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Dear friends, neighbors, and community members,

It is such an exciting time to serve our community as Chancellor of the University of Missouri–St. Louis as we work in multiple ways to foster inclusive excellence in the St. Louis region. In this issue of Community Connection, we're pleased to share stories of opportunity, community, and celebration in North County. Local educators are winning awards, volunteers

are cleaning up their communities, local organizations are breaking ground on new projects, and many events and fall activities are being offered for families and friends around the area.

I hope to see you out and about at one of the many community activities taking place this month as we are able to enjoy the fall weather. We particularly hope that you, our neighbors, will join us during Engagement Week on October 22nd for our [Health & Wellness pop up](#) and our neighborhood [open house at the Recreation and Wellness Center](#). And if you are a business leader in the community, we hope you will attend an October 29th [business engagement event](#) we are participating in along with other regional institutions to connect North County and City businesses with information on upcoming areas of spending need. As always, continue to stay safe and keep supporting one another as we take steps forward as community.

Wishing you well!

Kristin Sobolik  
Chancellor  
University of Missouri–St. Louis

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## Alumnus James Young wins Missouri Teacher of the Year

Months ago, James Young was shocked to learn he had been named the Ferguson-Florissant School District's 2021-2022 Teacher of the year. Young, a University of Missouri–St. Louis College of Education graduate and sixth-grade musical theater teacher at Johnson-Wabash Sixth Grade Center, was equally surprised, but grateful, this month when the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education named him the 2022 Missouri Teacher of the Year.

"I'm very honored," Young said of the recognition. "I'm honored to be able to represent UMSL. I'm honored to represent Ferguson-Florissant and the communities surrounding it. I'm honored to represent my family. I really feel a lot of love, support and encouragement from everyone who has been involved."

UMSL alumni have been well represented amongst Missouri Teacher of the Year winners recently. Young is the third Triton to win the top honor in the past five years. [Read more.](#)

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## UMSL Accelerate kicks off 2nd round of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Accelerator with reception

[University of Missouri–St. Louis Accelerate](#) launched the second round of its [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Accelerator](#) alongside big dreams with a three-hour event on Wednesday. More is the theme going into the second year: more impact, more founders and more space in which to accomplish those first two goals.

[Monique Bynum](#), program director of UMSL DEI Accelerator and senior director of development at Boone Center Incorporated, spoke to those ambitions. “We’re just hoping for more impact,” she said. “We had success the first year, but we want more success for our founders. We want to fund more founders. So we’re not done fundraising. We were able to fund six last year, but we would love to get to seven this year.”

The DEI Accelerator, which first launched in October last year, provides startup founders from underrepresented populations with \$50,000 in non-dilutive capital, access to a six-week business development course, mentors, paid UMSL student interns, assistance with grant applications, technology support and incubator space.

[Applications](#) for the second cohort opened on Sept. 29 and will close on Oct. 29. The top teams will be invited to pitch their businesses and ideas during a Nov. 18 event and the winners will be announced on Dec. 8. [Read more.](#)

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## UMSL wins fifth Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award from INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine

The University of Missouri–St. Louis takes pride in being one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse universities in the state of Missouri. But members of the campus community are continually looking for new ways they can cultivate an even more inclusive environment where everyone can feel valued and thrive.

INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine recognized that ongoing work while naming UMSL one of 101 recipients of its prestigious 2021 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award – a national honor recognizing U.S. colleges and universities that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion. The honorees will be featured along with the other recipients in the magazine’s November 2021 issue.

This marks the second year in a row and fifth time overall that UMSL has received the honor after previously being recognized in 2013, 2014 and 2015. It was also the only university in Missouri to be included in this year’s list of awardees. [Read more.](#)



## Karl Guenther, Patricia Parker honored at North County Inc.'s 44th annual Leadership Breakfast

North County Inc. celebrated the work of two members of the University of Missouri–St. Louis campus community among a list of 20 honorees at the 44th annual Leadership Breakfast.

Karl Guenther, the assistant vice chancellor for economic and community development, shared an Excellence in Partnership Leadership Award with Lynette Watson of the University of Missouri Extension's Small Business Development Center for their joint efforts to launch the North County Small Business Accelerator to support local restaurants and retail businesses. Patricia Parker, the E. Desmond Lee Endowed Professor in Zoological Studies and director of the Whitney R. Harris World Ecology Center, meanwhile received a Diversity & Inclusion Leadership Award for her role in the creation of the Collaborative Laboratory Internships and Mentoring Blueprint, better known as CLIMB, to benefit high school students at four area school districts.

"On behalf of the University of Missouri–St. Louis as well as MU Extension, we're just grateful for the chance to partner with North County Inc. and with businesses in North County to support more thriving communities," Guenther told the crowded ballroom as he accepted the award. "The richness of North County is throughout this this room. North County Inc. always creates the tables for us to come together, to work together and to be able to build and support strong communities." [Read more.](#)



## Volunteers spend day at historic cemetery, cleaning the grounds and locating missing graves

Fox2Now news, by Kelley Hoskins, August 30, 2021

Dozens of Spire employees volunteered at Washington Park Cemetery to help beautify the final resting place for hundreds of notable Black St. Louisans. The historic cemetery was established in the 1920s as a burial ground for African Americans. A Spire engineering team spent the day gathering valuable information to help families locate loved ones with high-accuracy GPS equipment. Volunteers also utilized their time to help clean the cemetery grounds.

"We are helping out the St. Louis Preservation Crew capture and improve data for gravesites and headstones," said Matthew Voelker. High-profile civil rights leaders, doctors, lawyers, and servicemen are among those buried here. "Historically, I know it's a significant cemetery in St. Louis. There are veterans here from multiple wars and it's significant to the African American community," Voelker said. "We are looking to help improve it any way we can." [Read more.](#)



## Ferguson Farmer's Market celebrates 20 years of bringing fresh foods and handmade wares to the community

St. Louis County Community News, by Wendy Todd, September 29, 2021

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Ferguson Farmer's Market serving the community. Beginning in 2002 in what was then called Victorian Plaza with only about eight tents and two volunteers, the market has grown to include over 50 vendors.

In addition to fresh produce, meats and cheeses from local farmers, one can also find creative homemade and handmade wares like small batch soaps, candles, and leather jewelry. It has become not only a place to indulge in local delights, but also a community staple that brings people together and offers family-friendly fun.

"It's the place to be on Saturday morning where people can meet up and also support local business," says Gita Suchland, who owns Alpacas of Troy and Brats of the World with her husband, Jeff. Suchland has seen the market and her business grow in the five years she's been a vendor. "Every year we get to know more people and they come to see us because their friends told them about us. The market also holds special events that bring new people to the market who usually don't go," she explains. [Read more.](#)



## Ascension Charity Classic Breaks Attendance Record

KSDK news, by Nathan Rubbelke, September 13, 2021

The inaugural Ascension Charity Classic presented by Emerson brought 51,000 fans to Norwood Hills Country Club over four days — an attendance record for a first-time PGA Champions Tour event and yet another reminder of the collective power of the St. Louis region. Proceeds from the tournament, which will return for the next three years, directly support North St. Louis County communities, including three primary beneficiaries: Marygrove, Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater St. Louis and the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis. [Read more.](#)



## UMSL expanding opportunity for area high school students through St. Louis Scholars Program

The University of Missouri–St. Louis has been helping top-performing students from underserved communities in the St. Louis metropolitan area realize their dream of a college education over the past decade through its Opportunity Scholars Program.

Through the program, UMSL has awarded five scholarships annually covering the full cost of tuition, housing, meals, books, a computer and other incidental expenses to select students enrolling in the Pierre Laclède Honors College.

The university is now working to broaden its impact with the creation of the St. Louis Scholars Program, designed as a companion to the Opportunity Scholars Program that will provide an additional 20 students \$8,000 per year in stackable scholarship funds along with membership in the Honors College and specialized advising and mentoring.

“This is a wonderful addition that will support academically gifted students who are either first-generation college students or are underrepresented in the workforce in their intended fields,” Chancellor Kristin Sobolik said in announcing the scholarship. [Read more.](#)



## EXTENSION & ENGAGEMENT WEEK | 2021

### UMSL celebrates Extension & Engagement week and invites the community to take part!

Join all four universities in the UM System with statewide partners on October 18-23, 2021 as we explore issues of health equity, the opioid crisis, and health data and hear from leaders and thinkers around the state. Highlights include:

- Monday (10/18): The Opioid Crisis in Missouri – UM System Response and Engagement, Health Strategies for Rural Missouri
- Tuesday (10/19): Health Equity keynote and panel featuring Dwayne Proctor, President and CEO of Missouri Foundation for Health following the grand opening of the Blunt NextGen Precision Health Building
- Wednesday (10/20): All Things Missouri Health featuring Bethany Johnson Javois, President and CEO of Deaconess Foundation

All events are virtual, free and open to the public. Click [here](#) to learn more and to register!

### UMSL neighbors are invited to take part in two in-person special events at UMSL on Friday, October 22nd.

#### What's Poppin? Health and Well-being Pop-up event

12:00 to 5:00PM

8225 Florissant Road

Activities and presentations focus on taking care of physical and mental health, mini-wellness and vision screenings, gardening and nutrition, as well as building community. Attendees will go home with a bag full of goodies to help them live more healthy and engaged lives. This is offered in collaboration with UMSL and UM Extension. [Click here](#) for the list of presentations and times.

#### UMSL Recreation and Wellness Center – neighborhood open house\*

4:00 to 8:00PM

11 Arnold B. Grobman Drive

Area residents are welcome to enjoy access to the track, gym equipment and machines, courts, climbing wall and pool (age restrictions may apply). A personal trainer will be on site to discuss plans and do a few different free assessments and the membership office will be open for questions until 6:00PM.



\*Note: attendees must present their UMSL Community card in order to attend without being charged a guest pass fee. [Click here](#) for eligibility or to register for a card which can be picked up at the event. Otherwise, there is a \$3 per person entry fee.

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## 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

[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 Contracts

Interested in bidding on projects at UMSL?

[Procurement Bids](#)

[Construction Bids](#)

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## Events & Resources



### Vaccine Clinics

Wednesday, October 13  
1:00 to 6:00PM

UMSL  
Millenium Student Center  
17 Arnold B. Grobman Drive  
Room 313  
St. Louis, MO 63121

[Learn more](#) then make an appointments on the [Revive STL](#) website closer to the event date. This event is open to everyone.

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Thursdays,  
1:00 to 7:00PM

Natural Bridge Library  
7606 Natural Bridge Road

Appointments are not required to get a vaccine at the St. Louis County Library clinic, but people can set up appointments in advance at [revivestl.com](http://revivestl.com). Neither proof of residency in the county nor proof of health insurance is required.



**UMSL Alumni 5K Run/Walk**

Saturday, October 16  
8:00AM

UMSL Campus  
One University Blvd.,  
St. Louis, MO 63121

At this inaugural UMSL Alumni Association 5K Run & Walk, see old friends, meet new ones, enjoy the beautiful surroundings and make strides towards a healthier life. [Click here](#) for more information

A portion of the proceeds from the event will benefit the UMSL Triton Food Pantry.

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— ST. LOUIS PROMISE ZONE —

**Apply for the 2022 Neighborhood Leadership Fellows Cohort**

Advanced Leadership Training to Increase St. Louis Promise Zone Civic Engagement

Neighborhood Leadership Fellows work to increase the voices of North St. Louis City and North St. Louis County residents at civic decision-making tables in order to produce more equitable regional policies for neighborhoods. Applications close October 18 at 11:59PM. Click [here](#) to learn more.

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**North County Inc Golf Tournament**

Monday, October 18  
Glen Echo Country Club  
3401 Lucas and Hunt Road  
St. Louis, MO 63121  
Click [here](#) to register.



**Refuge and Restoration Groundbreaking Ceremony**

Tuesday, October 19  
9:30AM  
  
10148 W. Florissant Ave  
St. Louis, MO 63136

Refuge and Restoration has purchased the vacant Springwood Plaza and plans to create a vibrant Marketplace for the community. Attendees are welcome to join in celebrating this journey to bring R&R's vision to life.



Welcome Fall with us!

# UMSL | Alumni

## *at Pumpkinland*

### **UMSL Alumni at Pumpkinland**

Sunday, October 24  
3:00 to 5:00PM

Thies Farm and Greenhouse  
4215 North Hanley Road  
St. Louis, MO 63121

Bring the family for a night of fun at Pumpkinland at Thies Farm! Explore the farm featuring a hay bale playground, farm animals, wagon rides, and more!

\$5 per person registration includes parking, admission, snacks, a small pumpkin and a \$2 voucher per guest for ticketed farm fun.  
Click [here](#) to register

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# PROUD

## People Reaching Out for Unity and Diversity

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### Understanding How Local Government Works

Wednesday, October 27  
6:30PM

Are you confused about how the city of Ferguson actually works? Would you like to know more about who does what? For the answers, join PROUD (People Reaching out for Unity and Diversity) for an enlightening presentation by UMSL alum Dr. Napoleon Williams III.

Zoom Meeting ID: 881 2781 6240  
Passcode: 829803  
Click [here](#) to learn more.

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### St. Louis Anchor Action Network Business Event

Friday, October 29  
9:00AM to Noon  
online

For companies located in north St. Louis City or County interested in doing business with members of the St. Louis Anchor Action Network (SLAAN) such as BJC HealthCare, Mercy Health, SSM Health, St. Louis Community College, Saint Louis University, Saint Louis Zoo, and the University of Missouri-St. Louis. The free event will showcase the SLAAN member's current projects and highlight resources available to businesses.

[Click here](#) to register. For more information call Stefani Weeden-Smith at 314-516-4124 or Prima Wagan at 314-516-6679.



### UMSL Office of Student Involvement Trunk or Treat

Saturday, October 30  
12:00 to 2:00PM

UMSL Millennium Student Center parking lot

Community children are welcome to enjoy a variety of activity booths, followed by "Trunk-or-Treating" going from trunk to trunk to get treats! Click [here](#) for more information.



**Haunted Shelter Extravaganza at St. Vincent Community Center**

Saturday, October 30  
2:00 to 4:00PM

7335 St. Charles Rock Road  
St. Louis, MO 63133

Attendees will enjoy candy, hot chocolate, s'mores, and other treats under the Haunted St. Vincent Shelter. There will be a Trunk-or-Treat as well as prizes for the best costumes. Call 314-615-8788 for more information or click [here](#).



**Ferguson Farmer's Market**

Saturdays  
8:00AM to Noon



PLAZA at 501  
501 S. Florissant Rd.  
Ferguson MO 63135

Enjoy live music and special events in a festive family atmosphere, and discover a wide variety of edible delights, including homemade jelly, farm fresh eggs, honey, spices, and meats. Attendees will find an ever-changing array of gift and specialty vendors, selling everything from cut flowers and bedding plants to hand-painted artwork and small-batch soaps. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Good Shepherd Arts Center at Ferguson Farmer's Market present the following artists:

- October 16: GSAC Third Annual "Y'Art Sale"
- October 23: JW Curry
- October 30: Davion Henry



### Chonganda's Children online exhibition

"An encounter with the plant spirits in our environment."

Kate Moore-Freeman is a St. Louis native, writer, and mixed-media artist. A reverence for ancient artistic techniques, a passion for where modern technology can take art, and a veneration for common consumer culture waste materials drive her artistic pursuits. With "Chnganda's Children," Kate has joined her love of plant life, interest in mythology, and photo-manipulation skills to better understand the plant spirits in her environment. Click [here](#) for more information.

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### "Pay What You Can" Farm Stand

July through November  
Fridays  
3:00 to 7:00PM  
Sundays

11:00AM to 3:00PM

EarthDance Organic Farm  
233 S Dade Ave.  
Ferguson MO, 63135

Earth Dance Farm's new [Pay What You Can Farm Stand](#) is now available for people to take home summer favorites, fresh from the fields. [Click here](#) for more information.

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