

[View in browser](#)

# UM Connection

Keeping you Informed. Keeping you Connected.



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

Spring 2021

Volume 8, Issue 3



## Update from Chief Engagement Officer Marshall Stewart

I hope everyone is enjoying the summer. In-person events and meetings have started again, and I look forward to seeing some of you in person soon.

The UM System Town Hall that took place in May had a wonderful turnout. Over 400 retirees attended to hear from President Choi and other Senior Leaders regarding pensions, benefits and engagement opportunities. The town hall video and answers to the Q&A questions can be found [here](#).

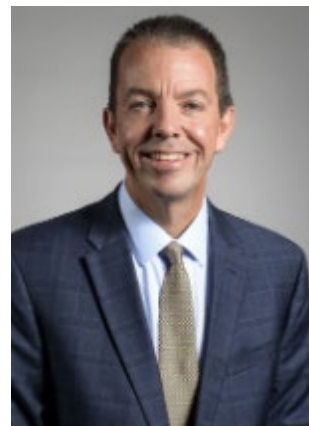
We, along with the leadership of the four campus retiree associations, have been working on communications efforts that we hope benefit all UM System Retirees. This information was shared during the town hall.

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.

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



### Retirees Association

University of Missouri

#### 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**

Continuing the year's theme of partnering and working together, the [June MURA Newsletter](#) focused on advocacy. Our members have rated advocacy as the most important of the four objectives. In addition to advocacy work on retirement and health benefits, MURA partners with and advocates for the university in a variety of areas as described by President Mun Choi in the newsletter.

MURA is structured to advocate at five levels: MU campus, leadership at MU and UM System, community, government and national. For each level, a chart displays the MURA Board Positions and persons who will serve in these positions during the 2021-2022 year.

A current example of MURA advocacy work-in-progress for retirees and pre-retirees is improving communication on a UM System-wide basis. Our four-campus retiree's associations are working on this initiative with UM administrative staff regarding retiree email addresses, a [UM System website](#) for our retiree associations, recruitment materials, system communications to retirees and UM System Retiree Town Halls.

##### **2. Events: Breakfast Presentations, Town Hall and Membership Orientation**

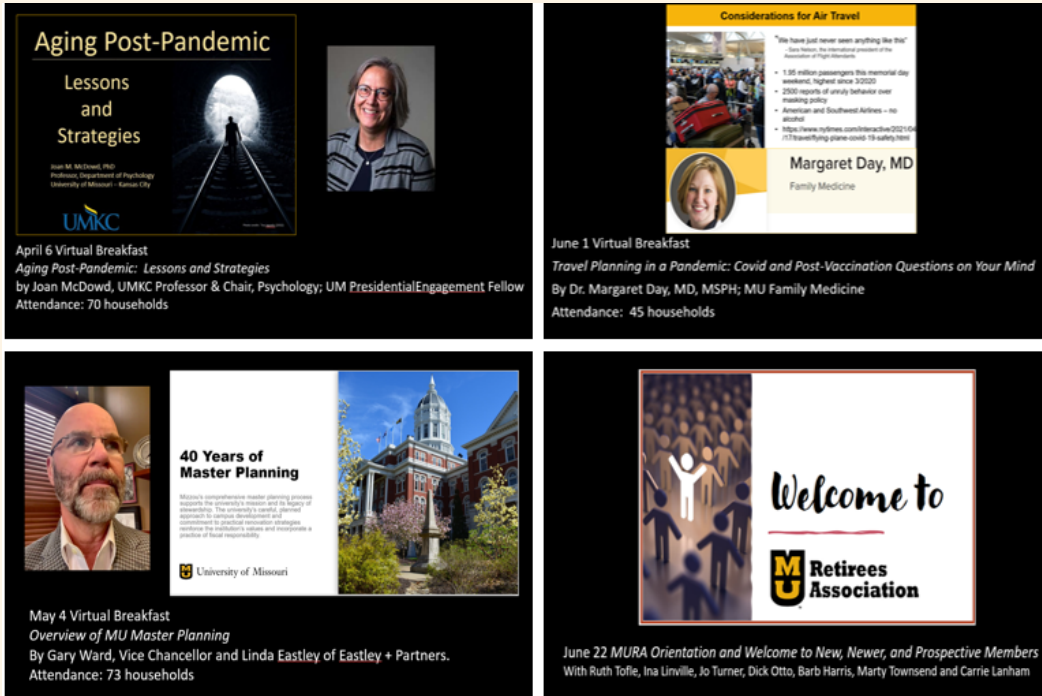
The April 6 virtual breakfast speaker was Joan McDowd. She spoke on *Aging Post-Pandemic: Lessons and Strategies*. Dr. McDowd is Professor and Chair of Psychology at UMKC and a UM Presidential Engagement Fellow. She shared studies that show positive messaging has real impacts on attitudes and longevity, and social relationships have importance in healing loneliness.

On May 4, Vice Chancellor Gary Ward and Linda Eastley of Eastley + Partners addressed 73 households by webinar to give an *Overview of MU Master Planning*. They offered details about the process to analyze the needs, costs of repairs and uses of buildings leading to the decision to eliminate some costly-to-maintain buildings on the MU campus.

The semi-annual UM Retirees Town Hall was held virtually on May 12 as requested by the Four-Campus Retirees' Associations. The spring town hall was again moderated by Marshall Stewart, Vice Chancellor for Extension and Engagement and UM System Chief Engagement Officer. Following a brief welcome and UM System update by Dr. Mun Choi, UM participants in the Town Hall were Marsha Fischer and Jessica Baker (Human Resources), Eric Vogelweid (Finances), Carol Wilson (Benefits), Becky Fowler (Information Technology) and Jo Turner (Membership & Communications). The town hall was viewed by 412 households with 53 survey responses, 40 survey questions, 18 live questions and 7 additional comments.

On June 1, Dr. Margaret Day gave a virtual presentation on *Travel Planning in a Pandemic: Covid and Post-Vaccination Questions on Your Mind*. She gave current details and considerations for different types of travel.

On June 22, we held a *MURA Orientation for New, Newer, and Prospective Members* by Zoom. The [recorded session](#) is currently available on our website.



The next breakfast presentation is scheduled to be both in-person and by webinar. Join us for ***“Back to School – Back to Nature: Boone County Nature School Update and Opportunities”*** on September 14, 8:00 – 9:30 am for in-person breakfast at the Country Club of Missouri in Columbia; 8:30-9:30 am for webinar. Mike Szydlowski, science coordinator Columbia Public Schools, was named the Conservation Educator of the Year by the Conservation Federation of Missouri. More details to follow.

### 3. Biweekly MURA Update emails

Biweekly emails include a broad range of items of interest to retirees. For example, [SHOW ME MIZZOU](#) highlights with links are shared. In addition, links are given to MURA program recordings (available for one month).

### 4. Website pages at [mura-missouri.com](http://mura-missouri.com)

Our website is the primary resource for information regarding the past, present and future life of our organization. The page [Past Events & Photos](#) archives photos from 2015-2016 to the current year with Presidents during that time:

- [2020-2021](#) Ruth Tofle President
- [2019-2020](#) Betsy Garrett President
- [2018-2019](#) Jo Turner President
- [2017-2018](#) Margie Sable President
- [2016-2017](#) Kitty Dickerson and Marty Townsend Presidents
- [2015-2016](#) Tom Henderson President

### 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](mailto:TofleR@Missouri.edu)
- Dick Otto, Co-Chair of Membership: [OttoR@Missouri.edu](mailto:OttoR@Missouri.edu)
- Jo Turner, Co-Chair of Membership: [Turnerlj@Missouri.edu](mailto:Turnerlj@Missouri.edu)

## UMSL | Retirees Association

### Updates:

The first in-person, post-pandemic event for the UMSL Retirees Association was a huge success. Our spring banquet and business meeting was held on June 17th at Glen Echo Country Club. Nearly 100 members attended! After we enjoyed a spring-inspired lunch menu, our business meeting featured several items. First, all of our past presidents were invited to attend (and all but one was able to do so) and given special recognition. Second, Chancellor Kristin Sobolik updated the members on campus activities and plans. Finally, we held elections for officers' positions and open board member slots. Of course, what made the event special was seeing the many colleagues we missed over the previous 15 months.

Our Planning and Events Committee is now hard at work on preliminary plans for 2021-22 events. A board meeting is planned for August to finalize the year's events. We are hoping a few activities will be "normal" adventures around town and a few will be on-campus events for those still avoiding public venues. Our Membership Committee is continuing efforts to keep our membership list and members' contact information up to date. Our Communications Committee kept our digital presence up-to-date during the pandemic. The fantastic turn-out at our luncheon and business meeting is a testament to the hard work of our officers and committees during the pandemic, keeping everyone informed and finding alternate ways to accomplish necessary tasks. Finally, we are very fortunate that our treasury survived the pandemic in good order and funds are available to support our 2021-22 agenda.



*Past UMSLRA Presidents were honored at the UMSL RA 2021 Spring Banquet: (left to right) Chancellor Kristin Sobolik, Past President Shirley Martin, President Clark Hickman*



## **Updates:**

### **New Retiree Reception**

UMKCRA will hold a reception for new retirees (both those who retired in 2020 and 2021) on Thursday, September 23, 4:30-6:00 p.m. at Pierson Hall in the Atterbury Student Success Center. All UMKCRA members and those interested in membership are invited to our first in-person event in the past 18 months. Dr. Joan McDowd of our own Psychology Department (well-known for her community work on aging) will be our guest speaker. Reservations can be made by contacting Sophia McCluskey ([smsr53@umkc.edu](mailto:smsr53@umkc.edu)).

### **Recognitions**

Our Retirees Association recognized several outstanding faculty and staff for the year 2020 at our spring event for their accomplishments and contributions during retirement. Those recognized were:

- David Skitek for his unwavering support in generating over \$100,000 in student scholarships for the School of Computing Sciences and Engineering through a series of annual Topgolf tournaments;
- Charles Wurrey for his involvement in founding the Emeritus College and planning its monthly programs, as well as continuing teaching and research contributions to the Department of Chemistry;
- Gail Metcalf Schartel for her high energy contributions to the UMKC Retirees Association in leadership roles and growth of the organization.

### **Scholarships**

UMKCRA was delighted to be able to award three "Scholarships in Aging" to graduate and undergraduate students in Pharmaceutical Sciences, Mechanical Engineering, and Health Studies for their research activities. We also awarded four "Going for Excellence" scholarships to high-achieving undergraduate junior and senior women for the coming year. We are pleased to be making this contribution to the success of our students.

### **Program Updates**

While COVID has limited our ability to meet in person, we have maintained an excellent set of monthly virtual programs. Most of our recent ones are now available on our web site: <https://umkcra.umkc.edu> under the News tab.

- April 10, Dean Mary Anne Jackson (Medical School) spoke at our spring event on "COVID-19 Vaccines, Herd Immunity, Opportunities and Challenges as We Look to End the Pandemic."
- May 21, Stacia Pieroni, Conservation Manager of the KC Zoo, spoke on "Advancing Wildlife Conservation: The Kansas City Zoo's Mission to Conserve Wildlife Around the Globe."
- June 18, Nelson-Atkins Museum docents spoke on "Museum Unframed: Behind the Scenes of the Nelson-Atkins Museum" which covered the stories of acquisition, conservation, and placement of three prominent pieces in the museum. (Unfortunately, we could not record this due to copyrights.)
- July 23, Stephen Steigman, Chief of Broadcast Operations for KCUR 89.3 FM, UMKC's NPR affiliate station, is going to discuss the current state of KCUR and its recent addition of the classical music station 91.9 FM.

### **More UMKC Participation in Community Connect**

A new project led by Jannette Berkley-Patton, Ph.D., professor in the UMKC School of Medicine and director of the university's Health Equity Institute is addressing vaccine hesitancy and health inequities in neighborhoods on Kansas City's East Side, the city's most socially vulnerable community. It is funded with \$5 million in CARES Act funding appropriated

to UMKC by the Jackson County Legislature. See <https://community.umkc.edu/engagements/umkc-awarded-5-million-to-fight-covid-on-the-east-side/> for more complete details.



## | 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. We managed to bring a small group of Board members together and there was a hesitant decision that we ought to give a meeting a shot starting in September. In the few days following that meeting, we sought reactions from identified members of the Retirees. The response was mixed -- about 40% of responses saying they'd not "risk attending", about 50% saying they'd likely come and about 10% saying they'd moved out of the Rolla area.

For more information, contact Richard Miller, President at 573-364-7608 or [dick@mst.edu](mailto:dick@mst.edu)

### 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](mailto:tofler@missouri.edu)  
Or visit the [MURA website](#)

#### **UMKC Retirees Association**

Linda Breyspraak, President  
[breytspraakl@umsystem.edu](mailto:breytspraakl@umsystem.edu)  
Or visit the [UMKCRA website](#)

#### **Miner Retirees Association**

Richard Miller, President  
[dick@mst.edu](mailto:dick@mst.edu)

#### **UMSL Retirees Association**

Kathleen Haywood, President  
[kathleen\\_haywood@umsl.edu](mailto: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](mailto:webmaster@umsystem.edu) | [Unsubscribe](#)

Copyright © 2003-2019 The Curators of the University of Missouri. All rights reserved.

[UM System Home](#) | [DMCA Policy](#) | [Accessibility](#) | [An equal opportunity/affirmative action institution](#)