMakers Award by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools. Sahil Cile, BSBA '18, became a senior accountant with Ernst and Young, Crypto. Patty Kowalski, BSBA 2021, joined Icon Mechanical as a project manager.

Nick Bommarito, BS 2014, was named conservation agent for Lincoln County by the Missouri Department of Conservation. Natalie Coyne, BA 2014, started NatalieCoyne.com, a digital marketing consulting business. Semi Vazone, BSEE '14, has joined the UMSL Alumni Association Board of Directors. Semi was recently promoted to manager of asset and investment management at Ameren Missouri. Jessepreet Babra, BSEE '15, was hired by CASCO Architecture, Engineering & Design as an electrical designer.

Christina Donald, BS 2015, was promoted to senior vice president of advocacy at the Wyman Center. Sharon Prutt-Young, BA '15, joined the Newsdesk Digital News team at National Public Radio. Chandrav Douchaine, BSBA '16, joined Hen Tools as a product manager. Christopher Imming, MBA '16, was promoted to regional president of commercial banking at Midwest BankCentre, which has locations throughout Missouri and Illinois.

Hannah Miller, BFA 2016, started a position as a claims professional with Seiler Instrument. JoAnna Watts, MSW '21, co-founded and now serves as executive director of Missouri’s Court Appointed Special Advocate office in Farmington.

Michaela Wells, MED '21, became coordinator of Student Organizations and Fraternity and Sorority Life at UMSL.