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UM Connection
Keeping you Informed. Keeping you Connected.



University of Missouri System
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Winter 2021

Volume 8, Issue 1



Update from Chief Engagement Officer Marshall Stewart

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday and beginning of the year. We are so thankful that students could return in-person to each of their respective universities. So many people have worked very hard to make it safe for students and staff to work and learn in-person at each university.

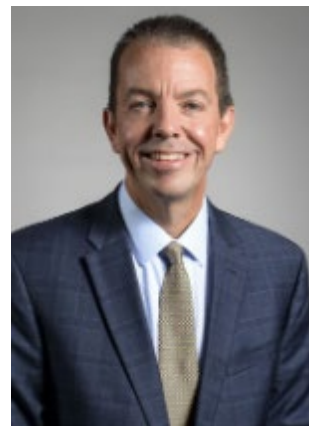
As I look back at our partnership with the retiree associations, I am so thankful for the leadership of the association presidents as well as the Four-Campus Retiree Association Leadership Team. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have partnered with them on two virtual town halls for retirees and hope to do more in the future.

We have also discussed many items, one of which was outreach to retirees who are not members of the four associations. We look forward to figuring out ways we can help grow your organizations.

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



Remember tuition assistance due dates

Eligible faculty, staff, their dependents and retirees can receive tuition assistance at any of the universities within the UM System. Those intending to make use of tuition assistance for the Spring 2021 semester must submit forms by March 1. Please see the [Tuition Assistance webpage](#) for additional information.

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:

Annual Holiday Reception/Business Meeting/Speaker

This event, which would have been a luncheon in pre-COVID times, was held on Zoom this year and provided a time for board and association members to mingle briefly. The primary activity of the business meeting was the approval of new officers and board members. These persons are:

- President: Linda Breyspraak
- VP/Pres-Elect: Virginia (Ginny) Davis [Ginny was actually approved later in December as we didn't have a nominee at the time of the meeting.]
- Secretary: Jakob Waterborg
- Treasurer: Carla Heins
- New board members: Mary Ann Morgenegg, Karen Williams, Joyce Johnson
- Re-elected board member: Robert Piepho (who will represent UMKC in the Benefits area)

Our meeting concluded with a fascinating presentation by Chris Wolff, campus historian and manager of the UMKC Bookstore, who has delved into the little known stories of UMKC's origins and its beginnings as the private University of Kansas City in the 1930's.

Upcoming Programs

Our Program Committee chaired by John Ditto is beginning to map out programs for the 2021 year approximately on a bi-monthly schedule. The first one, "Extremism: Left and Right," was presented by retired F.B.I. agent Michael Tabman on Friday, January 22, 9:30-11:00 a.m. via Zoom, and focused on the topic of cyber security. Special programs and speakers will be planned for our three social events of the year: a spring luncheon with several awards in April, a gathering with new retirees in September, and a holiday program with transition of officers in December. The April event will occur on Zoom this year, and a decision about the location of the other two events will be made at a later date.

Scholarships and Recognitions

We are advertising and hope to award in the spring two scholarships to students. One is the "Scholarship in Aging" for an undergraduate or graduate student studying aging in any unit on campus. The other is the "Going for Excellence Scholarship" for highly meritorious undergraduate women (funds from the demise of a Women's Club).

UMKC Participation in Community Connect

UMKC is fully engaged in this University-wide effort of campus engagement in the community.

Just a few examples of these efforts are:

- The Sojourner Health Clinic, a cooperative effort of the Schools of Medicine, Dentistry, and Pharmacy, provides quality medical care at no cost to over 300 uninsured and underserved Kansas City patients annually.

- UMKC is engaged in UniverCities Exchange with UMSL to focus on issues common to the two metropolitan areas. Currently, the focus is on the state of abandoned houses and structures in the two metropolitan areas, figuring out what these cities have in common and what is unique about the situations they face.
- The UMKC School of Medicine is expanding its program to St. Joseph, Missouri, to address the state's rural physician shortage.
- A new UMKC Engagement Council has been commissioned to encourage, strengthen, and celebrate UMKC's ongoing commitment to the community. The council is charged with creating a culture of engagement at UMKC and will invite diverse perspectives and experiences from across the campus and community to inform and advise the engagement efforts of the institution.



UMKC received a \$7 million grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to start the new program in January 2021. HRSA, the primary federal agency for improving access to health-care services for people who are uninsured, isolated, or medically vulnerable, will pay out the grant over four years.

UMSL | Retirees Association

The UMSL Retirees Association sponsored a webinar for members on November 12 called "Financial Planning in Uncertain Times" put on by the Institute of Financial Planning in St. Louis. The webinar was geared specifically for UM retirees in a defined-benefit pension plan and included topics of strategic investments for the retired demographic, estate planning, charitable giving, and strategies to minimize tax liability.

Clark Hickman, president of the UMSL RA met with UMSL Chancellor Kristin Sobolik on October 20 to brief her on RA activities and answer questions regarding our services to members during the pandemic. We intend to meet each semester for a similar briefing, especially since the Chancellor cannot personally meet with the Association until in-person meetings occur again.

The UMSL RA is planning a webinar on Elder Abuse for Thursday, January 28. This program will focus on ways scammers target the elderly with phone and internet scams as well as strategies to monitor loved ones who may be in locked-down facilities.

A spring luncheon is tentatively planned around a St. Patrick's Day theme on Friday, March 19—replacing the canceled Holiday Luncheon in December. However, given the slow rollout of vaccines, this luncheon will likely be canceled also. Our next planned in-person event will be our regular spring Business Meeting scheduled for June.

Clark Hickman and Debbie Kettler, past president of the UMSL RA has met three times with Jim Hertel, the director of HR for the UMSL campus. Once the campus is re-populated and in-person meetings are allowed, Mr. Hertel has committed to offering pre-retirement seminars for faculty and staff. Not only will these seminars lay the groundwork for employees planning for retirement, it will allow the UMSL RA an opportunity to meet with them and explain the benefits of staying connected through the RA. A specially-designed folder has been created for this purpose.

The Board and officers last met virtually on January 15. We have received a slate of nominations for 2021-2022 and have begun discussing recruiting appropriate nominations for the annual Retirees of the Year Award.

MISSOURI S&T | Miner's Retiree Association

The Miner Retirees has cancelled their retiree meetings until April. They are working on a functional listserv to better communicate internally.

For more information, contact Richard Miller, President at 573-364-7608 or dick@mst.edu

MU 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.

FOUR WAYS TO STAY IN COMMUNICATION WITH MURA

MURA publishes a quarterly newsletter, offers monthly programs, posts Bi-weekly MURA Update emails, and features ongoing web pages which include a curated monthly list of free online educational programs called "Barbara's Picks."

1. Quarterly Newsletter

A twelve-page [December newsletter](#) is the culminating issue celebrating MURA's 30-year history. Never before have all the photos of MURA Presidents and "Chancellor Retirees of the Year" awardees been collected and seen together. Never before have MURA leaders and milestones been indexed together. The newsletter includes MURA business, programs and opportunities. It is in electronic format and print format for retirees without email addresses. Previous newsletters can be found at the MURA website- www.mura-missouri.com

MURA News
MU Retirees Association Representing University of Missouri Retirees since 1990
DECEMBER 2020

Wrapping up our 30th year
Dear MURA members,
ACTING 30-year historical review in particular...
retiree health benefits, pensions, educational opportunities and so much more.
The 1990 leaders organized MURA, so retirees would have ongoing advocacy. The following three decades of our organization faithfully hold to that fundamental purpose. Cataloging benchmarks, searching photos and recording stories has been an exhilarating adventure. Never before have all the photos of MURA Presidents and Chancellor Retirees of the Year Awardees been collected and seen together.
— Ruth Telfs, MURA President

UM System retiree virtual town hall focuses on health benefits
RETIREE HEALTH BENEFITS was the topic of the second ever UM System retiree virtual town hall. It was held via webinar on Oct. 2. In response to a request by MURA and the retiree association at UMBC, S&T and UMBC.
Members of the responding panel included leaders in UM Human Resources and UM Benefits and representatives from United Health Care and Express Scripts. President Man Choi gave greetings, and Marshall Stewart, chief engagement officer, served as moderator.
Numerous questions were submitted in advance as well as during the webinar. Not all questions could be addressed during the one-hour session but have been answered and grouped into six categories: enrollment; prescription plan design; new active, dental, vision and hearing coverage; and coverage for specific services and care.
The recording of the town hall and written answers to the questions received may be found at <https://hrc.umcpresscripts.edu/zimslidg/1696/virtual-town-hall-october-2>.

Never before have MURA leaders and benchmarks been indexed together, or have we taken the time to examine the qualifications of the energetic "significant seven" leaders, who were both a Chancellor's Retiree of the Year and also a MURA President.
This issue documents the last decade of milestones and invites Tom Henderson, a past president, to provide his analysis. Before we conclude our historical look back in this fourth newsletter, we take stock of how we made history in 2020 by pivoting to total virtual programming. Online programming is reaching hundreds of retiree households both in Missouri and out of state with virtual breakfasts, socials and Town Halls.
In addition, we continue to identify areas of growth and improvement that are more than self-serving. We want our Kirby Dickerson MURA Scholarship to help more students. We want to continue a large and more diverse membership of MU and UM retirees to continue our objectives. We are poised to achieve these goals to make a difference.
Happy 30th anniversary to MURA!
— Ruth Telfs, MURA President

Keep strolling down memory lane
Celebrate 30 Years of MURA with this history-making 30th issue.

HOLIDAY SOCIAL Friday, Dec. 11

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www.mura-missouri.com

2. At the December virtual breakfast Kelli Hansen, MU Libraries Head of Special Collections, spoke on [Discovering the Secrets of MU Library Special Collections](#) and reached 63 households. Did you know that you can explore the library's collections of historic books, comics (yes, including Beetle Bailey!), WWI and WWII posters, and photos and memoirs of the Hiller family's life in China

in the 1940's and Matthew Henson who explored the North Pole?



The Holiday Social, *Home for the Holidays* hosted with Osher Lifelong Learning, reached 72 households. We were entertained by music from MURA leaders, a trivia quiz, toast of cheer, Tiger Pantry giving, and a presentation on the diversity of holiday traditions: Diwali, Kwanzaa, Santa Claus Christmas, Christian Christmas, Hanukkah, and Chrismukkah.

The next MURA Virtual Breakfast will be "*Columbia's African American Heritage Trail*" on Feb 2, 2021, 8:30-9:30. James Whitt, Sharp End Heritage Committee Chair will be the speaker. [See the trail map here.](#)

3. Biweekly MURA Update emails

Biweekly emails to members feature MU and UM news of interest to retirees, follow-up and upcoming programs, and personal notes from the MURA President. The emails provide current information and give links for further information.

For example, Ambassador Andrew Young will be the keynote speaker as MU Celebrates Martin Luther King Jr. on Tuesday, January 26, 4:30-6:30 p.m. in a Zoom webinar. The 2021 theme is Infinite Hope: The Power and Possibilities of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Vision. For more information, [click here.](#)

What is included in the personal notes from the MURA President? You will find everything from words of encouragement, a list of positive outcomes cited by Board members they have experienced during the pandemic, poetry, a crossword puzzle, and more than 101 everyday things to be grateful for at this time.

4. Ongoing web site pages

Our website serves as an orientation to our organization and so much more. Glancing back to MURA programs from the past five and a half years, [photos of past events](#) are posted. A curated monthly list of free online educational programs called [Barbara's Picks](#) is also featured. Despite staying at home during the pandemic, keep your mind active listening to music, learning from local and national speakers, appreciating art, or exploring new hobbies.

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
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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

dick@mst.edu

UMSL Retirees Association

Clark Hickman, President

hickman@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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