

A publication for and about The School District of University City, Missouri

October 2021

District welcomes all students back to school

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HUMANIZE: Learning Reimagined

The School District of University City welcomed about 2,500 students back to school on Monday, August 23, for the 2021-22 school year. About 96% of PreK-12 students are attending in-person instruction in school

buildings five days a week. About 4%, or a little over 100 students, will take classes remotely through state-certified semester-long courses with the online learning program Launch, operated out of the Springfield, Missouri, school system.

The start of the school year was especially gratifying for the District's high school students who learned online during the past school year due to COVID-19. The high schoolers were welcomed to the school on the 23rd by cheering alumni, parents and

"Radical love gives us
the heart to connect
with others...the energy
to fight for change and
press for excellence in
all of our students –
because we love them.
Radical love gives us the
courage to experience
the world with our
students, our families
and our colleagues
together as one love so
we all rise up."

Sharonica Hardin-Bartley
Superintendent of Schools



University City High School students were celebrated at the start of their first day of school with the annual Red Carpet Welcome. Alumni, parents and staff cheered them on as they walked the red carpet to enter the high school.

staff with a walk up a red carpet as they entered the school that morning.

Just prior to the return of students, Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley sent her welcome back video to all families and staff speaking to the themes of safety and health and the concept of Radical Love.

"Radical love gives us the heart to connect with others. Radical love gives us the energy to fight for change and press for excellence in all of our students – because we love them. Radical love gives us the courage to

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Moving, building and roosting: District makes facility improvements over the summer



PERSONALIZE: Learning Reimagined

The District was busy moving and improving spaces for its students and staff this summer, starting with a move of its central administration offices to a building on Olive Boulevard.

The move to 7700 Olive took place in August just before school started and was part of the District's sale of the former McNair Administration Building at 8136 Groby Road. The Groby Road building, built in 1949 to originally house Blackberry Elementary School, was sold in the spring after the University City Board of Education declared the building surplus.

The District's new location on Olive at the intersection of North and South was originally an A&P grocery store, and most recently the home of a physical therapy facility. The 9,000-square-foot building houses the offices of the superintendent, human resources, student services, special school district, finance and communications. The smaller, more professional space encourages staff collaboration and offers several conference and flex spaces for meetings, including a multi-purpose room that will host board of education meetings. The building is awaiting signage and some technology, but will be ready for board meetings later this fall.

In August, a naming committee of students, staff and community members decided to keep the name of the building the Ronald E. McNair Administration Building. The namesake is U.S. Astronaut Ronald E. McNair, an African American who made two missions into space and passed away in the Challenger explosion. As a young boy, McNair lobbied



District administrative offices are now housed at 7700 Olive Boulevard. In September, the University City Board of Education officially approved naming the building the Ronald E. McNair Administration Building.

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From our Superintendent of Schools



Sharonica Hardin-Bartley Superintendent

Greetings University City Community:

What a difference a year makes! Last year at this time we had no students in our school buildings as we learned how to deal with a global pandemic. This year, just a few weeks into the start of the school year, nearly all of our students are back in their classrooms with their teachers and friends. They are smiling. Their energy is fantastic. The learning is rich and hands-on. And, remarkably, our students are benefiting from new innovations created in the midst of the hardship of COVID-19.

In this issue of PRIDE, you will read about the many student and staff successes that occurred this past winter, spring and summer, as well as new programs and facilities for our students and staff in the 2021-22 school year. There is a new building, updated classroom areas for our Lieberman Learning Center students, and a new outdoor learning pavilion to enhance learning. There are also new programs, such as sustainability, to prepare our students for the environmental and societal challenges of the future. And there are many, many new supports in place to help our children with well-being as we continue to deal with the challenges of COVID-19. Thanks to a \$95,000 grant from the St. Louis County Children's Service Fund, this includes additional social workers and therapists as well as more in-depth training in trauma informed practices, particularly regarding the trauma of racism and inequity.

COVID-19 continues to challenge our community in heavy ways. Recently, with the approval of The School District of University City Board of Education, the District moved forward with a mandatory vaccination policy for our staff to better ensure the health and safety of our entire community. We continue with a mandatory mask

policy for all students, staff and visitors in our buildings. We also continue to sponsor frequent vaccination clinics in partnership with the St. Louis County Department of Health and other agencies. And, thanks to an incredible partnership with Washington University, we offer free COVID-19 saliva testing and highly effective contact tracing.

I wish I could wave a magic wand and make this pandemic go away, but for now, we are rising to the challenge of our research-based plan to keep everyone safe, healthy, flourishing and connected.

Speaking of rising to the challenge, in this year of controversy, uncertainty, and continued racial inequity, our district community is focusing on the powerful practice of Radical Love. It's a notion that despite differences, disagreements and difficult situations, we can respond with productive intention and out of a place of love for our community and the greater good of the world. University City is a special community. I know, because I am a resident and I am raising a family here. If there was ever a place in our world that can respond to hardship and unfairness with empathy and love, it is University City.

I cannot thank our community enough for its partnership and the hundreds of people who helped the District through the past school year with their time, their expertise and their resources. We are grateful and we are thriving thanks to your radical love.

In Service Of Our Children,

Shononion S. Handin-Boutley

Sharonica Hardin-Bartley, Ph.D., PHR Superintendent

From our Board of Education



Lisa Brenner Board of Education Vice President

Greetings, University City:

Recent news has placed a spotlight on school boards as they are being thrown into the divisive politics that permeate our country. Whether it is about masks or how to teach history, politicians' actions seem more about the sound bite than doing what is right for our children. Being a good school board director is not about winning an argument or beating an opponent. It is about being a servant leader. It is about having the determination and strength to always do what is right for the children, regardless of popularity, threats, or rhetoric. While there are stories about board directors resigning due to the political climate, my hope is that there will be those inspired to be the humble but strong servant leaders that our children deserve. If you are such a person, please consider running for an elected office, especially the school board. The community and our children need you.

Lisa Brenner, Ph.D.

Vice President

University City Board of Education

Lisa M Brenner

The personal opinions expressed in the letter above may not reflect that of the entire University City Board of Education.

School Board Elections Public Notice of Filing

The School District of University City encourages any qualified person interested in running for a position on the school board to file to be a candidate in the April 5, 2022 election. There are two positions available with voter approval for three-year terms.

Interested persons may file at the University City Board of Education office located at 7700 Olive Blvd., University City, MO 63130. Contact Juli Lashley at 314-290-4002 or jlashley@ucityschools.org for more details.

Filing will begin at 8 a.m. on December 7, 2021 and will continue during business hours, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. through December 17, 2021; plus 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. on December 28, 2021, which is the last day of filing.

Except for the first and last day of filing, filing will not occur on days the school district's central offices are closed due to inclement weather.

For more information on serving on the University City Board of Education, visit www.ucityschools.org/BOE.

Meet our School Board Members



Matt Bellows
President
Liaison to
Flynn Park
Elementary School

LaVerne Ford-Williams

Elementary School



Lisa Brenner, Ph.D.
Vice President
Liaison to
University City
High School



Traci Moore
Secretary
Liaison to
Jackson Park
Elementary School



Emma Scharff Student Representative University City High School



George Lenard
Director
Liaison to
Brittany Woods
Middle School



Joanne Soudah
Director
Liaison to Julia Goldstein
ECEC, Lieberman Learning
Center and Adult Education
& Literacy Program



Monica Stewart, Ed.D.
Director
Liaison to
Barbara C. Jordan
Elementary School

Board of Education News

In April, the University City Board of Education welcomed two new members. Dr. Monica Stewart joined the board as a new director. University City High School senior Emma Scharff joined the board as the District's student representative.

The board meets twice a month except for July, December and April when there are no work sessions. Work sessions are typically held on the first Thursday of the month at 5:45 p.m. Regular board meetings are typically held on the third Thursday of the month at 7 p.m.

Starting later this fall, regular board meetings will be held in-person at the new McNair Administration Building located at 7700 Olive Boulevard. Board work sessions will continue to be held virtually. Those wishing to attend or file a citizen comment for the virtual work sessions must pre-register. For more information regarding upcoming meetings and links to register for virtual meetings, go to www.ucityschools.org/BOEZoom.

For more school board information including agenda and minutes, go to www.ucityschools.org/BoardDocs.

Brittany Woods hosts book "tasting" at Legacy Café



Director

Liaison to

Pershing

PERSONALIZE: Learning Reimagined

On September 7, Brittany Woods Middle School students attended a Legacy Literacy Café where they sampled a delicious array of books.

Teachers and staff served as hostesses and waiters, serving up a sampling of books in different genres.

The formal word tasting, complete with menus, tablecloths and centerpieces, helped them to plan their book clubs for the year and build the foundation for a lifelong love of reading.







Partnership with Washington University enables free COVID-19 saliva testing for the SDUC community

The School District of University City is now able to offer free COVID-19 saliva testing to its greater community thanks to an \$8 million research program that includes Washington University in St. Louis and the National Institutes of Health.

The free testing became available to the community in late May and will be offered through the entire 2021-22 school year. Any student, staff member or individual living with a staff member or student is eligible for testing if they are experiencing signs or symptoms of COVID-19.

The easily accessible testing is available Sunday through Friday by calling 314-454-4269. The pain-free test requires participants to produce a saliva sample in a collection tube and does not require an invasive nasal swab.

"This is an absolutely fantastic opportunity for our school community," said Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley. "This service can act to close health disparities that harm our African American families regarding COVID-19. By having testing readily available to everyone in our community, we can better ensure that the virus is detected and further prevented from spreading to our loved ones and those most vulnerable to it."

Under the new research initiative, called RADx-UP, Washington University is further providing weekly saliva testing to any University City High School student or staff member. The testing will help the District better detect asymptomatic active cases which can cause transmission, quarantines and continued disruptions to learning.

Washington University in St. Louis offers free COVID-19 saliva testing for all District community members Sunday through Friday. To schedule an appointment, please call 314-454-4269.

The testing is on a voluntary basis, but Hardin-Bartley is hopeful that the students and staff will take advantage of it. The samples can be collected at home ahead of coming to school.

"I can't think of a better way to show your Heart and Health of a Lion by taking advantage of this new testing opportunity for the high school, especially as students and staff return to five days a week of in-person instruction," Hardin-Bartley said. "It truly is an easy way to care for



Jason Newland, M.D.

your entire community so it can thrive during hard times. Our students and families have endured a lot of sorrow, worry and loss due to COVID. I'm certain our students and staff will stand up for their school by participating in this profound way."

The District was invited to join the project by Dr. Jason Newland, a pediatric infectious diseases specialist who treats patients at St. Louis Children's Hospital. During the past school year, Newland spoke in generous detail during meetings with both district staff and parents about the most up-to-date research on COVID-19 and transmission in schools. He has also been readily available to help the District with its contact tracing efforts during the 2020-21

school year after students returned to school buildings at all grade levels.

The testing aims to help the researchers evaluate whether frequent COVID-19 testing in schools serving under-resourced populations can help to reduce the spread of the virus.

Newland said he hopes that the testing will give further peace of mind and safety for students and parents. The St. Louis RADx-UP project focuses on five school districts in St. Louis County with high percentages of African American students: Normandy, Jennings, University City, Pattonville and Ferguson-Florissant.



The Washington University in St. Louis' COVID-19 testing team offers drive-through services for our community.

Sleeves up, U. City!

The District is serious about community health and highly encourages all staff, students, families and the greater community to become fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Since the vaccine first became available in Missouri, the District has offered 11 free COVID-19 vaccination clinics open to the entire community with partners that include the Urban League, St. Louis Public Schools, Clayton Schools and the St. Louis County Department of Health. The clinics have taken place in district schools, at the District's annual Back to School Rally, inside the District's new Administration Building and at schools in neighboring districts.

In late August, St. Louis County Executive Sam Page visited students and parents getting the vaccine during Brittany Woods Middle School's Open House. Page said U. City Schools were setting an exemplary example regarding COVID-19 prevention.

In March, Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley also shared her thoughts on getting vaccinated in a widely shared essay published in the St. Louis American (see page 16).



Since the spring, the District has hosted multiple vaccination clinics for students 12 and older, staff, and U. City community members.

Moving, building and roosting

Continued from page 1



Entrance to the Ronald E. McNair Administration Building at 7700 Olive Boulevard at North and South Road.



A new outdoor pavilion was constructed this summer inside the Brittany Woods Middle School courtyard for classes, activities and meetings.

successfully for the desegregation of his local library. The popular children's book, "Ron's Big Mission," was inspired by his life.

As part of the move, Lieberman Learning Center (LLC) and the Office of Curriculum and Instruction moved to spaces in University City High School. LLC students are located in a corridor of the high school. Dozens of bright, inspiring murals were designed by local artist Sara Zigman. Soft seating and high-top work tables are interspersed throughout the hallway for accessible work and study spaces while students are not in class. The setting respects "young adults who live complex and busy lives and who are serious about their future despite many obstacles in their paths," said Gary Spiller, executive director of student services and innovation for the District.

A public open house for both the new building and the new LLC space will be held this fall once the final touches are completed.

This summer also continued the rich transformation of the Brittany Woods Middle School outdoor courtyard into a healthy social and educational space for students. In July, a 45-foot by 25-foot covered outdoor pavilion was constructed in the courtyard to enable outdoor classroom and lunch seating as well as a space for special student and community events.

The courtyard is also now home to 18 chickens and a chicken coop built by volunteers from Boeing, coordinated by ABCToday.

The chickens, who roost in the coop near the courtyard's Giving Garden, have a full range of the courtyard during the day. This gives students a chance to care for and engage with

the hens, and adds to a joyful and calming atmosphere in the courtyard, said Brittany Woods Principal Grace Lee. The courtyard's renaissance is due in large part to recognizing that learning is not limited to the indoors. The outdoor classroom is a vital space that offers students the opportunity to move and explore.

"Sustainability is about more than gardening; it's about connecting with all the layers that impact our daily lives from the environment to relationships with each other," Lee said. "It's never been more important than now to ensure that our kids have the opportunity to engage in meaningful problem solving scenarios to think about how they impact their community and how they can influence the need to equitably sustain everyone with resources to thrive."

New Lieberman Learning Center space gets an artist's touch

For more than a decade, University City High School's Lieberman Learning Center (LLC) existed in an aging corridor of a classroom building built in 1949 for elementary students to accomodate a post-World War II population boom. Fifty years later, the building housed administrative offices, the District's adult education program, and the LLC high school students. The building was underutilized and needed extensive capital improvements.

Building conditions aside, this was not an ideal setting for LLC students, who typically are high school sophomores, juniors and seniors in need of additional support and mentorship to graduate and find successful careers. They have had challenges in traditional classroom settings, and many are typically dealing with more adult problems and uncertainty about their futures. And yet, here they were, young adults who had already experienced rather adult lives, going to school in an old school building originally built for very young baby boomers.

Things changed drastically this summer when the building was sold and the District relocated LLC students to their own space inside University City High School. District leaders vowed to give them the space that they needed to thrive.

"We had to do something to help the mindset of our LLC students who already had chafed in a traditional school environment," said Gary Spiller, the District's executive director of student services and innovation. "They needed an aspirational setting based on real world, somewhat adult environments that they had already experienced."

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District welcomes all students back to school

Continued from page 1

experience the world with our students, our families and our colleagues together as one love so we all rise up," Hardin-Bartley said.

"This year, I challenged our staff to double down on love. I told them to go radical with it in the face of disappointment and fear of others. Bring it in their classrooms, in the hallways, on the playing fields and with their colleagues. This year, we can love powerfully, instinctually and loyally on our students and ourselves despite our hardships."

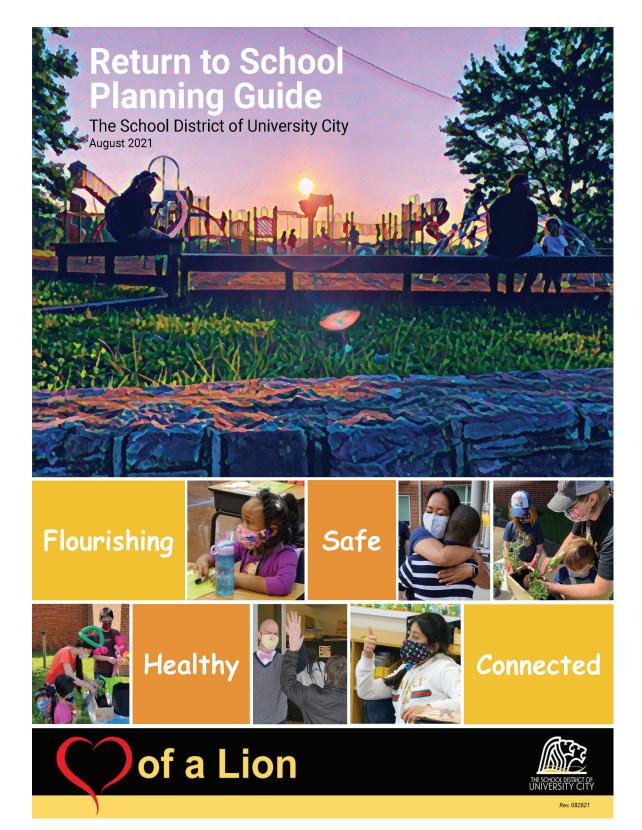
Students returned to an energized staff who spent early August participating in professional development which included intensive discussions on the unchecked trauma of racial inequity and ways to address it. Discussions also centered on Radical Love, and what it takes to love a community and people so we all rise up. On Monday, August 16, all staff participated in a fun lunchtime block party followed by more than 20 wellness activities to choose from.

The District begins the 2021-22 school year with a complete plan to keep its community safe, healthy, flourishing and connected as it continues to deal with COVID-19.

The District anticipates a full year of regularly scheduled athletic seasons, continued student clubs and district-wide events and school events that adhere to highly effective mitigation strategies to protect our community against COVID-19.

Additionally, thanks to generous grants and federal funding, the District now has social workers in every school building, additional counselors, expanded services for student and family therapy, continued anti-racial bias training and accelerated trauma-informed responses and practices so our community remains well.

As always, the District adheres to its vision of Learning Reimagined and works courageously and authentically to build meaningful relationships in our community. Together, we share the Heart of a Lion.



The complete Return to School Planning Guide can be found at www.ucityschools. org/2021ReturntoSchool.

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Safe, healthy, flourishing and connected

District shares a complete plan to address COVID-19

In August, the District released a 24-page Return to School Planning Guide outlining how it will strive to be safe, healthy, flourishing and connected while still dealing with a global pandemic. The guide can be found at www.ucityschools.org/2021ReturntoSchool. Here are some of the key strategies in the plan.

Safe

- Face masking is mandatory for all students, staff and visitors while in district buildings.
- Physical distancing of 3 to 6 feet will take place in all buildings at all times.
- Continuous cleaning and sanitizing of surfaces will continue.
- Parents will screen their children for COVID-19 symptoms every day prior to coming to school.

Healthy

- Vaccination of staff is mandatory.
- Vaccination of qualifying students is highly encouraged.
- COVID-19 vaccine clinics will be offered at regular intervals for our University City community.
- Free and easy saliva COVID-19 testing will be offered for all students, staff and affiliated household members in partnership with Washington University.
- The high school community will further be offered weekly COVID-19 saliva testing in partnership with Washington University.
- Intensive contact tracing in partnership with Washington University will continue throughout the District.

Flourishing

- Additional resources have been allocated for mental health and well-being of students, staff and families.
- The District continues its pledge to provide rigorous and relevant learning.
- The District has a heightened focus on racial equity and resources.
- The District will strive to maintain athletics, clubs, field trips, activities and community events in a safe and healthy way.

Connected

- The District will continue to maintain a COVID-19 Dashboard to track active cases and quarantines in all District buildings. (www. ucityschools.org/coviddashboard)
- The District will communicate COVID-19 statistics to all families every morning prior to the start of the school day.

Grab & Go wraps up

In August 2021, The School District of University City completed its 18-month-long Grab & Go drive-through meal program after providing nearly 1 million meals to students and their families during a global pandemic.

District administrators ended the program after it became clear that 96% of students district-wide planned to return to school buildings this fall for five days a week of in-person instruction. Now back in school, all students have access to free breakfast and lunches as well as sack dinners.

With the help of our partners at Wyman, Chartwells food service, dozens of volunteers, and generous donations from the community, the District distributed 908,739 meals.

Though school is back in session, the need continues for some families. The District's Student Services Office continues to provide families with essential household supplies and personal items. Thanks to a partnership with The Bailey Foundation, families with food insecurity are being provided essential meals and snacks.

Families in need of resources or additional support are always encouraged to call the Office of Student Services at 314-290-4045.







Partnership produces restaurant quality meals for district families

Vicia is one of the hottest restaurants in St. Louis. The St. Louis Community Foundation is a vital philanthropic organization in the region. In response to the challenges COVID-19 placed on both families and restaurants, the two institutions teamed up in February with the District to fund and cook fresh, healthy and delicious meals for 60 District Families.

Vicia, which specializes in organic, locally sourced ingredients with a focus on quality produce, is located in the Cortex Region of St. Louis. It was ranked the second best restaurant in America in 2017 by USA Today.

The delicious and nutritious meals of baked chicken, soup and vegetable sides were prepared by Vicia. They were then delivered to the family homes by Wyman and operations staff members. The meals were part of the first cohort of the St. Louis Community Foundation's Community Carry-Out Fund, which awards grants to local restaurants in exchange for the preparation of healthy and delicious meals to be delivered to participating organizations that then distribute to individuals with food needs. The program was designed to give both restaurants and families a needed boost

at a time when many restaurants had lost business due to the pandemic and many families were struggling with household expenses.

The U. City and Vicia partnership garnered immediate media attention. So much so that the nearby local restaurant Crispy Edge joined the Foundation's program and later



prepared another round of restaurant-quality meals to district families. In addition to Vicia and Crispy Edge, McDonald's, Starbucks, Kaldi's, Peel Wood Fired Pizza and other restaurants graciously donated sandwiches, fruit, dairy, vegetables and treats to be distributed to district families through the District's former Grab & Go meal program. Local businesses Which Wich and House of India further donated coupons and gift cards for families.

District hosts wellness block party for staff Opening Day

On August 16, the District welcomed back more than 400 staff members and partners with an Opening Day Wellness Block Party that started with lunch in front of the high school and continued with an afternoon full of more than 20 different wellness activities to choose from.

There were llamas to hug, a make your own potions and lotions workshop, cupcake decorating classes, line dancing groups, succulents to plant, kickball, volleyball and basketball games, yoga, sewing, creative writing, a neighborhood walk/run, cooking and art classes, and more.

The day was supported by the District's Wyman partners, who served as activity leads, building guides, lunch servers and more. The staff lunch was co-sponsored by the teacher and support staff unions: University City Education Association and University City Federation of Teachers SRP Local 3179.

The District wanted to especially stress staff wellness given the tremendous challenges of teaching and operating schools during COVID-19. It was a strong reminder that you cannot drink from an empty cup, and that to serve our students well, staff must also be well.

The afternoon started with webinar remarks and recognitions by Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley who said:

"I know from experience that it's hard to radically love others if you don't at first radically love and care for yourself — every part of you needs your own love, forgiveness and nurturing. This, too, is a challenge I present to you this year. It's not an easy one. But the reward of loving yourself is the priceless gift of living."







Students and staff create jumbo public art project

₩₩ HUMANIZE: Learning Reimagined

COVID-19 continues to challenge our students and families in many social and emotional ways. Research indicates students have strikingly higher levels of anxiety, depression and a sense of isolation due to the pandemic.

Last spring, as part of the District's efforts to encourage well-being and combat isolation, the District held a special Growing Together event outside Brittany Woods Middle School. The festival included music, games, yoga, fitness and a very, very big public art project focusing on the ways the U. City Schools community was strong, resilient and positive during a challenging school year.

Prior to the event, students and staff from every school were asked to write or draw pictures on varying shades of green construction paper shaped as tree leaves indicating ways they grew, despite dealing with COVID-19. More than 500 leaves were collected altogether. During the day of the festival, the leaves were attached by volunteers to a giant tree painted on a 10x20-foot canvas created by University City High School students.

Visitors to the May 1 event saw a vibrant, growing canopy of hope, courage and spirit in every leaf. The leaves included messages such as:

- "I've grown to be more patient. In life, you stop to smell the roses."
- "I learned to work under pressure... always remember you can do anything when you put your mind to it.
- "I learned to tell time."
- "I learned how to regroup and add two digits."
- "I learned not to be angry all the time."
- "At first I couldn't add up money, but now I can."
- "I learned how to take care of myself and be well."

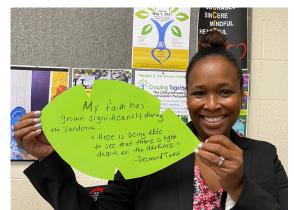
When the tree was fully put together, every school was represented in a part of the leafy canopy. Students from the high school then took a picture of the final product from a drone, highlighting the end of a perfect day of community and unity.











leaves were the affixed to the giant tree.

Students distribute plant seedlings to 200 families

The May 1 Growing Together event was also a beautiful day to celebrate sustainability through food gardening.

More than 200 families picked up free vegetable and herb seedlings as well as gardening supplies as part of the student-run Growing Together: The UCity Schools Food Garden Network. The Network promotes sustainability throughout University City by enabling District and community residents to grow their own food regardless of whether they live in a house, condo or apartment.

Under the mentorship of Brittany Woods Middle School teacher Anne Cummings, University City High School students spent months planning the Food Garden Network to promote the joy and practicality of growing food. With generous support from a local resident and former University City Schools teacher, the Network was able to purchase seedlings and gardening equipment for distribution. Additionally, the group provided gardening equipment such as soil, planters, gardening gloves and shovels to help people start their gardens.

With the help of teacher Steven Wurst, students in University High School's Black Academy further constructed more than 200 wooden planters for families that wanted to do porch or window gardening.

During the day, about 80 of the families gathered in the middle school courtyard to plant their own herbs and vegetables. All participants received yard signs to advertise that they are part of the Food Garden Network.

In June, the students further sponsored a Swap & Pops event where members could swap plants and gently used gardening supplies as well as socialize over popsicles about their growing accomplishments.





Retirees and special partners celebrated at U Are Special event

On May 12, the District honored 27 retirees, its teacher and educational support persons of the year, as well as 21 individuals and 13 local organizations for their outstanding and unwavering support of the District during COVID-19.

The U Are Special event was held outside in the Brittany Woods Middle School courtyard. Guests enjoyed boxed appetizers, Jilly's cupcakes and beautiful centerpieces made by volunteers with U. City in Bloom. The retirees honored included retirees from 2020 who did not have a celebration last year due to COVID-19.

Christina Grove, an eighth-grade social studies teacher at Brittany Woods Middle School, was honored as the District's Teacher of the Year. Pam Meyer, an administrative assistant with the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, was honored as Educational Support Person of the Year.

Those honored for their support for the District included physicians helping the District safely cope with COVID-19; funders and volunteers who made the District's Grab & Go meal program a success during the pandemic; churches that provided food, volunteers, bikes and other services to our students and families; and academics who helped our teachers grow.

Distinguished Retirees

Celebrating Retirees from 2019-20 and 2020-21

Kakoli Bhattacharyya (2020 SSD) Larry Schulz (2021) Charlene Bowers (2020) Sharon Shannon (2021) Dionne Bracely-Kelley (2020 SSD) Jerry Shores (2020) Herbert Buie (2020) Elliott Shostak (2020) Kevin Cheeks (2020) Annette Smith (2020) Kathleen Collins (2020) Heidi Stuart (2020) Lorraine Eason (2021) Lillian Blackshear Bryant Summers (2021) James Ferguson (2020) Booker Terry (2020) Robert Griffin (2020) Terri Thomas (2021) Charles David Hill (2021) Kurt Tuegel (2020) Margaret Holly (2020 SSD) Deborah Wells (2020 SSD) Marlise Jones 2021 Mary Williams (2021) Lyndlee Mabry (2020) Carol York (2021)





Pam Meyer
Administrative Assistant,
Department of Curriculum and Instruction



About 70 special guests safely attended the UAre Special event held in the Brittany Woods Middle School courtyard during a beautiful May evening.

Uniquely U. City

 $Celebrating\ Outstanding\ District\ Partners$

University City Board of Education

Kristine Hendrix, Former BOE President Jai'Den Smith, Former BOE Student Representative

Individual Community Volunteers

Ann Aurbach	Ann Geier	Ilene Murray
Terry Bowman	Laurie Geier	Trisha Pflantz
Jennifer Bretsch	Sharroky Hollie	Nancy Quigly
Jodie Burditt	John T. Kiehl	Tiffany Scharff
Tameka D. Cook	Jerry Lander	Maryann Shaw
Kim Dann-Messier	Nancy Morrow-Howell	Rudolph A. Walz
		Jackie Walker

Partner Organizations

All Nations Church (Chris Paavola)

First Bank (Stacy Clay)

Kids Smart (Michael Smith)

LPD - Literacy (Darlene Castelli, Patti Rosenkratz)

Math 314 Team (Victoria May)

One Family Church (Brent Roam)

Operation Food Search (Brooklyn Swyers)

St. Louis Chess Club (Jeremy Compton)

St. Louis Community Foundation (Elizabeth M. George)

The Journey (Pastor Carlos Smith)

University City Education Foundation (Linda Jones)

Urban League of St. Louis (James R. Clark)

Washington University in St. Louis

(Brett Maricque, Jason Newland, Katie Plax)

Brittany Woods Middle School bu

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PROBLEMATIZE: Learning Reimagined

The forecast predicted a storm coming. The day was already throwing off a lot of humidity. Time was limited before the weather rolled in, but it was also time to tend to Barry and Jerry.

The Brittany Woods Middle School seventh-graders were ready for the job on this steamy May afternoon. Like astronauts, the trio stepped foot-first into their heavy white protective suits, a U.S. flag on the upper right arm of each. It was best to wear their suits baggy, advised the students, because it provides better protection and ventilation.

It was also time for the three adults in training to don their suits. Unlike the students, they were rookies on this mission.

At just past 2:15 p.m. the students embarked from their basement classroom toward the Urban Bird Corridor, a wooded path and wetland that runs between Brittany Woods and the Ruth Park Golf Course. The adults trailed behind. White hoods and veils now firmly on their heads, they went down a narrow path, climbed a small berm, and arrived at their destination. What the students heard was no surprise given the uncertain weather: Barry and Jerry were buzzing.

These pioneering students, Lila Stewart, Bella Lombardo and Grayson Nagy, were becoming highly capable trained beekeepers learning to tend to the middle school's first apiary. Barry and Jerry are the students' nicknames for the tan and green painted wooden beehives, now the active homes of thousands and thousands of bees, each hive loyal to their own queen.

The hives were named for Barry, the lead character in the animated "Bee Movie," and Jerry, after the students learned that comedian Jerry Seinfeld produced the movie – though none of them had ever heard of the popular 1990s TV show "Seinfeld."

Brittany Woods Middle School is one of the few schools in Missouri that now keeps bees as part of its curriculum and everyday school culture. It is also one of just a few schools in the region that further raises free-ranging chickens in its enclosed outdoor courtyard. The animals, both cluckers and buzzers, are all part of the school's new sustainability initiatives.

Not only do the animals represent various parts of our integrated ecosystem for survival, but a relevant part of the school's hands-on curriculum and unique opportunities for students. Bees are critically important for pollinating plants and flowers. Our planet cannot survive without them. But their colonies are shrinking worldwide. Cummings said the students' interactions with the bees and their continued care and observation of their behaviors are all part of learning how the greater world works together to sustain itself.

As the bees buzzed, Lila and Bella entered the apiary and began their work, slowly lifting the wooden lid off the first hive with their heavily padded gloves. Bees immediately started darting out in swirling patterns around their bulky suits. It was up to Lila to pump the tin smoker. Smoke makes it harder for the bees to smell pheromones and calms them down.



Outside the aviary's fenced area, Grayson took detailed notes on a clipboard recording the bees behavior and the health of the hive.

Some of the bees began clinging to the students' protective suits and screened face masks. Unfazed, they noticed several ants on the edge of the hive and asked the observer to make note of a possible, but not highly concerning, threat.

They continued by lifting out one of 10 hanging frames inside the deep hive box, each swarmed in a thick coat of worker bees clinging to a growing mass of honeycomb. Yes, they noted, there were varying components of a growing, healthy hive. There were both bee eggs and bee larvae inside the honeycomb in the frame. Some of the larvae inside the





Brittany Woods buzzes as students learn beekeeping

Continued from page 11

by Rubina McCadney, BWMS' "Queen Bee" who shares beekeeping responsiblity with Cummings.

"What's really amazing here," Cummings said, "is how the students are really the teachers for the adults. That's a goal of project-based learning, giving the students the tools and experience to gain authentic expertise."

Donned in her own protective suit, Cummings watched and coached from outside the apiary.

There's been just one sting so far – and that was when Cummings and McCadney were transporting the bees to their new hives. But, just in case, the beekeepers keep an EpiPen in a special safety bag nearby whenever they check the hives. That protects anyone who is stung who may have an allergic reaction.

Altogether it took about 40 minutes to inspect both hives, and most importantly, ensure that the queens had not abandoned their workers – which could lead to a collapse of the colony. But the queens were doing just fine with their minions.

Though the hive is a safe distance away from the middle school, it's close enough for the worker bees to pollinate the blooms in the Giving Garden inside the school's courtyard. That's where students have been tending vegetables and berries, not to mention 18 new chickens who like to roost in the courtyard trees and peck in the grass with students nearby.

When the bees return to their hives from the garden and surrounding

woods, they bring with them small sacs of pollen and nectar from the blooms. These provide protein and energy for bees, eggs and larvae, and the key material to spark the chemical reaction that produces the sweet, golden prize: pure honey. The students said they are optimistic the hives will soon yield enough honey that they can scrape, drip and collect off the frames. But they have yet to decide what to do with the liquid gold. It could be sold as a special brand of Brittany Woods honey. Or, they could use the wax and honey in the production of soaps and candles. It will be up to them to decide.

Just like the Giving Garden, the aviary remains a marvelous example to both students and staff of how humans are interdependent with nature. Humans cannot survive without bees that have the herculean task of pollinating plants that provide the food we live on, the medicines we need and the materials to build our homes and create our everyday items. And, yet, the bees will not survive without the profound work of human beings to preserve and conserve the planet through sustainability.

As the storm moved closer, the students returned the lid to the second hive. They gently shook their arms and legs to shoo away the bees still clinging to their suits, and then headed back inside. The school buses were coming to take them home for dinner and homework. The bees, on instinct, swirled back to their hives. It was time to get back to work, and away from the approaching storm.





Brittany Woods Middle School's sustainability initiatives include caring for 18 chickens in the school's courtyard.

New Lieberman Learning Center space gets an artist's touch

Continued from page 5

Enter St. Louis area artist Sara Zigman. Zigman said the corridor needed a more aspirational personality.

Zigman, who cites artists such as Matisse, Calder, Morris Lewis, Vasarely, Warhol, Agam and Britto as her influences, designs bright modern murals with big pops of color that are printed on jumbo adhesive vinyl decals that can adhere directly on walls. This is a highly economic way to bring jumbo art into the hallways of larger buildings, said Zigman, who worked in partnership with the local company Color Art to facilitate the redesign of the space.

The new murals are intentionally inspirational and modern, appealing to the sensibilities of an older teen dealing with modern pop culture, the dynamic and changing world of everyday technology and the very modern challenges in their daily lives.

As Zigman put it, "We wanted to make this space bright and energized. We had to design it so it was

inspiring even if this was the worst and darkest day in January. The students should get the message that 'you are going to feel valued here."

During the design process, Paula Sams, coordinator of LLC, polled LLC staff about inspirational quotes that would appeal to LLC students. She wanted a mix of old and new. So the murals include quotes from Michelle Obama, Amanda Gorman, Greta Thunberg, Kobe Bryant and Eleanor Roosevelt. There are also references to Heart of a Lion and the core values of LLC.

By all accounts, Zigman has succeeded with her toughest critics. Sams said the LLC students were excited by the new facilities and felt special that they were the first in the school to have a redesign of their hallway. Teachers and students from around the school have stopped by to admire the new hallway as well, she said.



Kindergartners receive free, new Adidas sneakers

Y

PERSONALIZE: Learning Reimagined

September 20 brought smiles to the faces of all kindergarten students attending the four elementary schools in the District. Sneakers with Soul, a nonprofit with roots dating back to 2010 as a mission ministry of Manchester UMC in Manchester, MO, provided new, high-quality Adidas sneakers to all 260 kindergartners.

Working in collaboration with Joe Miller, executive director, organizational health and efficiency for Wyman, and Gary Spiller, executive director of student services and innovation, Sneakers with Soul Founder and President Maurice Parisien arranged for the distribution of the correctly sized sneakers to the U. City students at no cost to the district or the students' families.

The program is designed to support the children and their families by relieving one small, but costly component of going back to school. High-quality sneakers can be an expensive outlay for families sometimes living from paycheck to paycheck. Research suggests that when children are not equipped with well-fitted, quality shoes, they may suffer from physical and skeletal issues. Additionally, if a child lacks proper shoes for school, class attendance can be negatively impacted.

"We are grateful for the opportunity to work with the University City School District on this Kicks for Kindergartners program," Parisien said. "The children enrolled in kindergarten at each of the SDUC elementary schools had their feet measured ahead of time, enabling them to kick off their elementary school year in style."

Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley said, "We are so deeply grateful to Sneakers with Soul and our partners at Wyman for providing this special boost for our kindergartners and their families. Nice, new sneakers are too expensive for some of our parents, but a big deal to kids. Thanks to this generosity, we know our younger students are now ready for an active day of school, healthy movement and intensive learning."

There is hope next year to expand the program to more grade levels. KMOV News Channel 4 and the St. Louis American both visited Barbara C. Jordan to report on the kindergartners there getting their new sneakers.









District joins DonorsChoose Equity Acceleration Initiative

The School District of University City is part of a new Equity Acceleration Initiative with DonorsChoose. The District joins a select group of innovative, equity-focused districts being highlighted through DonorsChoose. The organization helps public school teachers nationwide crowdsource funding for special materials and projects in their classrooms. As part of the Equity Acceleration Initiative, the proposed projects are being marketed to donors with a particular interest in supporting equity initiatives in schools.

The District's DonorsChoose website is at www.donorschoose.org/ ucityschools. This is where teachers post their funding requests to connect with potential donors from around the country.

The District has had impressive results through DonorsChoose. Teachers have raised about \$200,000 through 371 fully funded projects in all seven of schools. More than one-third of the funding comes from donors outside of Missouri.





Congratulations UCHS Class of 2021!



PERSONALIZE: Learning Reimagined

The Class of 2021 made history in many ways. A global pandemic prohibited the classmates from attending in-person instruction in the high school during their senior year, and several signature events such as Homecoming were canceled. However, beautiful weather and the need to hold a large ceremony outside due to COVID-19 restrictions also enabled the class to be the first to celebrate their commencement ceremony at the school's historic Muhl Schemmer Stadium in 27 years.

About 150 students attended the evening ceremony. Graduates were seated on the football field facing a stage in front of the northern goalpost. They marched around the track before and after the ceremony in front of cheering parents, grandparents and other extended family members seated in the bleachers. The stadium received a fresh coat of black and gold for the occasion.

Students in the Class of 2021 stood out with 68% percent headed to two- or four-year colleges that included Alabama State University, Beloit College, Bryn Mawr College, Cornell College, DePaul University, Fisk University, Georgia Institute of Technology, Grinnell College, St. Louis Community College, Saint Louis University, University of Missouri -Columbia, University of Missouri - St. Louis, Washington University and Occidental College. Another 20% were headed into the world of work. Some of these students are entering job apprenticeship and training programs in well-paying industries such as information technology and the trades, with 4% of graduates headed to the military.

Fourteen students graduated with dual degrees from both University City High School and St. Louis Community College - Forest Park with two full years of college credits. Another 14 students earned more than 12 hours of dual credit to transfer with them to their new colleges. Altogether, the Class of 2021 garnered \$6.9 million in scholarships that included full rides to Washington University and Saint Louis University.

The Class of 2021 proved themselves to be highly resilient and creative despite obstacles and disappointments. During the last school year, despite COVID-19, they safely conducted concerts, plays and musicals, held dance performances, competed in athletics, wrote provocative editorials, won journalism awards, spoke openly about the teaching of race in schools, built planters for a local food gardening initiative, and even created a new outdoor Lion's Den courtyard at the high school for students to enjoy. We wish them the best! Lions forever!

May 2021 Graduates

Emma R Al Samaraiy Jordan L Allen **Erick Atkinson** Ousmane Ba Lawson O Barnard Marshawn Barnett **Ruth Tefera Belachew** Zauria Unique Billingsley Lamarkko S Birchfield Isaac Braeske Alonna Braziel **Taylor Breite** Aaliyah Reonna Brown **Angel Bryant** Malina Bryant Caitlyn J Caston Taiyanna C Clark Caleb Mekhi Collins Deion Derrell Cobb Ivan Barrett Coble Stella Marie Cordes Jalen M Corn Ja Shon Cox Janae E Cox **Kevin Andre Craig** Mikiyah R-M Cushshon Victoria M Cushshon Nevaeh Kamill Daniels Jaylen Dickson Braulio Escalante Ian T Feld Makaiyla S Ford Honesty A Funches **Terrynce Cooper Gandy Timothy James Gibson** Xy Gibson Kaden K Gilbert Mya N Gilyard Jada Glass D'Khia Green Essence Chanale Sky Green Marissa L Green Elijah J Greenlea Nakayla Amoni Griffin Jared Michael Grove Sebastian Wesley Gunter Aaron Jamall Hall Brandon L Hall Jalen Hampton Tarren M Harris

Jessica Hartfield Jaleah Lisa Marie Hatcher A'Neisha Henderson Ruby Rianna Hicks **Precious Hill** Merrick Hoel Adam D Holahan Justin Holland Maddison Hussmann Arereana Darcel Jackson Aaniya M Jacobs Sahra Jamal Asa Nurul Jaman Cameron D Jensen Jacaii Maurice Jones Jlynn Adam Jones Kenwyn L Jones Laqwan L Jones Jana K Kelly Mialla Haley Klohr **Trinity A Lewis** Octavia Lomax Tania Lopez-Reyna Ramata Ly Taniko Marks **Nathaniel Martin** Sydni Marie Martin Zion Martin Ivan K Maynard Amiyah N McClure Nia Nicole McFadden Jalen Aarion McKee Ja'queese Jael McMillion Christa Medcalf John Constandenos Meeker Nasia O Metcalfe Brandon N Ming Anayha J Moffatt Mariyah Montgomery Tia A'jonea Moore Tamia Moseley Justin K Norman Jimmy J O'Neil Kelis Monyaé Petty Niarre N Phillips **Dariaun Pointer** Dariyana Pointer Nydia Star Purnell De'Ianna Leatrice Redden Joshua Paul Rhiney

Jurnee Andrea Rhone Jamya J Richardson Andres J Rico Jadae Yvette Robinson Kayla Michelle Robinson Mylia M N Robinson Shadonna Robinson Kiara Marie Rodgers John Michael Ruland Noel Adrian R Sinco Cameron E Smith Demario Smith Donna Smith Jaiden Demitri Smith Kristen Smith Rhya N Smith Takhia Smith Zion Mark Smith **Tamiah Renee Staton** Brianna Stokes Justice Trianna Strickland Diamond Charlotte Taylor Lauren Taylor Mikel O'shay Taylor Rafa N Thabet **Lorren Thomas Reuben Orion Thomas** Lydia Thoroughman Jonah T Trussel Dylan Tucker Nathan Turner Juan Esteban Velandia Puyo Billy J Walker Janelle Endia Walker Kyra Walker Jalyn Ware Nicholas S Weekly Larry Anthony Welch Areanna Christine Whittington **Brennyn** Wilke A'nya N Williams Ayanna L Williams Lanaja D Wilson De'vin R Wood Jermaine C Woods Marion T Wright **Quincy Yarrington** Zoe Yudovich

Preschoolers create a sound wall for playground

PROBLEMATIZE: Learning Reimagined

What is a sound? What things make sounds? Why do things sound different from one another? What happens when you mix sounds together? How do you write sounds down on paper?

There is nothing more joyful than when preschoolers ask questions about everyday things and then start to chain the questions together into a wonderful song of exploration.

In 2019, the then 3-year-olds at Julia Goldstein Early Childhood Education Center began exploring the concept of sound with just such questions. The inquiry led them over the next two years to experiment with sound through everyday objects. That led them, with the help of artists

from nearby COCA, to invent their own instruments to produce their own unique sounds.

From there they practiced writing, drawing and painting to understand how to represent sound on paper. They learned the basics of musical notes. And finally, with experimentation as their guide, they designed and created a sound wall for their school's playground, finished just before their promotion to kindergarten.

That wall was unveiled on May 27 during the school's annual field day. Under blue skies, students of all ages were allowed to sound it out on the playground for the first time.

Students immediately gathered around their final creation – a brightly painted wooden wall standing about 8 feet tall and adorned with metal pots, pans and trays, plastic gallon drums, a laundry washboard, and other everyday items. Using spatulas and wooden spoons attached to the wall with rope, they began tapping, pounding, patting and drumming on their





With the financial support of the University City Education Foundation, Julia Goldstein preschoolers designed and helped put together their own Sound Wall for their playground.

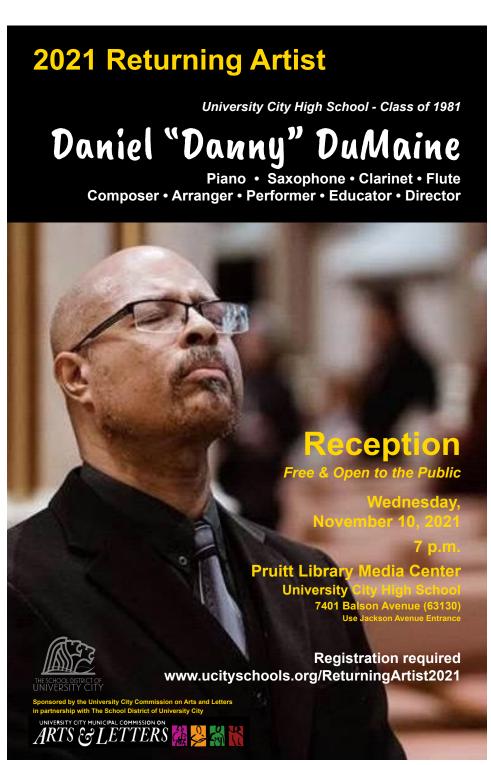
"instruments." The symphony drew other students on the playground to join them, and the music went on throughout the school day.

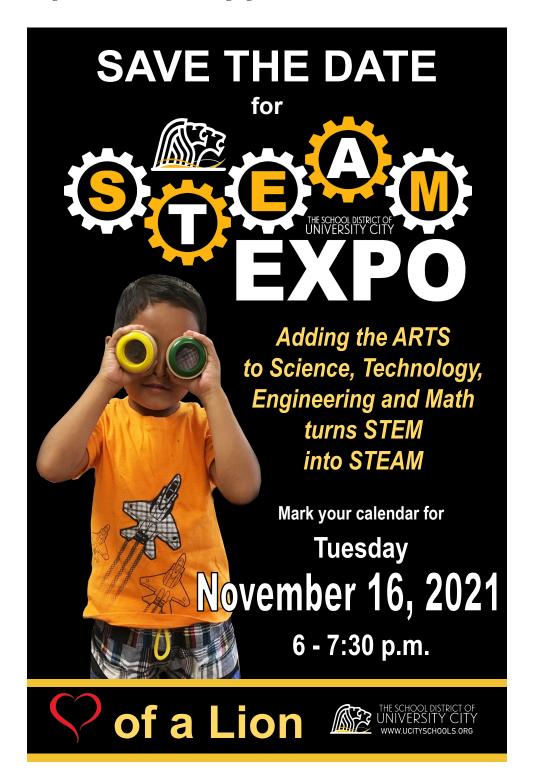
The sound wall was made possible by a \$1,088 grant from the University City Education Foundation awarded to Julia Goldstein teachers Dawn Pulsipher and Fannie "Belle" Lebby.

Pulsipher said they wanted to introduce the preschoolers to the design process by brainstorming a project on sound and building it.

Indeed, throughout the year, students tested out the best "instruments" to put on the wall. They made drawings of what the wall should look like and what colors best represented certain sounds. Materials were purchased and the basic wall was constructed. Students then painted the wall aqua, red, orange, yellow and purple and then added musical notes and other final touches.

The wall was a loud and bold testament to the power of young imagination and the ever-changing world of sound.





THE SUPERINTENDENT'S VOICE: Sharonica Hardin-Bartley, Ph.D. PHR

Reprinted with permission from the March 22, 2021, edition of the St. Louis American.

Repairing our trust in medicine amid COVID-19

By: SHARONICA HARDIN-BARTLEY, Superintendent, The School District of University City

As a superintendent of a school district in which more than four-fifths of its students are Black, COVID-19 has been nothing but a scourge to our community and the work we've done to lift and empower our students.

This virus has been particularly cruel to the Black community. It has cut off many of our students from the refuge of school buildings where they not only learn best, but where we hope they have powerful relationships with their teachers, coaches and staff and critical wellness resources that they may not have at home.

This virus has also unfairly separated our fine and loving Black culture of extended family members. Our divine bloodlines and our blessed cultural web of aunties and uncles and cousins and grandchildren who support one another currently cannot give rides to one another, share meals or gather on Sundays. They cannot celebrate milestones like births and birthdays, graduations or even a great report card – all the things that fly in the face of poverty and systemic exclusion. Right now, they cannot hug.

For some struggling to survive, their safety bubble is impossible to keep. Their need for extended family support may open a doorway to this awful disease. When will it stop?

Right now we have a complex and emotional choice to make. Do we take the vaccine or not? Do we trust a medical profession that treated our ancestors like guinea pigs, cruelly oblivious to their pain? Do we trust an institution that to this day treats Black men and women different in ERs, ambulances, exam rooms and labor and delivery wards?

I can't make this critical medical decision for you. Like all of this, it's incredibly

personal and part of the pain, resilience and courageous beauty of the Black experience.

However, I've been asked quite a bit about what to do in my role as a school superintendent where most white parents and grandparents will without hesitation get the vaccine, and many of our black families may not.

My advice is this: Look to our youth. Look to the vision and innovation of your children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

One of them, at the sweet age of 24 in full bloom like a spring daffodil, had the courage to stand on a podium as a young Black woman at one of the tensest presidential inaugurations ever and joyfully tell all

Sharonica Hardin-Bartley Superintendent

Americans, it's the past we step into and how we repair it. Let's also look to Dr. Kizzmekia "Kizzy" Corbett, an African American researcher who led the

charge to develop the first COVID-19 vaccine at Pfizer. This is a woman who embraced intellect and science amid cruel political pressure to disbelieve everything she stood for.

Let's look closer to home to Brittany Packnett and the young voices of Ferguson. Remember African Americans like Bethany Johnson-Javois, who put health equity on the table, and Jason Purnell, who framed the issue with powerful research and action among the white power structures in this city. Let's follow the wisdom of Serena Muhammad, who took the reins of the COVID-19 Regional Task Force in August and hasn't looked back. Think of the maternal health torchbearers like Brittany "Tru" Kellman, who literally built a village of joy and health for expectant Black mothers right in the center of Ferguson. Or the homegrown Rev. Starsky Wilson, who is now the leader of one of the most powerful children's organizations in America. I know I've missed so many many others who deserve applause, as well as those in the generations behind them. And I apologize for that.

But my point is, change in medicine has sprung from the power, vision and integrity of our Black offspring. It is this youthful hope and transformative change they are building together that still gives me hope for our students currently fighting to be educated and healthy in a global pandemic. It is in honor of all of our youth – the young innovators and the children – that I will let go of my fear. I will step into the past to repair my trust in medicine lost in our African American experience. I will be getting the vaccine.

"I've been asked quite a bit about what to do in my role as a school superintendent where most white parents and grandparents will without hesitation get the vaccine, and many of our Black families may not.

My advice is this: Look to our youth. Look to the vision and innovation of your children and grandchildren and grandchildren."

Stressed? Need time to reflect? Want some downtime?

Join us in...

The Peace Place

As part of its vision of well-being and joy, the District has created a virtual toolkit for wellness.

The Peace Place offers guided exercises for mindfulness, quick escapes through sounds and music, creative exercises and more.

The Peace Place is open to anyone who would like to take a little time for themselves to refresh, refocus and be well.

www.ucityschools.org/ThePeacePlace

STUDENT'S VOICE: Ian Feld, UCHS Class of 2021

Reprinted with permission from the April 26, 2021, edition of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

University City students were captivated, not indoctrinated, by 1619 Project

By IAN FELD, a senior at University City High School in May 2021

Of course Missouri wants to ban the 1619 Project. It is impossible to expect anything less of a state represented by the likes of conservative Sen. Josh Hawley and a gaggle of Republican state House members, and by the likes of those who consider themselves free-speech activists but who seek to suppress perspectives that are different from their own.

It's pathetic to have to advocate against the banning of curricula. We are witnessing modern-day book burning.

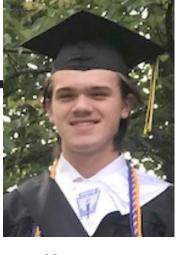
The students at University City High School and their teacher included the 1619 Project in our Advanced Placement language class in 11th grade. The 1619 Project, written by Nikole Hannah-Jones for The New York Times in August 2019, presents a look at the contribution of African Americans throughout U.S. history since they were first shackled and brought to America as enslaved people. It presents an alternative view of

American history that is often whitewashed in textbooks. Our teacher included the 1619 Project in our 11th-grade AP English language and composition class.

We students were not taught exclusively by it; we were not indoctrinated; but we were captivated. We examined and connected with it, criticized and scrutinized its claims, and we left our junior year of high school with a better understanding of how America feels to people whose generational histories have been left in the margins. In the fall of 12th grade, we urged the school board to include the 1619 Project in our district's curriculum, not because it brainwashed us but because we felt it was valuable.

No one in America is arguing that the 1619 Project should be the indisputable instruction our students receive on this subject, but that does not mean it shouldn't be included in discussions; teaching it does not mean it is 100%, cover-to-cover, factually indisputable. The 1619 Project is no different from any passage from a history textbook, any historic speech, or any historical documentary. It presents a viewpoint of history that can't be universally defended in the same way that traditional

The 1619 Project is not revisionist history. It is history. It is a collection of stories from real people about real events that <mark>often get glossed over. It</mark> provides perspectives and viewpoints that haven't been adequately heard. It is not just about slavery. It is about what our country is born from.



Ian Feld, teaching UCHS Class of 2021 levies bias

into the minds

of students. But that does not mean it is incorrect. It's appalling to many students like me that something so valuable, something so critical of traditional teaching should be banned simply because it paints an unpleasant picture of the past that still exists in today's world. The effects of slavery are not confined to the past, just as tears in the fabric of a quilt are not eliminated by sewing torn pieces back together.

For a party dedicated to preserving the constitutional rights of Americans, promoting a bill that bans a source material in classrooms seems hypocritical, unconstitutional, authoritarian and politically petty. Students aren't sheep, and lawmakers should never assume that students in classrooms absorb the information they are fed without critical

analysis, questioning and discussion. This is the purpose of education.

The 1619 Project is not revisionist history. It is history. It is a collection of stories from real people about real events that often get glossed over. It provides perspectives and viewpoints that haven't been adequately heard. It is not just about slavery. It is about what our country is born from. It is about respecting emotions and viewpoints. It is about making us uncomfortable with our past and desiring to build a better future.

Students like me are sickened by the blatant constitutional infringement that Missouri House Bill 1141 presents, and I join more than 25 students at University City High School in urging state officials and lawmakers to consider their position. We demand that each lawmaker examine and critically analyze their own viewpoints as much as we did last year in the classroom. This bill needs to be exiled from the legislative floor. We understand firsthand the impact of the 1619 Project. We have seen and heard and felt the uncomfortable reactions that it evokes. But we also understand better than lawmakers that the manner in which to confront discomfort is not to ignore it or feel threatened by it.

Embrace a different perspective. Do not erase it.

Student speaks on Women's Voices Raised panel about the 1619 Project



Jai'Den Smith UCHS Class of 2021

Amid continued debate in state legislatures nationwide regarding the teaching of race and history in America, three District members were invited to speak on June 10 to members of Women's Voices Raised for Social Justice as part of the group's speakers series.

Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley, **English Language Arts Coordinator Christina** Sneed and University City High School senior Jai'Den Smith spoke via Zoom to an audience of more than 100. The trio talked candidly about the need to include the history of racial inequity in school curriculum as well as the often overlooked accomplishments of African Americans in the building of wealth and power in America.

The audience was particularly interested in the use of the 1619 Project in Sneed's high school AP English and Composition class focusing on differing narratives of U.S. history. The 1619 Project continues to draw ire from many conservative lawmakers, some of whom have acted to ban teaching the materials in public schools. They argue the material is polarizing. Smith, the UCHS student, disagreed.

"The first thing that learning about the project did was in bringing us (students) closer together in a way that just learning about slavery could not do," Smith told the audience. "It fully makes you aware of where we are today and how none of (our current situation) is a coincidence. It's all a result of slavery and it's all a ripple effect."

The talk was recorded and can be found on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GxoPyck6vcE.



University City News

Upcoming Events

Electronics Recycling
October 23
9:00 AM - Noon
Heman Park Community Center
975 Pennsylvania Ave.
(rain or shine)

Visit_www.ucitymo.org_for details.

Fall Curbside Leaf Collection

Crews will begin collecting leaves from the front curb of participating residential properties in November.

Leaves must be raked to the curb line by Sunday, the day before collection in your area. Trucks make only one pass on each street during the collection week. Leaves must be raked at curb before scheduled collection week begins. Area pick-up schedules:

EAST AREA - NOV. 1-5 AND NOV. 29-DEC. 3 CENTRAL AREA - NOV. 8-12 AND DEC. 6-10 WEST AREA - NOV. 15-19 AND DEC. 13-17

Parked vehicles must not block access to the leaves. Only leaves will be collected, not gumballs, limbs or other yard debris, which are considered yard waste and should be placed in yard waste bags to be picked up on your regular collection day. Yard waste bag stickers are NOT required on bags. For questions, please visit www.ucitymo.gorg or contact the Department of Public Works at (314) 505-8560.

U City Community Vision 2040

University City is embarking on a visioning process that will produce a future-oriented and inclusive Community Vision for its residents looking out to 2040. The shared vision is intended to be strategic, actionable, and sustainable. University City's new Community Vision will identify future opportunities and align resources for development as the city prepares to update its Comprehensive Plan in 2022.

Schedule Update

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the rise of Delta variant transmission, the City has postponed the two Think Tank sessions originally scheduled for October 14 and 16 to next year. In the meantime, smaller engagement sessions with a wide range of stakeholders will be held later this year. Small groups may include students, educators, business owners, faith leaders, etc. Please stay tuned to the project website for more information and to provide us your input.

We want your input!

The purpose of this project is to develop a unified community vision for University City looking out to 2040. The vision must be built on the input of community stakeholders like you. Please take a moment to participate in this important building block of the visioning process for your community. The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes and the results will inform the next steps in the visioning process. To take the survey, follow the project and contribute your ideas, visit www.ucitymo.org/Vision2040. We want to hear from students, parents, faculty and staff.

For more information about U City's Community Vision Project, please contact:

Gabby Macaluso, Asst. City Manager 6801 Delmar Boulevard University City, MO 63130

Phone: (314) 505-8533

Email: gmacaluso@ucitymo.org



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	jmiller@ucityschools.org290-4045
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	abentley@ucityschools.org 290-4038
	ncambria@ucityschools.org290-4016
	communications@ucityschools.org290-4001
Adult Education and Literacy Program - Clarence Ware, Coordinator (7401 Ba	alson Avenue, 63130)cware@ucityschools.org290-4052
University City Board of Education, 7700 Olive Boulevard, University City, MC	O 63130jlashley@ucityschools.org 290-4002
See page 3 for University City Board of Education members and their liaison ass	
Julia Goldstein Early Childhood Education Center 290-4390	Brittany Woods Middle School 290-4280
737 Kingsland Avenue, University City, MO 63130	8125 Groby Road, University City, MO 63130
Principal: Crystal Cauley - ccauley@ucityschools.org290-4392 Secretary: Barbara Dickerson - bdickerson@ucityschools.org290-4390	Principal: Dr. Grace Lee - glee@ucityschools.org
Nurse: Pat Wilson - pwilson@ucityschools.org	Assistant Principals:
Social Worker: Madison Brown - mbrown@ucityschools.org	Catherine Pautsch (6th grade) - cpautsch@ucityschools.org
Counselor: Cynthia Ross - cross@ucityschools.org	Pablo Flinn (7th grade) - pflinn@ucityschools.org
	Yvonne Rooks (8th grade) - yrooks@ucityschools.org
Barbara C. Jordan Elementary School 290-4360	Nurse: TBD
1500 North 82nd Boulevard, University City, MO 63132	Social TBD
Principal: Dorlita Adams - dadams@ucityschools.org 290-4369	Counselors:
Secretary: Darlene Holliday - dholliday@ucityschools.org290-4360	Rashaad Davenport (6th grade) - rdavenport@ucityschools.org
Nurse: Erika Buckels - ebuckels@ucityschools.org	Kellie Douglass (7th grade) - kdouglass@ucityschools.org
Social Worker: Rosa Vance - rvance@ucityschools.org Counselor: Anita Qualls - aqualls@ucityschools.org	Emily Bardot (8th grade) - ebardot@ucityschools.org Registrar: Tonda Barnes - tbarnes@ucityschools.org
Wrap-Around Services: Jamal Bailey - jbailey@ucityschools.org	Wrap-Around Services: Nikole Shurn - nshurn@ucityschools.org
Wrap firound betvices, build Builey Jouney @ dercysenoois.org	Wrap invalid betwees, tylkole bildin hondrin@deltyschools.org
Flynn Park Elementary School 290-4420	University City High School290-4100
7220 Waterman Avenue, University City, MO 63130	7401 Balson Avenue, University City, MO 63130
Principal: Nicalee Wilson - nwilson@ucityschools.org290-4431	Principal: Michael Peoples - mpeoples@ucityschools.org 290-4148
Secretary: Portia House - phouse@ucityschools.org	Secretary: Britini Ward - bward@ucityschools.org290-4101
Nurse: Cherich Jones - cherichjones@ucityschools.org	Receptionist: Jaki Cooke - jcooke@ucityschools.org
Social Worker: LaKaysha Shields - lshields@ucityschools.org Counselor: Jona Ross - jross@ucityschools.org	Associate Principal: Kimberly Austin - kaustin@ucityschools.org Assistant Principal: Ernest Carter - ecarter@ucityschools.org
Wrap-Around Services: Jamal Bailey - jbailey@ucityschools.org	Dean of Students: Lawndale Thomas - lthomas@ucityschools.org
Wrap Around Services, bamar Baney - Joaney@dertysenoois.org	Nurse: Kendress Hughes - khughes@ucityschools.org
Jackson Park Elementary School 290-4450	Athletic Director: David (Matt) Brooks - dbrooks@ucityschools.org 290-4106
7400 Balson Avenue , University City, MO 63130)	Athletic Admin Asst: Ashley Jenkins - ajenkins@ucityschools.org 290-4116
Principal: Rebecca O'Connell - roconnell@ucityschools.org	Social Worker: Christine Woodward - cwoodward@ucityschools.org
Secretary: Laela Weems - laweems@ucityschools.org290-4451	Counselors (Last Names):
Nurse: Johnnye Farrell - jfarrell@ucityschools.org	Counseling Secretary: Bella Quintal - bquintal@ucityschools.org
Social Worker: Christine Parks - cparks@ucityschools.org	Kimberly Merrill (A-G) - kimerrill@ucityschools.org
Counselor: Shalonda Haynes - shaynes@ucityschools.org	Melvin Bond (H-O) - mbond@ucityschools.org
Wrap-Around Services: Jamal Bailey - jbailey@ucityschools.org	April Money (P-Z) - apmoney@ucityschools.org Katy-Jane Johnson (Early College) - kjjohnson@ucityschools.org
Pershing Elementary School 290-4150	Registrar: Robyn Murry - rmurry@ucityschools.org
6761 Bartmer Avenue, University City, MO 63130	Wrap-Around Services: Nikole Shurn - nshurn@ucityschools.org
Co-Principal: Deitra Colquitt - dcolquitt@ucitvschools.org	
Co-Principal: Jessica Hawkins - jhawkins@ucityschools.org 290-4151	Lieberman Learning Center 290-4330
Office Coordinator: Terry Hill - thill@ucityschools.org290-4152	7401 Balson Avenue, University City, MO 63130
Nurse: Patricia Chandler - pchandler@ucityschools.org 290-4155	Director: Paula Sams - pasams@ucityschools.org290-4330
Social Worker: Stacey Miller - smiller@ucityschools.org	Secretary: Milinda Coleman - mcoleman@ucityschools.org
wrap-Around Services: Jamai Bailey - Jbailey@ucityschools.org	See UCHS for Nurse, Social Worker and Wrap-Around Services
Co-Principal: Deitra Colquitt - dcolquitt@ucityschools.org	Lieberman Learning Center

Legal notices for school families (www.ucityschools.org/LegalNotices)

The following policies and information important for families are available in parent/student handbooks as well as the District website at www.ucityschools.org/LegalNotices. Please take time to read them. If you have any questions, please contact the office of Communications at (314) 290-4001 or email communications@ucityschools.org.

- Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed by President Obama on Dec. 10, 2015, to replace the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2002. ESSA was enacted to ensure educational equity and ultimately, to close the achievement gap. It maintains that all children, no matter where they live, what income level, what type of family unit or what challenges they have all are entitled to a quality education. ESSA includes:
 - Title I.A: Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged
 - Title II: Preparing, Training and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers, Principals, and Other School Leaders
 - Title III: Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students
 Title IV.A: 21st Century Schools

All are federal programs under ESSA aimed at closing the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility and choice. More details including ESSA's Parents Right to Know letter and Complaint Procedures are available at www.ucityschools.org/ LegalNotices. Any additional questions should be directed to Rebecca Soriano at (314) 290-4020 or via email at rsoriano@ucityschools.org.

ADA accommodations: The School District of University City wants all students, parents, staff and community members to be able to attend and enjoy District events, meetings and activities. For special assistance or accommodations to participate, contact the office of Operations at (314) 290-4044.

- **English Language Learners** are offered appropriate instructional services and content modifications, as needed based on assessments.
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): Parents/guardians and students who are at least 18 years of age have rights regarding education records. FERPA explains these rights and offers a process to file complaints if those rights are violated.
- **Students In Foster Care:** The School District of University City is committed to the identification, support and enrollment of foster care students living within the District. For more information, contact Gary Spiller at (314) 290-4045.
- The McKinney-Vento Education Assistance Act protects the rights of school-aged children of homeless and migrant workers. The executive director of Student Services serves as the link between homeless families and school staff, district personnel, shelter workers and social service providers. For more information, contact the District's homeless liaison, Gary Spiller, at (314) 290-4045.
- **Notice of Non-Discrimination** is printed on the back cover of all issues of PRIDE as well as other school and District publications.
- Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes and certain physical exams.
- Senate Bill 319 calls for early reading assessments, reading improvement plans and student retention.
- **Students with Disabilities** are offered services in partnership with the Special School District of St. Louis County to all eligible children ages 3 to 21, with disabilities, under the District's jurisdiction.

University City Board of Education | The School District of University City Matthew Bellows, President

Lisa Brenner, Ph.D., Vice President

Superintendent of Schools

LaVerne Ford-Williams, Director George Lenard, Director Traci Moore, Secretary

Monica Stewart, Ed.D., Director

314-290-4000 • www.ucityschools.org

Communications Specialist

CarolAnn Cole,

Communications Director

Nancy Cambria,

Joanne Soudah, Director

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THE SCHOOL DISTRICT of UNIVERSITY CITY Dated Material. Distribute as soon as possible. 7700 Olive Blvd. University City, MO 63130 Sharonica L. Hardin-Bartley, Ph.D., PHR

St. Louis, MO Permit No. 276 **ECRWSS**

Postal Patron

Substitute teachers needed

permanent building substitute teachers for the 2021-22 school year. We offer competitive rates as well as The School District of University City is seeking benefits.

Candidate qualifications include high school Certification. Previous teaching experience or diploma and current Missouri Substitute equivalent in urban settings preferred.

Apply now at www.ucityschools.org/Employment.







Drop-off your pumpkin: 2 to 4:30 p.m. Stroll: 6 to 7:30 p.m. in UCHS stadium Carving: 2 to 4:30 p.m. outside UCHS

Needed! Hosts of car trunk stations and candy



lackson Park Elementary

ck-o-lanterns. Get your treats at iroll from 6 to 7:30 p.m. among runk or Treat. Carve your own 200 glowing, hand-carved pumpkin before the stroll

nearby Jackson Park Elementary Trunk or Treat: 6 to 7:30 p.m at Sponsored by One U City

donations: oneucity@ucityschools.org











- Safe, Healthy, Flourishing and Connected: The latest on COVID-19 plans District welcomes more than 2,500 students to in-person instruction
- New learning and office spaces for LLC, Brittany Woods and district administrators Grab & Go program distributes nearly 1 million meals
- Kindergartners get a spring in their step thanks to Sneakers with Soul
 - Preschoolers design sound wall for their playground
- Upcoming events, celebrations and more!

