

WE Got This!

U. City Students Take the Spotlight as Part of the WE Movement



PROBLEMATIZE: Learning Reimagined

Geronimo Thomas admitted to being a little nervous.

From a seat in the fourth row, the Jackson Park third-grader peered up at the big stage at the Stifel Theatre quietly with his dad. Not yet 10:15 in the morning, there had already been singers, laser lights, pop and TV stars, and a dance-off on the stage.

It was April 3, WE Day in St. Louis – essentially the Super Bowl of community service celebrations. Geronimo and about 100 of his fellow U. City students from Jackson Park Elementary, Brittany Woods Middle and University City High School were invited to celebrate the service projects they had put together via WE Schools – a program founded by the WE Movement, a philanthropy to enable community service projects around the world. WE Day celebrations are held nationwide, but this was the first for St. Louis.

“Geronimo, are you ready?” asked a woman who stopped by his seat

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Jackson Park third-grader Geronimo Thomas took the big stage at the Stifel Theatre to talk about Jackson Park’s Sustainability Expo, in which students educated the community about the need to reduce waste and recycle. He spoke in front of 2,500 students from dozens of schools in attendance for the WE Day organized by WE Schools.

Coaching Through Relationships

Basketball Coach Kelvin Lee Uses Restorative Practices to Lead the Lions to a Championship Victory



HUMANIZE: Learning Reimagined

Coach Kelvin Lee didn’t have the easiest first year as head boys basketball coach at University City High School in 2017.

The team had a lot of raw athletic talent – perhaps even more so than in his days of coaching future NBA stars at Chaminade College Prep in Creve Coeur.

But his new U. City players were not set in winning habits. They argued with him. They hot-dogged into turnovers and fouls. Off the court, it was cool to rattle the rules.

The final 2017 record showed it: 6-19.

This wasn’t easy for a man who has held assistant coaching jobs at Texas A&M, Baylor and Saint Louis University. It wasn’t easy for a coach who had mentored Jayson Tatum, Bradley Beal and David Lee into the NBA.

But Lee knows two things really well: how to coach basketball, and how to coach kids through trauma and hardship into manhood.

Despite a rocky first season, he knew it was just a matter of time. It all came down to getting to know his youth and “circling up” to build not just a team, but trusting relationships.

Circling up refers to a restorative practice in which people stand or sit in a circle and have a conversation about pressing tensions and issues. Sometimes it’s a meditation on the day’s events or the general vibe of the group. On the basketball team, players and coaches typically stand in a circle, hold hands and pass a basketball around to give everyone a turn to speak and be heard.

“The reason I like it is you can see each other’s eyes,” Lee said. “There’s equality. Everyone has equal opportunity to have a voice, and people have the opportunity to listen to a person.”

This winter, in only his second season with the Lions, Coach Lee



UCHS Coach Kelvin Lee knows two things really well: how to coach basketball, and how to coach kids through trauma and hardship into manhood.

led his University City hoopsters to a conference championship with a conference record of 6-1 and a season record of 15-11. It was the District’s first conference win since 1995. The incredible turnaround earned Lee Conference Coach of the Year.

The impact was felt district-wide. Alumni started coming to the games. There was genuine excitement in the school not just among students, but

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From our Superintendent of Schools



Sharonica Hardin-Bartley
Superintendent

Greetings, University City Families:

Summer lends itself to special moments. I hope you all are having a wonderful season with a mix of fun, relaxation and meaningful time with friends and family.

Summer is also a busy time in your school district. In June, we welcomed children from all grades to our Summer Learning Academy to hone and enhance their skills. We also had many younger learners in our classrooms through our fantastic Novel Engineering STEM program, which was open to all children in the University City community. And we celebrated six high school students who recently completed impressive internships at companies such as Mastercard and World Wide Technology.

Now it is time to look ahead to the 2019-20 school year. You might be curious about the cover art to this issue of PRIDE. “Heart of a Lion” is our theme for the District’s Opening Day on Aug. 5 – the day when teachers and staff return to work. This important day sets the tone for the school year.

We know that the most impactful teaching results from both academic rigor and strong, sometimes courageous relationships built with students. Relationships – or the power to connect – often isn’t discussed in the classroom dynamic. But it is an essential component of effective instruction. That’s why this year we will not only celebrate the qualities of strong relationships but will use our opening day with staff to provide professional development to all

staff on relationship-building. I can tell you that no other school district dedicates a full day of staff training on this critical learning tool. We know the art of connecting is the key to ensuring our students are engaged, challenged, included and even joyful in demanding coursework.

As this edition of PRIDE lands in your mailbox, please note these upcoming events: Our annual National Night Out and Back-to-School Rally is set, rain or shine, for Tuesday, Aug. 6, from 5 to 8 p.m. outside the McNair Administration Building, 8136 Groby Road, 63130. It’s a great way for families to get ready for the start of school. Throughout the evening, we will hold a Pack the Bus event in which we hope attendees will help pack an entire school bus with donations of clothes, shoes, toiletries and school supplies to help our families. Also, at 5:30 p.m. in the Brittany Woods theater, an amazing 12-year-old guest speaker and singer, Jhala Angelique, will discuss her national campaign against bullying. Her talk is perfect for older elementary and middle school families. So plan ahead for this fantastic event, and look for more details about this evening’s festivities in this issue of PRIDE.

Finally, the first day of school is Tuesday, Aug. 13. We look forward to welcoming back University City’s amazing children.

In Service of Our Children,

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

From our Board of Education



Kristine Hendrix
Board of Education
President

Greetings, University City:

It is hard to believe that summer is drawing to an end. No more lazy days sitting beside the pool or traveling for vacation or extra time with our loved ones. We are approaching the startline of another exciting school year, where we should have high expectations for our entire learning community. Learning Reimagined continues to be the guide our schools need to be excellent learning environments. Learning Reimagined is our system of education that takes into consideration the whole child in education by personalizing, problematizing and humanizing education. While we have a long way to go towards true educational equity, your board of education strives to ensure all students are transformed daily. In order to reach this goal and show our constituents our commitment to excellence in education, your board of education recently passed a Resolution to Humanize School Climate Through Restorative Justice and Social Emotional Development.

This document serves as our commitment to systemic restorative justice. It aims to build an inclusive school community in which individual students can feel part of a healthy and safe environment. In a world where poor, black

and brown children are often disproportionately disciplined, we have created a school-to-prison pipeline. That unfair system includes disproportionate student suspensions, expulsions and referrals to alternative programs, all of which ultimately contribute to mass incarceration. The School District of University City seeks to end any practices that contribute to this devastating pipeline. While one document will not end years of systemic problems, with the help of our many partners like Wyman, the invaluable culturally responsive linguistic training for staff from Sharokie Hollie, and the ACLU to train parents and stakeholders about advocating for students, we will get there. These and other valuable programs can make our schools strong, but it is the students and parents who put their faith in the SDUC that make it great. For that we owe them our best.

Please join us in this amazing journey of Learning Reimagined as we begin a school year focused on both our students’ academic achievement and their social emotional growth and well-being.

Kristine Hendrix

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 7, 2020, election. There are three positions available with three-year terms. Interested persons may file at the Board office located at 8136 Groby Road, University City, MO 63130. For more information, contact Juli Ward at 314-290-4002 or jward@ucityschools.org.

Filing will begin Dec. 17, 2019, at 8 a.m. and will continue during business hours, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 2 - 4:30 p.m. Except for the first and last day of filing, filing will not occur on days that the school district’s central offices are closed due to inclement weather. Filing will also not occur on the following holidays and breaks when the school district’s central offices are closed: Dec. 23, 2019, through Jan. 3, 2020, and Monday, Jan. 20, 2020. Filing will end on Jan. 21, 2020, at 5 p.m.

For more information, visit www.ucityschools.org/BOE.

Meet our School Board Members



Kristine Hendrix
President
Liaison to Jackson Park Elementary School



Chelsea Addison
Vice President
Liaison to Barbara C. Jordan Elementary School



Lisa Brenner, Ph.D.
Secretary
Liaison to Flynn Park Elementary School



Nicole Kellogg
Student Representative
University City High School



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



LaVerne Ford-Williams
Director
Liaison to University City High School



George Lenard
Director
Liaison to Pershing Elementary School



Joanne Soudah
Director
Liaison to Brittany Woods Middle School

Board Meeting Information

The date, time and location of sessions and meetings for The School District of University City’s Board of Education are posted on the District and school website calendars at www.ucityschools.org. Agendas are posted at www.ucityschools.org/BoardDocs 24 hours prior to each meeting. Meetings are recorded and uploaded to the District’s YouTube channel, with the most recent available at www.ucityschools.org/ULive.

Community members are encouraged to attend Board work sessions and meetings held at the McNair Building, 8136 Groby Road (63130). Citizen comments are heard during Board meetings and work sessions.

For more information, please visit www.ucityschools.org/BOE.

To communicate with a Board member, contact Juli Ward, executive administrative assistant, via email at jward@ucityschools.org or call (314) 290-4002 or fax (314) 290-4076 or mail/deliver correspondence to (Board member’s name), c/o The School District of University City, 8136 Groby Road, University City, MO 63130.

New Faces in New Places

The new year brought new hires to The School District of University City.

JaNaé L. Alfred, Ph.D., is the new principal of Barbara C. Jordan Elementary School. A 2002 graduate of University City High School, she was assistant principal at Mason Ridge Elementary School in the Parkway School District. She previously served as an instructional support leader and classroom teacher in the Ferguson-Florissant School District.

Kashina Bell, Ed.D., is the new assistant superintendent for people and general administration. A former math teacher, she previously served as assistant superintendent of Student Services for the School District of Clayton and as a principal in the Parkway School District.

Nancy Cambria began as the director of communications in February. She previously was the communications manager for Health Equity Works, a Washington University in St. Louis initiative. She was a reporter with the St. Louis Post-Dispatch for 18 years.

Paula Sams became an administrative consultant for the Lieberman Learning Center after having served the past school year as interim principal at Barbara C. Jordan Elementary School. An educator for more than 35 years, she has a B.A. from Spelman College in Atlanta and an M.A. in Educational Policymaking and Administration from Washington University in St. Louis. She is filling the position vacated by Christopher Blumenhorst, who recently retired after 31 years with the District.

The District also welcomes **Stephani Hudson** and **Angeline Williams-Jackson** as new St. Louis County Special School District (SSD) area coordinators assigned to supervise secondary and elementary, respectively, special education in U. City. They will work with students, parents and staff to coordinate Individual Education Programs.

As a teacher and administrator, Hudson has focused on special education since 2001, the past 13 with SSD. Most recently, she was area coordinator for Riverview Gardens High School. She has a B.A. and an Educational Specialist degree from Southern Illinois University – Carbondale.

Williams-Jackson has worked in special education for 18 years and most recently was an SSD area coordinator for Ritenour High School. She holds a Master’s of Education and Educational Leadership from Parks University and is currently working on her Ph.D. in Social Justice Leadership at the University of Missouri – St. Louis.



JaNaé Alfred, Ph.D.



Kashina Bell, Ed.D.



Nancy Cambria



Paula Sams



Stephani Hudson



Angeline Williams-Jackson

Superintendent Receives Award

In March, Sharonica Hardin-Bartley, Ph.D., PHR, received the 2019 New Superintendent Award for the St. Louis District from the Missouri Association of School Administrators.

“Since being hired in 2016, she has put her heart and head into her work as Superintendent,” said Joanne Soudah, former University City Board of Education president. “She is truly student-centered and deeply immersed in the work of moving our students and school district forward. This award is richly deserved.”

Current BOE President Kristine Hendrix said, “Dr. Hardin-Bratley came into our district determined to be a transformational leader. She has truly done just that. She continues to motivate and inspire students, parents, staff and me. This award is well earned.”



Sharonica Hardin-Bartley Superintendent

Learning Reimagined

Creating a Modern Learning Experience

In 2017, The School District of University City worked closely with school leaders, community members and national educational experts to create a dynamic strategic plan called Learning Reimagined. The plan strives to ensure all District students graduate college- or career-ready with a strong sense of purpose and confidence to impact the world.

*"We need our community to be a part of this.
To challenge us. To make us better.
To co-own this effort to make our district
one of the best in the country."*

*Sharonica Hardin-Bartley, Ph.D., PHR
Superintendent of Schools*

Five Overarching Strategies

Students are at the core of our plan.
We strive for them to be well-prepared for their future
with a sense of purpose and the skills to creatively impact their communities.
To do this we must strive to achieve:

Rigorous, Relevant, Modern Learning Experiences

Well-Being and Joy

Excellent Staff

All Hands

Resources



Three Core Pillars

Learning Reimagined stands on three core pillars that humanize, personalize and problematize learning for all students. We know academic performance rises in school climates that embrace these core principles. The Pillars provide a foundation of vital relationships, connections and learning possibilities to elevate our students, teachers and school community.

Explore Learning Reimagined on the District website at www.ucityschools.org/StrategicPlan.

U. City Schools Featured “In The News” Both Locally and Nationally

The word is getting out about the unique people, programs, teachers and students that make The School District of University City special.

Since the last issue of PRIDE, the District has been featured in local and national media outlets, both in print and broadcast. Find all of these stories and more on our website through the new “In the News” tab located at the top of the District’s home page: www.ucityschools.org. Below is a sampling of the District’s students, events and programs that have been receiving media attention:

In the St. Louis Post-Dispatch:

Reporter Colleen Schrappen wrote a May 13 front-page story featuring University City students participating in Alive and Well Communities’ Student Ambassador Program. See a reprint of the story on page 9.

Education reporter Blythe Bernhard wrote a May 31 front-page story on the enduring careers of Sharon Knuckles and Delores Gardner, who together have served up more than 60 years of cafeteria meals to University City students.

Our student athletes were recognized by the newspaper’s Prep Sports team for their exemplary performance in District baseball, basketball, track and soccer.

At St. Louis Public Radio:

Education reporter Ryan Delaney broadcast a March 12 story featuring University City students and staff on the growing use of

restorative justice and restorative practices in schools. Delaney also featured University City schools in a July 10 broadcast about the District’s use of Panorama, a data program that measures student social emotional growth at school.

In local network news:

Fox 2’s Tim Ezell spent the entire morning of March 13 broadcasting live feeds with our UCHS broadcast students from the District’s McNair Building. Students and staff were interviewed about their work creating the broadcast and various programs to support students in the District.

KSDK Channel 5 featured the grand opening of Brittany Boutique in a March 28 broadcast. The free boutique is open to U. City schools families in need of clothing and other supplies.

Nationally:

The youth empowerment organizations America’s Promise Alliance and the International Institute for Restorative Practices featured the School District of University City both on their websites and in their social media. Both organizations highlighted the District’s use of restorative practices, and its commitment to social emotional learning, social justice, and health and well-being in its school community. See the story on page 7 about America’s Promise featuring The School District of University City in a social media video campaign.



SDUC News Expands to Include Younger Broadcasters and Journalists

PROBLEMATIZE: Learning Reimagined

At the beginning of the 2018-19 school year, The School District of University City launched a student-led newscast called the SDUC News.

In the upcoming school year, the team plans to expand to include younger students to further inform students, teachers, staff, parents and the broader community about great things happening in the District.



SDUC News is currently scheduled to be produced monthly during the school year from September through May.

University City High School alumnus and local media producer Rod Milam, UCHS Class of ’88, assisted with the auditions and provided the voiceover for the SDUC News introduction.

“The production of SDUC News is an exciting development for our students, parents and the community of University City,” said Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley, Ph.D, PHR. “I am extremely proud of the students who are taking part and leading the way in showcasing the accomplishments of our district.”

Each newscast episode is approximately 10 to 15 minutes and features stories published on the District website as well as the PRIDE and U. Times newspapers.

Archived videos of the broadcasts are posted on the UCitySchools’ YouTube channel and website at www.ucityschools.org/sducnews.



Help UC 2 NYC 2020

In March, Fox 2 News’ Tim Ezell reported live from the District with our student broadcasters who produce the monthly SDUC News newscast. After the broadcast, Ezell surprised the students with some news of his own. Plans are underway to send University City High School student broadcasters and journalists to New York City next spring on an educational field trip to visit national media outlets.

To view the current episode, visit www.ucityschools.org/SDUCNews. For more details about the fundraising effort, visit www.ucityschools.org/UC2NYC or contact Nancy Cambria at ncambria@ucityschools.org or (314) 290-4016.

WE Got This!

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with a headset and walkie-talkie. The 4-foot boy got out of his chair, high-fived his dad and walked in his powder blue Converse high tops into the hush of a theater back hallway.

The usher turned out to be University City High School Grad Arika Parr, UCHS Class of '97, who volunteered for the day. She led him and two other students, a high school senior and a seventh-grader from other school districts, through a maze of hallways. It was her job to get them backstage and into the cue line.

“You guys are going to rock this,” she said as they waited in the hallway.

It was almost showtime.

Geronimo and the two other students had been chosen by their classmates to present their schools’ service projects on stage. It was an honor for sure, but it also meant Geronimo would need the courage to walk up on stage in front of 2,500 students from dozens of schools from all over the region and give a talk about Jackson Park’s Sustainability Expo, in which students educated the community about the need to reduce waste and recycle.

On top of that, Geronimo would appear on stage with a television star and was preceding nationally known speakers. They included Martin Luther King III. Gulp!

“What grade are you in?” asked the seventh-grader from St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School as they opened a massive steel door and walked into the cavernous backstage area.

“Third,” Geronimo said.

“Wow, I could have never done this in third,” the older boy said.

WE Schools is the brainchild of Craig and Marc Kielburger, brothers who wanted to inspire students to make the world a better place. Designated WE Schools get training and resources to enable students to devise hands-on service projects. There are thousands of WE Schools nationwide. The projects not only help people, but build student leaders.

According to WE Schools, more than 80 percent of educators report that the program makes their students more likely to take action to improve the lives of others in their own community and beyond. And 95 percent of educators say students demonstrated increased leadership in their schools. The projects typically motivate youth to go on to college.

Last summer, Brittany Woods middle schoolers Tae Shia Johnson, Mouhamed Ly, Lucy Rhoades, Emma Scharff and Alara Stuart were given scholarships to go to a WE To ME Take Action Camp in Tucson, Arizona. They returned to Brittany Woods with action plans for projects that included a community garden to feed nearby refugee families; water bottle filling stations in all elementary schools to cut down on waste from plastic bottles; a clothing and supply drive for the Loaves and Fishes homeless shelter; and a demonstration bake sale where boys and girls were charged different prices to demonstrate the gender wage gap in America.

About 125 children at Brittany Woods participated in these and other programs this past year, including team efforts to build awareness around student well-being and mental health; create a sixth-grade “survival guide” for the incoming students; and publish a document titled What We Wish Our White Teachers Knew, to enhance racial understanding.

“As a result of WE Schools, we have students collaborating with others outside of their grade level and social circles,” said Brittany Woods



There was a quiet bustle in the dark backstage area. Stagehands dressed in black spoke in whispers as they handed Geronimo and the two other students specially designed WE microphones.

teacher and WE Schools coordinator Anne Cummings. “Students want to be involved because their choice and passion directs the campaigns they design and support. At this point, students routinely come to me to suggest campaigns they want to work on. It’s changing the climate in our building.”

There were about 20 WE Schools projects spread across the District’s elementary, middle and high schools this past school year.

At UCHS, 17 students were involved in WE projects addressing multiple community issues. The students spearheaded recycling and re-use efforts, water supply and quality advocacy, a supply drive for victims of Hurricane Maria, and a book drive to support youth literacy.

One of the high school projects was so unique, it was honored by WE Schools during the Stifel celebration. Senior Cabria Shelton was called out for her entry in the annual University City Mannequins on the Loop art competition. Shelton used entirely reclaimed materials to make her public art that encouraged reuse and recycling.

At Jackson Park Elementary, 29 students in grades 1 through 5, including Geronimo, also focused on sustainability, particularly waste management and disposal.

They toured a local recycling center and landfill. They created a video to teach their peers about how to reduce, reuse recycle and rot – a nod to composting. And they held a Sustainability Expo open to the entire community – the very event that Geronimo was getting ready to speak about in front of many hundreds of students.

Then he and the other youth were introduced to a handsome young man in a white sweater, tennis sneakers and a Hollywood smile. His name was Marcus Scribner, an actor on the hit television show Black-ish.

Geronimo and the others were escorted to wings of the stage. Standing behind heavy black curtains, a stage manager gave final instructions.

“You hold the microphone with one hand and you tilt it into your chin,” she said.

And then Geronimo got the go. He marched on stage in his high tops into the spotlight with Shelton and the two other students.

Geronimo had to wait his turn to speak. His classmates from Jackson Park were in the audience, not very far below where he stood on stage. Finally, it was his turn.

“So what are some of the great things you and your schools have been doing, my man?” asked the TV star.

Loud and clear and without hesitation, Geronimo spoke into his microphone:

“I’m passionate about recycling and sustainability. I believe in the impact that waste management and up-cycling can make in local communities. So, with the help of my school, I organized a sustainability expo to spread awareness and raise money for recycling stations at school.”

When he finished, the crowd went wild.

More photos and a video of Geronimo’s presentation are available at www.ucityschools.org/WEgotTHIS.

Getting a Leg up on College

Seventeen sophomores sign on for Early College Experience

 **PERSONALIZE: Learning Reimagined**

Many high schools celebrate their athletes committing to college early to play sports with official “signing days.” But University City High School and St. Louis Community College decided to put a twist on that ritual.

On April 17, they held a signing day for high school scholars who commit to enrolling early to college.

Seventeen University City High School sophomores signed on to the Early College Experience program. Most of them attended a special signing ceremony held at St. Louis Community College-Forest Park.

With Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley, various school leaders and proud parents on hand, the students each signed an enrollment pledge to work hard, seek help with their coursework, and stay on track with their college studies and high school activities. When they graduate from University City High School in 2021, they can potentially earn enough college credits for both a high school diploma and a two-year associate’s degree – at no cost to them.

This is the second group to enroll in the Early College Experience program in partnership with STLCC-Forest Park. The first group will graduate in May 2020.

The program is competitive. Sophomores must have a minimum 3.0 GPA and must formally apply. Grades, commitment and academic drive are taken into consideration. The students are keenly aware that the program can give them a leg up after high school and significantly reduce future college expenses if they decide to go on to earn higher degrees.

Take Malina Bryant and Ramata Ly, who want to eventually apply to the accelerated medical program at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. In that program, students graduate with bachelor’s and M.D. degrees in just six years. But Malina and Ramata will already have many needed credits before they even start the program.

“This means a lot to me, I’m really excited for a head start in my college education,” Malina said after she signed her letter of commitment with UCHS principal Michael Peoples at her side. “It cuts the cost by a great amount, and I’m happy about that.”

Ramata said the Early College Experience program also has the



University City High School and St. Louis Community College put a twist the official “signing days,” when 17 sophomores committed to be the second UCHS cohort to participate in the Early College Experience.

potential to open doors to more financial resources in the future.

“I feel we will get more college scholarships because we got accepted to this program and we are doing good,” Ramata said.

Studies show many students start college but are unable to complete their degrees due to financial hardship. University City Schools, which strives to personalize the educational experience, felt this barrier needed to be addressed in high school so all students have the opportunity to engage in rigorous college-level courses, said UCHS Dean of Students Samuel Martin.

This is particularly important for first-generation college students who might not envision themselves as ready for college. Additionally, dual credit and early college enrollment open other pathways for rigorous coursework beyond taking AP classes, Martin said.

The new group of UCHS signees will begin their coursework this summer on the campus of STLCC-Forest Park. During their junior year, the students will take dual-enrollment courses on the high school campus. These courses will earn them high school and college credit simultaneously. Between their junior and senior years, the students will transition to the STLCC-Forest Park campus for the remainder of the program, taking six credit hours in the summer and a full course load during their senior year.

District Featured in "Every School Healthy" National Media Campaign

In mid-May, the youth empowerment organization America's Promise Alliance began featuring a series of videos about The School District of University City’s efforts to amplify student voices, create a social justice mindset, and prioritize health and well-being in the culture of all of its schools.

The videos are part of the #EverySchoolHealthy national media campaign, an effort to champion social emotional health in schools nationwide so students are able and ready to learn – because students who are overly stressed from poverty, trauma or other home issues, or students who don’t feel included or safe at school, have a harder time learning.

Whereas, students who feel safe, encouraged, engaged, and empowered while in school are more likely to attend, engage and succeed in school.

Throughout the summer and fall, America’s Promise continued posting the District videos on its website and Twitter and Instagram accounts. They feature Executive Director of Student Services and Innovation Gary Spiller and Director of Communications Nancy Cambria discussing the work that has been done to humanize the school culture in University City toward quality social emotional learning. Topics discussed in the videos include humanizing the school culture; use of restorative circles for social justice; the University City Board of Education’s recent proclamation requiring social emotional learning, restorative practices, social justice and trauma-informed practices in its schools; positive effects of social emotional practices; the importance of listening to youth voices; advice for school districts wanting to build a better social emotional climate; self-care for students and educational staff; and the role of community partners.

Videos can be found on the America’s Promise website and www.ucityschools.org/EverySchoolHealthy. Individual videos can be searched on Twitter through the hashtag #EverySchoolHealthy.



Restorative circles are routinely held in our District’s classrooms to ensure everyone is heard, apologies have been made if a wrong has been done, and community is restored. The above photograph was taken before a community Ubuntu circle was held this winter. Guests were invited to the circle to discuss life in University City and the community’s connection to the school district.

America’s Promise Alliance has been an important partner with the District. Through funding provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, America’s Promise Alliance has been supporting acceleration sites around the nation, including in St. Louis, to help specific schools rapidly advance their efforts to create healthy climates that cater to the whole child.

University City is one of five school districts in the region that are part of acceleration work in St. Louis facilitated by the local organization Alive and Well Communities. Alive and Well has been actively working with District teachers, staff and students to address trauma and toxic stress among staff and students, build resilience and create systems and programs for positive change.



The 2018-19 UCHS varsity boys basketball team, led by Coach Kelvin Lee during his second year at UCHS, won the St. Louis Suburban Conference Blue Championship. It was their first conference win since 1995. The incredible turnaround earned Lee Conference Coach of the Year.

staff, parents and administration. Lee’s players began seeing their role in the classroom differently. “My players are starting to walk down the high school’s hallways like ambassadors for the school,” Lee said. “Sports plays a major role in the culture of the school, especially when behavior has been an issue.”

Winning the conference was great. But, more so, Lee views the team turnaround as a victory for the District’s decision two years ago to use restorative practices in both disciplinary and everyday school settings, including on the high school basketball court.

When Lee joined the District in the summer of 2017, he was hired as a coach and as a restorative practices specialist. When he’s not on the court, he’s in the high school working with students who have broken the rules or acted out in class or who just aren’t respecting the opportunities given to them in school. He uses restorative practices, including circles, to build relationships and repair harm. He’s also coaching teachers to use the circles in their classrooms to check in with students and talk through issues.

It’s a simple concept, really. People who join in a circle engage in eye-to-eye contact and have equal stature. The situation that brought them to the circle is discussed calmly and rationally. The person who has done harm is asked to recount what happened, and relay his or her thoughts at the time of the incident. They discuss who they think they may have affected and how they need to make things right. Those harmed by a person’s behavior or a situation are able to voice their feelings and hurt. They talk about the reality of what it’s like to go back home after something damaging happening to them in the school.

“Restorative practices really are meant to rebuild trust and repair relationships,” said Executive Director of Student Services and Innovation Gary Spiller, who hired Lee. “We do discipline with dignity.”

Heading the restorative justice position at U. City Schools was a natural fit for Lee.

“I’ve been at the college level and at the high school level, and everywhere I’ve been, we’ve used circles. I just didn’t know that at the time this was a type of restorative practice,” he said.

Lee said the position gave him a chance to be in the school hallways every day with his players, and to get to know them as students and as teens with a variety of challenges that sometimes include heavy issues such as poverty, loss of a parent, and neighborhood violence.

Lee’s seen a lot of bad coaching in his career, when coaches aren’t invested in the players in a humanizing way. Or, when coaches stand

“The reason I like it is you can see each other’s eyes... There’s equality. Everyone has equal opportunity to have a voice, and people have the opportunity to listen to a person.”

Coach Kelvin Lee
University City High School teacher and boys basketball coach

aloof. Or, when they don’t recognize that their negative coaching behaviors may trigger memories of past trauma in their younger players. It all backfires on the court, he said.

Lee, instead, took his coaching cues from his mentor, legendary Saint Louis University head basketball coach Charlie Spoonhour, who died in 2012. Lee called Spoonhour “the best at relationships there is.”

“I learned from Charlie how to treat players,” Lee said. “It was stellar the way he treated people. He could speak and walk up to talk to anyone.”

There were a lot of factors that went into this season’s successful team: athletic prowess and grit, emerging student leaders and a great coaching staff. But Lee doesn’t downplay the power of restorative circles to build his team.

After losing to Clayton when the team fell behind after a big lead, Coach Lee held an impromptu circle on the bench as the fans trickled out of the gym. His players reflected for about 30

minutes on the loss and the personal impact of selfish play. They stayed and practiced on the court until the trust was rebuilt. The next week, they went on to trounce major contender Parkway North.

But the most profound circle was held at a Saturday practice in the UCHS gym in February. Things were unsettled. The team was lacking student leadership. Plays weren’t coming together. Lee had the team bring chairs into the gym and they held an hour circle – on what Black History Month meant to them.

As conversations about race, inclusion and equity do, it turned to the topic of hardship and resilience. An assistant coach reflected on painful events in his childhood, including losing two parents to incarceration.

“I didn’t know these things about my own assistant coach,” Lee said. “There was not a dry eye in the circle. Everyone was crying.”

Players as young as 15 began to speak out about challenges and grit. The presence of each other in the circle was real.

“We felt more open to each other’s stuff,” said sophomore Brandon Ming of the circle. “It helped us come together as a team.”

Lee said that during that circle two team captains emerged – Ming and sophomore Jaylen Hampton.

“What’s great about the circle, is you begin to also see who the leaders are,” Lee said.

Indeed, Jaylen, who was named Conference Player of the Year at season’s end, is pretty confident about things to come.

“Next, year, with more younger players coming together like that, I don’t think there will be a team that can beat us.”

Beyond locks and buzzers, students look for emotional safety at school

By Colleen Schrappen, Reprinted with permission, St. Louis Post-Dispatch – May 13, 2019

 **HUMANIZE: Learning Reimagined**

This is what high school students say they need:

- A positive atmosphere.
- A voice in how their school works.
- Better mental health services.
- Less stress.
- More time.

Those were among the priorities laid out during the last of four daylong workshops of the Youth Ambassador Academy, a pilot program with about two dozen students. Mostly sophomores and juniors, the participants attend schools in the Hazelwood, Parkway, Ritenour, St. Louis Public and University City districts.

On a Saturday afternoon last month in the University City High School library, the teens mapped out their ideas on chart paper, debating what to include. They wrote bubble-letter headings and triple-underlined important points with colorful markers, taking breaks to snack on Oreos, chips and fried chicken left from lunch.

In groups of twos and threes, the students presented their ideas to each other and a few teachers, principals and guidance counselors. Applause — intermingled with whoops and hollers — was generous.

“Seven classes a day, stacks of homework, working after school, athletics — it’s a lot to juggle,” said 16-year-old Alberto Linares, a junior at Ritenour. “Having a few minutes to de-stress and settle down and go back to class, we think that could be really effective.” He and two classmates suggested that a “quiet room” be available at school for students who are feeling overwhelmed.

Three girls from Roosevelt High in St. Louis proposed forming a student council, with each grade represented. The Hazelwood Central team explained how a “buddy system” for upperclassmen and freshmen could benefit younger students.

Student Voice

The teens spent the morning hearing from school leaders, including University City Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley, about ways they could improve the environment at their schools. She explained how to set up a meeting with administrators, petition the school board for policy changes, or secure financing for a new club or activity.

“For me, the No. 1 goal was to bring student voice into this, that they could be agents of change,” Hardin-Bartley said in an interview.

For a long time, the social emotional side of education had been an afterthought, she said. But awareness is growing. Guidance has come from national sources, like the Sandy Hook Advisory Commission report, and local ones, such as Forward Through Ferguson.

According to a study by the Journal of Adolescent Health, almost 90 percent of school districts have used some kind of social emotional lesson or curriculum. Data suggest that such an investment can lead to better attendance rates, fewer suspensions and higher grades and test scores, especially in struggling districts.

It’s about providing tools and strategies to students, Hardin-Bartley said. “Conflicts don’t go away, but your response to them can change. This is an issue plaguing our country, and we want to be at the front of that.”

The idea for the Youth Ambassador Academy, run by Alive and Well Communities, grew out of the Student Summit on School Safety hosted by Rockwood School District last spring following the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla.

“For a long time, we had been looking to engage and activate young people,” said Emily Luft, the program director at Alive and Well, a statewide nonprofit that promotes awareness of and healing from all types of trauma.

The organization had been working with teachers and administrators across the region to recognize the effects of stress on students’ health, well-being and, ultimately, academic success.

After the Parkland shooting ignited student activism here and across the country, many district administrators were grappling — again — with how to address physical and psychological safety in their schools.

“I thought, ‘Let’s hear from the students,’” said Terry Harris, the executive director of student services at Rockwood School District. Harris, along with



Students from high schools in Hazelwood, Parkway, Ritenour, St. Louis and University City participate in a Youth Ambassador Academy activity last month designed to help them improve their school climate.

Hardin-Bartley, is part of Alive and Well’s educational leaders work group. The group put out a call to area districts, and about 80 students gathered at Lafayette High School last year to create a student action plan.

‘Not just locks’

It became clear at the summit that students were looking for ways to help themselves and their classmates navigate issues ranging from depression and anxiety to time management and relationships. Their priorities did not include bullet-resistant windows or sophisticated buzzer systems.

“From the kids’ perspective, they wanted us to include emotional safety, not just locks,” Harris said. “We should never say, ‘These kids are so different,’ but life has changed. Things have evolved. Our approach to mental health has been very reactive.”

Depression and anxiety are on the rise among U.S. teenagers, according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness. Social media has raised the stakes, making it easier to feel rejected and more difficult to unplug and unwind.

The Youth Ambassador program attempts to address these issues, Luft said. Participating schools all have a tie to the Alive and Well teachers group.

“On the planning committee, we said we don’t just want kids who were always nominated for things. We wanted students who were concerned about their communities,” she said.

Malaikah Lawrence, a junior at University City High School, was recommended to the group by her Latin teacher. She said the social aspects of school can be most challenging for her, as she tries to balance fitting in with feeling different.

Through the Youth Ambassador meetings, she’s realized that everyone’s struggle is not the same. “We get to have interactions where we see different perspectives,” she said.

At a February workshop, the group made paper loops to connect into a chain. “We sat in a circle. The discussion centered around privilege,” said Malaikah, 17. “You took off a ring if you didn’t have a privilege, and put on a ring if you did.”

The teens took off rings if they had dealt with substance abuse, LGBT issues, sexual assault, racism or family separation. The causes of trauma may be different, Malaikah realized, but the consequences are similar.

Another session focused on response to stress and self-care strategies: exercise, meditation, nutrition, sleep.

The Youth Ambassadors learned about the science behind trauma, how to build individual and community identities, and methods of organizing and advocating.

As the final session drew to a close last month, the teens gathered for their usual debriefing. They formed a circle one last time, and Luft asked them the question that she thinks will be the indicator of the program’s success: “What will you do on Monday to keep this work going?”

Going Authentic: University City’s Elementary Schools Get Real with Early Reading and Writing

University City’s budding readers and writers are getting real. They are honing their literacy skills with authentic stories containing compelling plots and worldly information. It’s all part of The School District of University City’s efforts to ensure every child is engaged and excelling early in reading and writing.

Research finds appropriately challenging assignments, deep engagement in subject matter, high expectations and unique experiences facilitate student competency – even with younger children in subject areas like literacy, often associated with rote learning.

In kindergarten, students still learn to form basic letters. They still sound out basic words and spell phonetically. They still practice reading and writing through repetition. Even so, they crave to read and write with real information, rich stories and tools for genuine expression. In this way authentic texts challenge our earliest of readers and writers to communicate their place in the world.

It’s a far more natural and relevant way to teach reading and writing, said Ian Buchanan, Ed.D, assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction services. It also helps close learning gaps with young students who enter kindergarten with varying levels of literacy, particularly exposure to vocabulary.

“Research shows vocabulary gaps across socioeconomic lines. Kids already come to us with a significant gap and less familiarity with words,” Buchanan said. “We try to resolve that by providing a

broad range of experiences for all of our students. We understand early literacy is one of our greatest opportunities.”

The stakes are high. Research finds that youngsters who do not test at proficiency by third grade have learning deficits throughout their schooling, hindering graduation and post-secondary rates of education.

The situation is concerning for African American students, whom, once behind, experience widening deficits as they move through school. This is often due to a lack of challenging, grade-level appropriate instruction and low expectations.

Proficiency gaps like this should never happen. University City educators and administrators are acutely aware these deficits exist. That’s why the District has doubled down on its early literacy efforts through authentic texts and other innovations.

Young Authors

In April, kindergarten classes in every school in the District deeply researched a specific biome, or natural environment. Students had three choices: the desert, the ocean or the forest. Each child did research with the goal of writing and illustrating a book of about eight pages.

In Melissa Klopstein’s Flynn Park kindergarten classroom students worked together at round tables, grouped by the biome they were researching. Each table had baskets stocked with early-reader and picture books on their topic.

Coached by Klopstein, the students read and sight-read through the authentic texts to gather more facts for the drafts of their books and add stronger details and layers of information. Students were encouraged to give one another writing feedback as they worked.

“It gives them choice and voice, and that’s a big thing for kindergartners,” Klopstein said.

The writing isn’t perfect – nor should it be at that age. Students spelled words like they sounded. Penmanship was crunched together or sprawled apart. Yet still, the students were engaged in

the process of writing their own book as real authors invested in the process of communicating.

In May, every kindergarten class in the District had completed a book. Students presented their final research to real audiences during festivals in their schools. With parents and grandparents on hand, the young authors read their books aloud. They answered questions about their topics, which included details on desert poppies, gila monsters, monkeys and sperm whales. Then they were given feedback from their guests – including applause and big hugs.

Instructional Support

Rigorous literacy activities like these need intense instructional support. The District knows that teachers can’t go it alone.

So, in 2018 District administration committed to hiring eight full-time teachers instructional leaders or TILs, two for each elementary school. Their job is to build teamwork between teachers through unified curriculum and instruction within the district’s elementary classes, particularly at the early literacy stage. The TILs use classroom data to analyze curriculum effectiveness and provide professional coaching and feedback to teachers on how to increase rigor and cater instruction to particular students.

“As TILs, we see the data firsthand. Our job from a coaching lens is to help teachers be better equipped with instructional concerns,” said Deitra Colquitt, a TIL working in Pershing Elementary School. “We really try to better equip the teacher with the needs of the students.

The TILs also provide backup support in the classroom by working individually with students and in groups. This hands-on support helps ensure classroom instruction is rigorous and just slightly above student competency to accelerate learning, Colquitt said.

Connecting with Movement

The TILs have also been particularly important in coordinating the District’s decision to focus heavily on phonemics instruction in the early grades to close potential learning gaps between students. Phonemics is the identification of sounds through oral and auditory exercises and the ability to connect them to the construction of words. It is considered an essential building block of literacy.

TILs have been particularly supportive in helping teachers integrate Heggerty Phonemic Awareness curriculum into their classes. The Heggerty method is designed to ensure all students have a way to access phonemics in fast, easy and fun ways that utilize body movements to put together and break apart words.

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Elementary school literacy instruction has come a long way from the mundane days of reading Dick and Jane.

Rock, Paper, Scissors: Koran Bolden Inspires at Promotion Ceremony

HUMANIZE: Learning Reimagined

The summer between eighth grade and high school is a time of anticipation, growth and decisions. Making good decisions can be a challenge at a time in life when the brain isn't fully matured and the freedom of summer beckons.

St. Louis native and nationally known motivational speaker Koran Bolden has an energizing way of connecting with teens. On May 24, Bolden shared his wisdom about good decision-making and finding success during the eighth-grade promotion ceremony at Brittany Woods Middle School. Later, Bolden mingled with the students and their parents at a barbecue picnic in the school's courtyard.

His visit on the last day of school marked the culmination of Project Restore, a year-long grant-funded parent and student engagement program. During the past school year, the District hosted four parent workshops at the middle school to guide them through effective, positive parenting strategies in the adolescent years.

Bolden's celebratory visit and the picnic aimed to keep families engaged with the school in a positive and supportive way – because engaged and involved parents have a positive influence on both student attendance and academic performance.

Bolden is the chief motivational officer of his company, Dream Success World Wide. He also was University City High School's keynote speaker during its 2018 graduation ceremony.

An avowed fan of University City Schools, Bolden told the rising ninth-graders about his theory of "Rock, Paper, Scissors" when it comes to making sound decisions and achieving big dreams.

The Rock represents the powerful foundation of believing in yourself, he explained. "Believing means that you understand you're part of that dream and play that part in making it happen before it happens," he said.

The Paper represents the place where you write down your dreams and



During the Brittany Woods eighth-grade promotion ceremony, motivational speaker Koran Bolden energized teens regarding the importance of good decision-making and finding their personal success.

map out solid plans, which includes excelling in high school.

And, The Scissors, he said, represent the tools you need to cut out the bad influences that stand in the way of the dream.

"Whenever you have a belief in something, and you write it down on paper, and you begin to act on it, there is an opposing force that is going to try and lead you astray. And, at that moment in time, I want you to look, and to reach down into your pocket, and pull out your scissors, and cut everything out of your life that does not line up with your dream."

All of the rising ninth-graders were given a free copy of Bolden's book "Rock, Paper, Scissors: Secrets to How Your Failures Can Make You Famous."

Gary Spiller, executive director of student services and innovation, said the event gave the students an inspirational start to their summer. "We expect great things from them, and wish them the happiest and healthiest of summers, so they come to high school ready to achieve their dreams."

Let It Rain! UCHS Students Celebrate Poetry Through Public Art

PROBLEMATIZE: Learning Reimagined

Here's something to perk up a rainy day! This spring, University City High School students gave University City residents and visitors a bit of poetry to brighten their day.

April was National Poetry Month, and several UCHS students celebrated by taking part in a University City public art project called Raining Poetry. The project was sponsored by the city's Municipal Commission on Arts & Letters. Participants were asked to shower beautiful poetry on local citizens, while also recognizing the area's rich literary heritage. The activity involved spray painting lines of poetry for display at sites around University City, including the high school. Four poets with Missouri roots were represented: Langston Hughes, Howard Nemerov, Mona Van Duyn and Maya Angelou.

UCHS studio arts students, under the direction of art teacher Marnie Claunch and visual artist Adelia Parker-Castro, used stencils and special paint, visible only when it rains, to reproduce lines of famous poetry. The project created a visually stunning welcome to those who enter or walk by the high school in the rain – and inspiration from poet Angelou: "Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear, I rise."

"What a great way to be in the moment," said Parker-Castro, who helped the students with the project. "After we did the installation, I photographed the work in the rain and was able to observe the various responses. People were surprised and delighted to see the poetry displayed in such a unique way."

The students were inspired to take part in the project following a classroom visit with Jane Ellen Ibur, the newly installed poet laureate of St. Louis, who helped the students write their own poetry.

"The project has been a wonderful experience for my students," Claunch said. "Jane Ibur shared her reasons for writing, and how poetry has helped her through difficult times. After reading some of her poems, the students were inspired. She helped guide them through the writing of their own poems, which were amazingly thoughtful and meaningful."



Adelia Parker-Castro (left) works with art teacher Marnie Claunch (center right) and studio arts students to create the Raining Poetry project in front of University City High School.

Art students wrote their own poetry with the support of St. Louis Poet Laureate Jane Ellen Ibur (left) during a classroom visit.



In addition to the high school, the poetry was on display at the market in the Loop, Centennial Commons recreation center and the University City Public Library. To learn more about the Raining Poetry Project, visit universitycityartsandletters.wordpress.com.

Going Authentic

Continued from page 11

Colquitt said the kinesthetics “give all kids, regardless of resources at home, an entry point and includes kids who don’t always learn in a traditional way.”

The method takes some artistry on the part of the teachers and the students.

On a gray spring day in Emily Desloge’s kindergarten class, Desloge guided her Pershing students through hand chops as they broke the syllable sounds in words like up-set, un-der, un-lock, and un-button. Then they waved their hands like maestro conductors to blend the sounds back together into complete fluent words. Later, they “rollercoastered” other words, raising their hands up in fluent arcs at the dominant syllable in a word and then gliding down at the quieter sounds.

“It helps them to separate the sounds and identify them in both isolation and in context of the whole word,” Desloge said. “So when it comes time for writing, it makes more sense because they can recognize building blocks for words through sound. It just gives them a really clear baseline for all of them to work from.”

Reading Buddies

The District has further invested in leveled reading libraries for each of its elementary schools. The libraries contain hundreds of fiction and nonfiction books categorized by reading levels. This enables teachers and TILs to match a book with an individual student’s level of ability and interests. There are multiple copies of the same title in each library, so students at or near the same reading level can read collaboratively and grow together.

The District’s elementary school teachers understand that literacy takes all hands. The schools each host volunteer programs for adults to read regularly with students, sometimes in cozy reading nooks set up by their teachers. Students also meet with visiting storytellers thanks to libraries, arts groups and bookstores.

Classroom guests this past year included Jacqueline Woodson, who read from her New York Times bestseller “The Day You Begin;” Natasha Tarpley, who read a selection of her children’s books to the students at IKEA; Nic Stone, a nationally recognized young adult author who tackles race relations in America; and Lynn Rubright, who came to Jackson Park thanks to the St. Louis Storytelling Festival.

“We are excited about the work our teachers do each day,” said Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley. “They are providing students opportunities to engage in diverse, culturally relevant texts; going deep regarding the early literacy foundation skills. Students are seeing themselves as authors and readers, and it’s very exciting.”

Chase Hired as District Liaison to University City Education Foundation

The School District of University City is excited to announce the hiring of Debbie Chase as the part-time District liaison and administrative consultant to the University City Education Foundation.

Chase, a 1984 University City High School graduate, will help grow the UCEF board capacity and fundraising efforts. Chase has more than 20 years of experience in strategic and business development. Most recently, she was the chief strategy officer for Beyond Housing. Previously, she was the vice president of philanthropy for the Jewish Federation of St. Louis and oversaw all fundraising and development, with annual fundraising totaling \$15 million.

UCEF is in need of several new members for its board, which meets monthly, 10 times a year. Board seats are open to anyone. Members do not have to be residents, parents or alumni of the school district.

Last year, the UCEF awarded \$20,000 in grants to District educators for unique class projects and experiences.

To read more about Debbie Chase, download the news release at www.ucityschools.org/Chase2019.

For more UCEF board information, visit ucityeducationfoundation.org or email info@ucityeducationfoundation.org.



Debbie Chase

Presentation Against Bullying

especially for older elementary and middle school families

during U. City’s National Night Out & Back-to-School Rally

Tuesday, August 6, 2019
5:30 p.m.

Brittany Woods Theatre
8125 Groby Road 63130

Featuring 12-year-old Artist and Anti-Bullying Activist

Jhala Angelique

Stop by the school bus during our annual National Night Out & Back-to-School Rally (Tues., Aug. 6, 2019 • 5 - 8 p.m. • McNair Campus) to drop off your donations for families in need

Please consider the following items:

- New or gently used clothing/shoes
- After-school/weekend healthy snacks
- Personal care items
- School supplies

A more specific list is available at:

UCitySchools.org/Donations4Families

Donations may also be delivered directly to a school social worker or the office of Student Services at the McNair Building, 8136 Groby Road (63130). For more details, call 314-290-4045 or email communications@ucityschools.org.

The School District of University City

S

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E

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Science Technology Engineering Mathematics

EXPO³

Thursday,
November 14
6-7:30 p.m.

Brittany Woods Middle School
8125 Groby Road (63130)

Come and explore science, technology, engineering and math in an interactive and engaging atmosphere.

Join us for this innovative event and see all the “STEMulating” learning taking place in U. City Schools!

Watch for more details, including vendor list, at www.ucityschools.org/STEMExpo.

This year University City High School journalism students under the direction of teacher Mary Williams received an impressive 23 state awards, including five prestigious All Missouri Awards during the Missouri Interscholastic Press Association (MIPA) 2019 Scholastic Journalism Day on March 25 at the University of Missouri - Columbia. Students were also honored with multiple awards from the Missouri Journalism Education Association. Those honors included a prestigious In-Depth Story of the Year Award for a story on active shooter drills and school shootings by Eliot Fuller, UCHS Class of '20, reprinted below. Bravo to our student journalists!

MJEA State Winner

Gun Violence In America

Intruder drills just part of school life in age of increased mass shootings

By Eliot Fuller, U-Times Web Editor

Multiple gunshots fired in the hallway. Teachers barricading the doors. People hiding in closets. This may sound like the climax of an action movie, but it's actually just another day at U. City. On a weekday where students were given the day off, the entire staff was in the building, participating in a school shooting simulation led by Tier One Tactical Solutions.

Brian Ashley, social studies teacher, participated in the drill. He explained that there were multiple stages of the four-hour training.

"In the first part, we were in a classroom and informed that there was an active shooter in the building," Ashley said. "We worked to try and barricade ourselves in."

From there, another simulation was run, where teachers had to decide what to do in the event of a shooting. Gunshots rang out in the hallway.

"We had the option to either barricade ourselves in or get out of the building," Ashley said.

Towards the end of the training, there was one final simulation, consisting of an active shooter in the classroom.

"We were in our classrooms, and someone started firing a [starter] gun," Ashley said. "We had to find something to throw at him, and then get behind a desk."

When students across America walk into school, they're supposed to feel safe and secure. But in 2018, this isn't always the case. With school shootings becoming more and more prevalent, students and teachers alike feel as though their safety is being jeopardized.

According to the organization Everytown for Gun Safety, as of Dec. 1, the United States has seen 86 shootings on school grounds in the past year alone. That statistic hits close to home for many students, and has some wondering how safe they really are in school.

Jayla Fitch, junior, worries that the growing number of shootings impacts how parents feel about their children's safety.

"I think it's making people kind of hesitant about sending their kids to high schools, or just American schools in general," Fitch said. "Because guns are so easily accessed, there can be a shooting anywhere."

As part of the generation that grew up post-Columbine, Fitch recalled the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre, which occurred when she was in fifth grade. She explained that since then, the country has seen many more school shootings, and she has noticed a shift in the way people view the issue.

"Now, as we're growing older, we're realizing that this is more of a problem," Fitch said. "There could be a shooting at recess. There could be a shooting at lunch. There could be a shooting anywhere."

Last spring, many students participated in a National School Walkout on the 19th anniversary of Columbine in support of stopping school violence. One of the organizers of the local event was senior Rowan Hoel, who has been very outspoken on the issue of gun violence and its impact on U.S. schools. Her activism was sparked by the many school shootings the U.S. has recently endured.

"I hate that a school shooting had to make me more aware of gun violence that happens daily, but I think that it forced me to get more involved," Hoel said. "The mass shootings we've seen over the past few years have shone a light on gun violence."

Hoel explained that the frequent shootings have changed the way she feels in school.

"Now, [school shootings] are always kind of in the back of my head,"



University City High School students and staff from across the District receive active-shooter simulation training led by Tier One Tactical Solutions.

Hoel said. "But at the same time, you can't live in fear of that happening."

When it comes to making schools safer, Hoel feels there are actions our country can take to protect our students.

"I think common sense gun control is a pretty obvious one," Hoel said. "It's ridiculous how easily accessible guns are in this country."

Some teachers have voiced their concerns on the issue as well. Peggy Halter, English teacher, thinks it's unfair that students have to live in a world where school shootings are a constant threat.

"Children should never have to go to school worrying about becoming a victim of gun violence," Halter said.

Halter believes the school is being proactive in preventing gun-related mayhem, but that it could take more action to fully ensure the safety of students.

"I feel as though safety in our school is being adequately addressed by both the district and building leaders," she said. "However, I have always thought that adding an extra layer of security would make us just a bit safer, buy a little more time, or give us advanced warning in the event of an active shooter."

During the active-shooter simulation, Michael Peoples, principal, participated alongside his fellow administrators and staff. He explained the logistics of the training drills.

"There was a team of [off-duty police] officers who came over to deliver the training," Peoples said. "The training started off with a presentation. It provided some data on school shootings and police response time."

Peoples said that from there, the staff put their knowledge to the test in a school shooting simulation.

"We were separated into groups, placed in classrooms, and told that we would be participating in some active shooter training that was very realistic and intense," Peoples said. "Once we completed those, we were moved upstairs, and the main office went through a situational drill."

Peoples said he feels a great deal of pressure as the head of the building, and an obligation to keep his students safe.

"In school shootings, adults are ultimately responsible for the safety of our students," Peoples said. "As the building principal, I am responsible for everyone, both staff and students. The unfortunate reality is that school shootings have occurred, and my heart's desire is that nothing like that would ever occur at any point of my career."



On May 13, the class of 2019 became the 102nd class to graduate from University City High School. The commencement ceremony was held at Chaifetz Arena on the campus of Saint Louis University. Kamiya Davis, 2019 class president, addressed the audience along with Valedictorian Peter Zhang and Salutatorian Leah Zukosky. Remarks were also given by Principal Michael Peoples; Superintendent of Schools Sharonica Hardin-Bartley; and School Board President Kristine Hendrix.

This year's class had 170 graduates walk across the stage, with 54 of them receiving an Academic U pin or letter. Eleven earned the distinction of Summa Cum Laude with a grade point average of 4.0 or higher. Eight graduated Magna Cum Laude

with a 3.8-3.99 GPA. Another 11 graduated Cum Laude with a GPA of 3.5-3.79. There were eight National Honor Society Members. Nine graduated with National Career Readiness Certificates, and 11 plan to utilize A+ program scholarship funds for their future education. Thanks to our career readiness programs, nine of our graduates have already obtained employment in a trade or other vocation. Another 10 are planning to go into military or law enforcement, and 120 plan to go on to one of 50 different post-secondary, educational institutions.

We wish the UCHS Class of 2019 success in their futures. We welcome them as our newest alumni! Please stay in touch.



Oh, the Places You'll Go

The District's 2019 graduates are headed to an impressive list of colleges and universities spanning the United States.

In Missouri, 16 students are enrolled at the University of Missouri in Columbia. Two more are heading to the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Another six are bound for Lincoln College in Jefferson City. Seven are going to Cape Girardeau to Southeast Missouri State University. Two more are headed to Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla – one on a full scholarship. Two more will travel to Maryville to attend Northwest Missouri State. Three others are going to Missouri Western State University in St. Joseph, Rockhurst University in Kansas City and University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg. Locally, more than 45 students plan to attend Harris Stowe University, Webster University, Fontbonne University and St. Louis Community College's Forest Park, Meramec and Florissant campuses.

Students will also attend select colleges and universities as far-flung as California and Maine. They include: American University, Bates College, Central State University, Columbia College in Chicago, Lane College, Macalester College, Morehouse College, Pitzer College, Rhodes College, University of Alabama, University of Arkansas, University of Denver, University of Kansas, University of Memphis and West Point.

St. Louis Cardinals vs. Chicago Cubs

U CITY DAY at the Cardinals Ball Game

Saturday, Sept. 28, 2019

Game begins at 6:15 p.m.

Left Field Porch (sections LP2 & LP3 in the shade!) seats at Busch Stadium, downtown

All attendees will receive a 2020 Magnet Schedule courtesy of Shelter Insurance

Limited seats available! ONLY \$20 (a \$98 value)

Children age 3 and under do not require a ticket for entry into the ballpark.



**Available WHILE SUPPLIES LAST
through Friday, Sept. 6.
Cash or check only.**

**Look for tickets on sale during the
Tues., Aug. 6 National Night Out & Back-to-School Rally
or via the District Communications Office, 8136 Groby Road 63130.**

**To schedule an appointment to purchase during office hours:
email Communications@UCitySchools.org or call 314-290-4001.**

Nostalgia Nook: U. City Steak

HUMANIZE: Learning Reimagined

On May 31, two of the District’s longtime food service employees were highlighted on the front page of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch for more than 63 years of service to students in the District.

Sharon Knuckles began working for the District in 1977 when the Bee Gees ruled the charts and Jimmy Carter was president. Her longtime colleague Delores Gardner retired in May after 23 years. Together, the pair have served up thousands of breakfasts and lunches to hungry students.

In honor of Gardner’s last day on May 30, they prepared a nostalgic lunch specialty no longer served in the District: U. City Steak – a four-times breaded and egg-washed, deep-fried ground beef patty served with homemade gravy, white bread and a dollop of mustard on top.

U. City Steak was once a cafeteria delicacy so popular, alumni still call Knuckles for the recipe.

We’ve included the recipe. Alumni, do you have other fond memories of going to school in U. City? If so, email communications@ucityschools.org and it might be featured in a future issue of PRIDE. To read the Post-Dispatch article, visit www.ucityschools.org/SteakPD.



Cafeteria manager Sharon Knuckles (left) and longtime coworker Delores Gardner in the University City High School cafeteria were featured on the front page of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch – along with their recipe for U. City Steak.



U. City Steak Recipe

Ingredients:	Directions:
Frozen hamburger patties	Thaw hamburger patties. Then dip in milk/egg wash. After they’re coated, roll them in a 50/50 mixture of flour and bread crumbs. Once they’re fully coated, place patties onto wax paper or parchment paper. Then store inside freezer for one hour. Repeat the process (start to finish) three more times. After the fourth time, deep fry patties in the oil of your choosing. Serve with gravy.
Egg/milk wash	
Bread crumbs	
Flour	

Young Alumni Corner: UMSL STARS Researchers

Under the leadership of Dr. Kenneth Mares, UCHS Class of ’61, the Students and Teachers as Research Scientists (STARS) Program out of the University of Missouri-St. Louis offers academically talented high school students a rare opportunity to work within a laboratory research setting well before attending college.

The highly competitive program has enabled 10 University City High School students to work for six weeks each summer with top scientists at Cortex Innovation Community, Donald Danforth Plant Science Center, Saint Louis University, Washington University in St. Louis, and the host institution, the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

This summer PRIDE checked in with two recent UCHS STARS participants to see how the program impacted their lives after high school.

John Tschampel, UCHS Class of ’17, currently attends the University of Missouri in Columbia. He participated in the STARS program in his junior year and worked under chemist Benjamin Bythell, Ph.D, at UMSL. Bythell studies gas-phase fragmentation chemistries affecting industrially important chemicals.

“Dr. Bythell was one of my choices to work with because the description of his research paired computational analysis and lab experimentation, which sounded quite interesting,” Tschampel said. “At the end of it, Dr. Bythell invited me back to work with him.”

Tschampel returned to Bythell’s lab in the summer after high school graduation, and he is back in the same lab this summer.

“I’ll likely be working on either some sugar or oil samples,” Tschampel said. “In general, the goal of our research is to try to find ways of identifying molecules in a sample based on how those molecules break apart when exposed to differing levels of energy. If we can figure out (and we have, somewhat) how to use the way these sugars break apart to determine the strength of certain molecules and molecular bonds, we can use that knowledge to make assumptions and predictions for larger, more



UMSL research professor Benjamin Bythell, Ph.D. (left), is working a second summer with STARS and UCHS alum John Tschampel (right).

useful molecules.”

Bythell said Tschampel will be using a time-of-flight mass spectrometer to weigh and fragment cationized sugars. He will then, like putting a puzzle back together, weigh the charged fragments and use these to identify the original cationized sugar.

“If successful, this will aid in many areas of biology and medicine as complex carbohydrates are associated with normal cellular function and also many diseases, such as types of cancer,” Bythell said.

Tschampel has nothing but high praise for the program.

“The STARS program gave me my first actual research experience, which is very unlike any high school or university lab class,” he said. “It allowed me to have some experience on which to base my decision to pursue a career in research, without which I would be flying quite blind.”

Saida Donaldson, a newly minted 2019 UCHS graduate, said her

Continued on page 17

Musician Chris Watkins Returns



Christopher J. Watkins
2019 Returning Artist
UCHS Class of 1988

The University City Municipal Commission on Arts and Letters has selected noted music director and composer Christopher J. Watkins as the 2019 University City Returning Artist. Watkins, a 1988 University City High School graduate known for his humility and sincerity, will work closely with music students in elementary, middle and high school classrooms during the week of Nov. 11-15. He will share his expertise both in assemblies with younger students and master classes with older music students. The community is invited to a public

reception in his honor beginning at 7 p.m. on Wed., Nov. 13, in the UCHS Pruitt Library, 7401 Balson Ave. (Jackson Avenue entrance) 63130.

Watkins began playing the church piano and organ at a young age under the mentorship of his mother, noted director and composer Anita Watkins-Stevens.

After high school and college at Webster University, he went on to work with internationally renowned gospel artists and groups, including Ricky Dillard, soul singer Ledisi, Bebe Winans, Earl Bynum, the Gospel Music Workshop of America and the National Convention of Gospel Choirs and Choruses. Watkins’ compositions “Because of the Blood,” “God is Truly Amazing” and the award-winning “No One Like You” are sung in churches across the country.

Watkins attended U. Forest Elementary School, Brittany Woods Middle School and University City High School. During Returning Artist Week 2019, he is looking forward to sharing his enthusiasm for various genres of music as well as sharing with students and staff the impact U. City Schools has had on his life journey.

“It is truly one of the great honors of my life to be even considered to come back and share with students the educational and psychological fulfillment of music in life,” Watkins said.

He currently serves as minister of music and creative arts for the historic Central Baptist Church of St. Louis. He is the proud father of two sons: one a high school sophomore and the other a college sophomore.

The Returning Artist Program, coordinated by the Commission, enables accomplished artists who are UCHS graduates to share their talents with students and further encourage them to investigate careers in the arts. Past Returning Artists include visual artists, glassblowers, writers, filmmakers, musicians, actors, singers and dancers. More information about the U. City Returning Artist series is available at www.ucityartsandletters.org.

STARS Researchers

Continued from page 16

STARS experience led her to enroll in UMSL this fall.

“Having been involved with both the STARS program and the UMSL Bridge program, I’d already had a lot of experience in the school, and knew that it was a pretty good school to be,” she said.

Donaldson worked with UMSL research chemist Bruce Hamper, Ph.D., who is studying efficiency improvement of chemical reactions through continuous flow processes. Donaldson said she worked on creating a vaccine model to better understand how vaccines are formed chemically and if there were a better, more accurate way to do so.

Donaldson said she was encouraged to apply for the STARS program through her high school counselor Rashida McKinley. She had not heard of the program before then. She said the experience opened doors for her.

“Because of the STARS program, my ACT score and my grades, I got a lot of scholarships for UMSL, which is something that is very useful for me,” she said. “I am very grateful for having been in the program.”

Mares, director of the STARS program, said students interested in scientific research should apply for this rare opportunity to work with top scientists before graduating high school.

“They need to be with STARS for the summer,” Mares said.



University City High School to Induct 15 Alumni Into Hall of Fame

Leaders in medicine and science, actors and singers, an NFL athlete, musicians and even an avant-garde lingerie designer will be among those in the spotlight this October as the newest inductees to the prestigious University City High School Hall of Fame.

The celebration of University City High School’s finest graduates will take place Friday evening, Oct.4, 2019, at the Sheraton Lakeside Chalet in Westport Plaza from 6 to 9 p.m.

The 2019 selected honorees are:

- Herbert Abelson, ’58, celebrated medical researcher, pediatrician, leader in academic medicine
- David Bass, ’08, NFL New York Jets linebacker, community volunteer
- Gregg Berger, ’68, internationally known actor, voice-over artist, author
- Allieze Ruby Curry, ’71, educator, St. Louis Community College leader
- Gale Epstein, ’64, avant-garde lingerie fashion designer, business leader
- Hadiyah-Nicole Green, ’99, physicist, cancer researcher, founder of Ora Lee Smith Cancer Research Foundation
- Sheldon Kaplan, ’65, pediatrician, educational leader for infectious diseases
- Carol Kaplan-Lyss, ’59, educator, child-development expert, author, community volunteer
- The late Zale Kessler, ’56, Broadway and screen actor, operatic star
- Lester Pines, ’68, legal pioneer, educator, community service leader
- David Prelutsky, ’72, medical doctor, HIV research and treatment leader
- Stephen E. Schwartz, ’59, chemist, atmospheric science researcher
- Mary Beth Tinker, ’70, community leader, social activist
- Jim Olyn Triplett Jr., ’96, educator, community volunteer
- Michael “Spike” Wilner, ’84, musician, legendary NYC club owner

The evening will be hosted by 1999 UCHS Hall of Fame inductee Wayne J. du Maine, a 1983 graduate who is currently the principal chair with both the Brooklyn Philharmonic and the American Composers Orchestra and the trumpet program director for brass studies at New York University Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development. A nationally recognized trumpet player who once performed with Prince at his Paisley Park, Minnesota, home, du Maine returned home as a featured soloist with the 2019 U. City Summer Band on June 25 at Heman Park.

This year’s upcoming Hall of Fame inductees will join a long and prestigious list of alumni to have graduated from University City High School. They include playwright Thomas “Tennessee” Lanier Williams; internationally renowned rap artist Cornell “Nelly” Haynes, and Marlon West, the lead effects animator for beloved Disney films, and many more.

Their photos will join more than 100 others hanging in the main hallway of University City High School.

The UCHS Hall of Fame was established in 1999 for the purpose of honoring graduates from each era of the school’s history. These are individuals who have brought honor to the school through notable contributions to their fields and the world. Although the induction event occurs every other year, each January the District publicly calls for nominations.

Registration for the event will begin in August. Details are available at www.ucityschools.org/HOF2019. To learn more about the UCHS Hall of Fame, including a list of impressive inductees, their biographies and how to nominate for 2021, visit www.ucityschools.org/HOF. For more information, contact Traci Moore at tmoore@ucityschools.org.



Wayne J. du Maine
1999 UCHS Hall of Fame
UCHS Class of 1983



Pictured is a sampling of University City residential recycling sent to the Recycling Plant. Examples of contamination in this load:

- ✗ Plastic bags
(empty or containing recyclables)
- ✗ Clothing
- ✗ Styrofoam
- ✗ Yard Waste
- And more...

RECYCLE RESPONSIBLY 6

STICK WITH THE

Please keep items loose, clean, and dry.



PLASTIC BOTTLES
& CONTAINERS



GLASS BOTTLES
& JARS



FOOD & BEVERAGE
CARTONS



METAL FOOD &
BEVERAGE CANS



FLATTENED
CARDBOARD



PAPER

Find out where you can recycle or donate
other items at: RecycleResponsibly.org



RECYCLE TODAY

for a Better Tomorrow



Recycling is NOT dead!

You may have heard that China has stopped taking recyclables from the United States, resulting in new challenges in the recycling industry. However, US recycling infrastructure is growing and improving. The recycling industry generates hundreds of billions of dollars to the US economy and conserves energy and resources. It is not going anywhere.

Why did China stop taking our recyclables? Because of contamination – like plastic bags, Styrofoam, garden hoses, food waste, yard waste, etc. In order for University City and other cities to continue successful recycling programs, contamination must be reduced. Not only does it spoil the good recyclables, contaminated recycling loads cost the City extra money.

Recycle Responsibly – NO WISHCYCLING!

Wishcycling is the practice of tossing questionable items in the recycling bin, hoping they can somehow be recycled. Acting on those good intentions can do a lot of harm. The best case scenario is that the items are separated then landfilled, which costs time and money. The worst case scenario is that items contaminate other recyclables, rendering the entire batch useless. Wishcycling can also damage processing equipment, like when plastic bags end up tangled in sorting screens and conveyor belts. Wishcycling is one of the biggest issues facing recycling today.



When unsure if an item is recyclable, ask these questions:



- ✓ Is it a clean container that is made of plastic, metal or glass? **RECYCLE IT!**
- ✓ Is it clean cardboard or paper that is not used for personal hygiene*? **RECYCLE IT!**
- ✓ If you answer NO, throw it away, or check www.stlcityrecycles.com/database to see if it's recyclable elsewhere.

*Paper towels, toilet paper, tissue paper are not recyclable.



**DON'T FORGET
TO RECYCLE THIS
PAPER**

Legal Notices for School Families

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.

School Closing Procedures

When inclement weather or other emergency conditions exist, the health and safety of students and staff is the most important consideration. District administrators may decide to close school for the entire District or specific buildings, open schools on a late start schedule or dismiss early. The decision is usually made by 5 a.m., and notifications may begin as early as 5:30 a.m. through the District’s automated phone and email system based on current contact information in Tyler SISK12 Parent Portal. Closings are also posted on the District website at www.ucityschools.org, social media such as Facebook and Twitter, which are also streamed through the District app and local television and radio stations.

Parent contact information may be updated in the family’s Tyler SISK12 Parent Portal account throughout the school year.

Days missed because of school closures are typically made up at the end of the school year as needed.

The School District of University City Leaders Who to Contact

Board of Education
(See page 3 for names and offices of school board directors along with their school-liaison assignments)
8136 Groby Road, 63130314-290-4002

District Administrators

Sharonica L. Hardin-Bartley, Ph.D., PHR
Superintendent of Schools
8136 Groby Road, 63130314-290-4002

Ian P. Buchanan, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent
Curriculum and Instructional Services314-290-4020
Robert Dillon, Ed.D., Executive Director
Technology and Innovative Learning 3314-290-4097
Elizabeth Gardner, Director, Instruction314-290-4017

Kashina Bell, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent
People and General Administration314-290-4021

Scott Hafertepe, Chief Financial Officer
Business and Finance314-290-4008
Gene Kieczkowski (Transpar), Director
Transportation 314-290-4046
Dereon Hill (Chartwells), Director
Food & Nutrition314-290-4068

Karl Scheidt, Executive Director, Operations 314-290-4044

Gary L. Spiller, II, Executive Director
Student Services and Innovation 314-290-4045

Nancy Cambria, Director, Community Relations 314-290-4001

Debbie Chase, Director, Development 314-290-4001

Ayinda Wayne (FantasTechs), Senior IT Manager314-290-4014

University City Alumni Association314-290-4126

University City Education Foundation 314-290-4037

School Administrators

Crystal Cauley, Director,
Julia Goldstein Early Childhood Education Center
737 Kingsland Ave., 63130314-290-4391
Parents As Teachers 314-721-4120

JaNaé L. Alfred, Ph.D., Principal, Barbara C. Jordan Elementary
1500 N. 82nd Blvd., 63132 314-290-4360

Nicalee Wilson, Principal, Flynn Park Elementary
7220 Waterman Ave., 63130 314-290-4420

Rebecca O’Connell, Ed.D., Principal, Jackson Park Elementary
7400 Balson Ave., 63130 314-290-4450

Herbert Buie, Principal, Pershing Elementary
6761 Bartmer Ave., 63130.....314-290-4150

Elliott Shostak, Principal, Brittany Woods Middle
8125 Groby Road, 63130314-290-4280
Assistant Principal: **Ernest Carter**
Dean of Students and Instruction: **Cate Pautsch, Ph.D.**

Michael Peoples, Principal, University City High
7401 Balson Ave., 63130 314-290-4100
Assistant Principals: **Kimberly Austin** and **T-Herbert Jeffrey**
Dean of Students: **Samuel Martin, IV**

Paula Sams, Interim Administrator, Lieberman Learning Center
8136 Groby Road, 63130 314-290-4330

Program Administrators

Clay Ware, Coordinator, University City Adult Education and Literacy
8136 Groby Road, 63130 314-290-4052

Sandra Cox, Coordinator, K-12 English for Speakers of Other Languages
8136 Groby Road, 63130314-290-4077



July 2019

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University City Board of Education	The School District of University City
Kristine Hendrix, President	Sharonica L. Hardin-Bartley, Ph.D., PHR <i>Superintendent of Schools</i>
Chelsea Addison, Vice President	Nancy Cambria, <i>Communications Director</i>
Lisa Brenner, Ph.D., Secretary	CarolAnn Cole, <i>Communications Specialist</i>
Matthew Bellows, Director	Curtis Conyears, <i>Communications Specialist</i>
LaVerne Ford-Williams, Director	314-290-4000 • www.ucityschools.org
George Lenard, Director	
Joanne Soudah, Director	

314-290-4000 • www.ucityschools.org

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Join us for



Elementary:
Tuesday, Oct. 22

Middle: Wednesday, Oct. 23

High: Thursday, Oct. 24

Learning Reimagined.

Elementary:
Tuesday, Oct. 22
Middle: Wednesday, Oct. 23
High: Thursday, Oct. 24

Middle: Wednesday, Oct. 23

High: Thursday, Oct. 24

Learning Reimagined



Transform the Life of Every Student Every Day!

ucityschools.org/SeeOurSchools2019

enrollment process coordinates enrollment to obtain accurate student and family data. ALL returning students must re-enroll through the Parent Portal before the start of the new school year

New to the District? Enrollment procedures, including a checklist of what is needed when enrolling a child, are available at www.ucityschools.org/Enroll. For more details, visit your neighborhood school or call (314) 290-4045.

Not certain which elementary school your child will attend? Visit www.ucityschools.org/FindMySchool for the elementary boundary map or call 314-290-4045.

Entering kindergarten? Don't miss the July 30 - Aug. 1 Jump Start to Kindergarten at your elementary school. The event is designed to get kindergartners ready for their first day.

Transitioning to middle or high school?

Visit www.acityschools.org/SixthGrade or

www.ucityschools.org/Freshman, respectively, for important dates and more.

Mark your calendar for the
First Tuesday in August

August 6, 2019

5-8 p.m

McNair Campus

Details at www.ucityschools.org/NNOBTSR

communications@ucityschools.org or call 314-290-4001