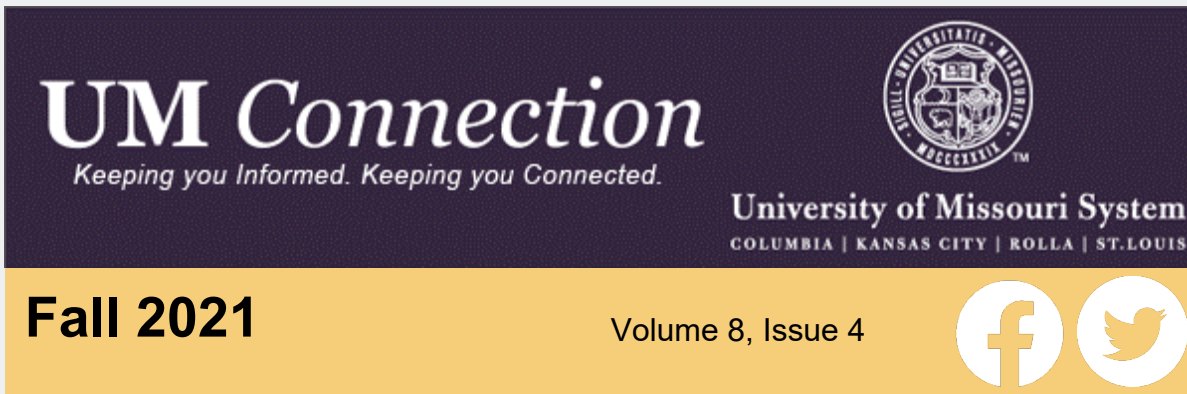


From: [UM System Office of Engagement](#)
To: [Seidel, Karinna](#)
Subject: UM Connection: Fall 2021
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UM Connection
Keeping you Informed. Keeping you Connected.

University of Missouri System
COLUMBIA | KANSAS CITY | ROLLA | ST. LOUIS

Fall 2021 Volume 8, Issue 4

Update from Chief Engagement Officer Marshall Stewart

I hope everyone is enjoying the beautiful fall colors. We continue to see more people out and about. I know that I have enjoyed seeing some of you in person over the last several months.

The UM System Retiree Health Benefits Virtual Town Hall that took place in October had a wonderful turnout. Over 500 retiree households heard from senior leaders and benefits representatives regarding health benefits. We also had over 100 questions asked live during the event. The town hall video and answers to the Q&A questions can be found [here](#). If you have additional questions, please reach out to the HR Service Center at hrservicecenter@umsystem.edu.



Our office, along with the [Engagement Leaders](#) from each university, have been working on a community engagement portal called [University of Missouri System Community Connect](#). This portal has events listed from each university as well as impact reports that share how the UM System is impacting not only your community, but the state of Missouri as well. You can also see the latest updates on our initiatives – Broadband, Workforce Development and Health. Each month features a different theme and November’s feature is Arts & Humanities.

Thank you for your continued support of and advocacy for the University of Missouri. Please let us know how we can assist you as engaged leaders in your communities!

Sincerely,

Marshall Stewart, Ed.D
Chief Engagement Officer, UM System

In Memoriam

They were our colleagues, our friends, and part of our UM family. Together, we remember those who shared their lives with us. Please keep their families in your thoughts. [View current list...](#)

Campus Association News & Announcements



Updates:

The [MU Retirees Association](#) (MURA) serves MU and UM system retirees as well as faculty and staff who are nearing retirement. We welcome retirees from all universities to join as associate or non-voting members.

MURA CONNECTS WITH MU AND UM RETIREES

1. Quarterly Newsletter

The [September issue of MURA News](#) continues the theme of working together and partnering while highlighting the communication objective. Brief highlights include:

When our organization was established 31 years ago, retirees met in person and leaders used paper newsletters and promotional fliers to communicate. Since then, communication technology exploded. Today, MURA's mediated channels include emails, website pages, Facebook posts, online newsletters, video recordings, webinars and Zoom.

There are two ways retirees can be active participants in the medical school partnership. Retirees participate in the Heyssel Senior Teacher Educator Partnership Program (STEP) bringing together senior members of the community and future physicians to share past and current life stories. Also, retirees can be a Simulated Participant in the state-of-the-art Simulation Center.

Clarification is given on the UM email policy as cybersecurity needs grow.

2. Breakfast Series

Our first-ever *hybrid* breakfast series began this fall. We are enjoying the fellowship of in-person breakfasts at the Country Club of Missouri and synchronous webinars. As in the past, the link to recorded presentations are available to all members in the following Bi-weekly MURA Update Emails. Health safety precautions of mask-wearing and social distancing are practiced for in-person events.

Hybrid breakfast presentations offered this fall were:

- September 14: Mike Szydlowski presented ***Back to School – Back to Nature: Boone County Nature School Update and Opportunities***. Szydlowski is the science coordinator for Columbia Public Schools and

was named the Conservation Educator of the Year by the Conservation Federation of Missouri.



- October 5: Steve Hollis presented **Addressing Homelessness in Columbia/Boone County: What is the Best Solution?** Hollis is the human services manager, Columbia/ Boone County Department of Public Health and Human Services.
- November 2: Dr. Tom Spencer presented **Update on the NextGen Precision Health.** Spencer is the scientific director of NextGen.



Upcoming programs are:

- December 1: **Holiday Luncheon** with a toast to Ray Schroeder, introduction of scholarship awardees, trivia quiz, and a gift basket raffle benefitting MU Tiger Pantry.
- December 7: Nina Mukerjee Furstenau on **History on the Plate: Fulbright Research in West Bengal.** Furstenau is an author, journalist, and editor of FoodStory book series.

3. Biweekly MURA Update emails

These bi-weekly emails provide details on upcoming MURA events, MU information such as *SHOW ME MIZZOU* stories, and “Barbara’s Picks,” a monthly curated listing of free online programs (with details on our website at [Events](#)), and a personal note by the MURA president.

4. Ongoing and Online

You can always learn more about MURA from our website, which provides a wealth of information including board members, board minutes, newsletters, events and membership information. Additional pages of interest to retirees are:

- [Volunteer Opportunities](#)
- [Kitty Dickerson Scholarship](#) for MU/UM students of staff parents
- [MURA History](#)
- [Chancellor’s Retiree of the Year Awards and Nomination Form](#)

JOIN US!

MURA dues are \$12.50 per year for annual members and \$100 for a lifetime membership. You can join at any time, but sooner is always better! You may apply online and pay dues via PayPal. Use our printed or fillable form online at [membership application](#).

Contacts for more information:

- Ruth Tofle, MURA President: TofleR@Missouri.edu
- Dick Otto, Co-Chair of Membership: OttoR@Missouri.edu

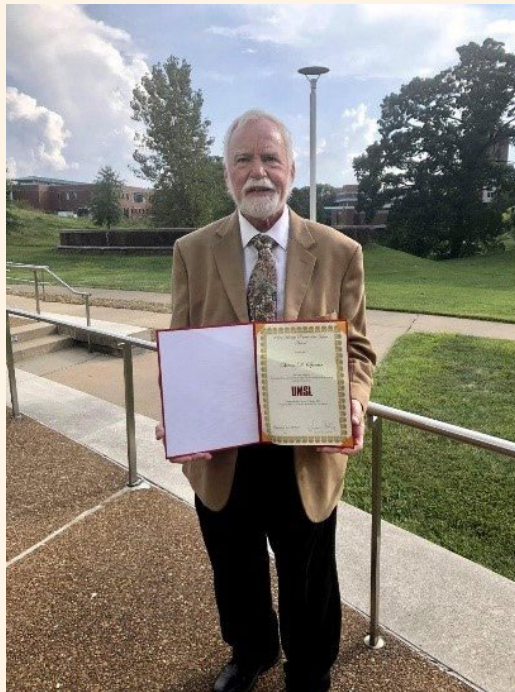
- Jo Turner, Co-Chair of Membership: Turnerlj@Missouri.edu

UMSL | Retirees Association

Updates:

Fall activities of the UMSL RA were shaped by coronavirus restrictions but those restrictions did not stop us from holding a great event by Zoom. We invited Professor Patricia Parker, E. Desmond Lee Professor, in the Biology Department to do a special presentation on the Galapagos Islands. Professor Parker is a specialist in disease ecology and population genetics. Her presentation was one part travelogue, but more importantly about disease ecology and population genetics research she has done on the islands. It was wonderful to take advantage of having a world-renowned specialist on our faculty. Everyone came away impressed by her work and excited to have learned many new things.

The Association also was excited to have one of our officers, Dr. Steven Spanner, recognized with the UMSL 2021 Retiree of the Year award. Chancellor Kristin Sobolik presented Steve with the award at her 2021 State of the University Address. The Retiree of the Year award recognizes retirees for their service to the campus and community after retirement. Steve has given countless hours to our Retirees Association as secretary and long-time treasurer, and has promoted retiree benefits at the local and System level. He also has continued to mentor doctoral students with his expertise in research methods, helping many to degree completion. In addition to campus service, Steve has been instrumental in his work with the Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests (SNAP), including the establishment of SNAP activities and services in Australia. He supported survivors to travel to Rome to seek justice from the Vatican itself. Steve has also worked with the Cornerstone Society of KWMU (St. Louis Public Radio), the Missouri Botanical Garden, and the Heritage Society of the St. Louis Zoo.



Professor Steven Spanner, 2021 UMSL Retiree Award Recipient

Upcoming for UMSL Retirees is the Holiday Luncheon, to be held on December 10th at Glen Echo Country Club. We look forward to seeing retirees there and enjoying an in-person celebration of the holidays.



Updates:

Welcome Reception

UMKCRA held its first in-person event since pre-pandemic times with its New Retirees Welcome Reception on September 23rd. We were pleased to welcome a number of new retirees—both faculty and staff from various units across the university in a festive event. Dr. Joan McDowd from the Department of Psychology gave a lively talk on “The Psychology of Aging Well: Lessons from the Pandemic,” and she stressed the significance of having a purpose in life for positive outcomes including health, social engagement, and reduced mortality.



UMKCRA New Retirees Welcome Reception

AROHE Conference (Association of Retirement Organizations in Higher Education)

Four of our UMKCRA members and several of our Emeritus College members participated in the virtual AROHE conference October 12-14. The theme was “Re-imagining Retirement: Let Us Boldly Go...” and featured many programs that universities and colleges around the U.S. and Canada have initiated to facilitate retirement transitions and make the most of this stage of life, called “Elderhood” by the keynote speaker, Dr. Louise Aronson.

Nominees for Upcoming Board Elections and Holiday Luncheon

We have successfully recruited excellent nominees for four positions that will be open on our board starting in January 2022. These are Vice-President/President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and one board member. These nominees will be voted on at a brief meeting at our Holiday Luncheon on December 11. In addition to board elections and passing the presidential gavel from Linda Breytspraak to Virginia (Ginny) Miller, the program will feature guest speaker Dr. John Herron, formerly of the UMKC History Department and Interim Dean of Arts & Sciences and now Director of the Kansas City Public Library. His topic will be “Libraries in Democracies: Information in a Contested Age.” Register for this event at: <https://umkcra.umkc.edu/Holiday21>.

UMKC Campus

UMKC has two building projects completed or underway. The Robert W. Plaster Free Enterprise and Research Center, a \$32 million building featuring innovative equipment and facilities that students, faculty, and community members can use, officially opened to the public in October. It is part of the School of Computing and Engineering, and some of its amenities include a 3D printing lab, a two-story drone testing bay, virtual reality equipment, a flight simulator and high-performance computing and analytic software. The other project is the \$15.2 million renovation of the Bloch Heritage Hall, which along with the Bloch Executive Hall for Entrepreneurship and Innovation is home to UMKC’s business school. This building will be quite forward-looking in relation to student needs and will open in July, 2022.



| Miner's Retiree Association

Updates:

The members of the Miner Retirees Board have been trying to determine whether or not we can begin our retiree lunch meetings. Throughout the pandemic we have been dormant eagerly awaiting an opportunity to resume in person activities.

Get Involved!

For more information about your campus retirees association and upcoming events, please contact the following representatives:

MU Retirees Association

Ruth Tofle, President

tofler@missouri.edu

Or visit the [MURA website](#)

UMKC Retirees Association

Linda Breytspraak, President

breytspraakl@umsystem.edu

Or visit the [UMKCRA website](#)

Miner Retirees Association

Richard Miller, President

oakox1@gmail.com

UMSL Retirees Association

Kathleen Haywood, President

kathleen_haywood@umsl.edu

Or visit the [UMSL RA website](#)

UM Connection is produced quarterly for the retirees of the four-campus University of Missouri System. This publication is a partnership between the Office of Engagement, the Office of Human Resources and the UM Retirees Association Leaders.

Questions or feedback? Email webmaster@umsystem.edu | [Unsubscribe](#)

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