

District Prepares for “Next Steps”

On Feb. 1, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) released its final 2018 annual performance report (APR) for all Missouri school districts.

The School District of University City is pleased to announce that it remains fully accredited with 85.4 percent of APR points.

“While there is still significant work to be done,” Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley said, “I am encouraged that our students and staff continue to proceed toward academic excellence in the classroom.”

More than 110 parents, staff, partners and other community members attended an annual State of the District community meeting on Feb. 25, 2019. They listened intently as Hardin-Bartley presented state testing results, accreditation status and the District’s Strategic Plan. She shared highlights of student successes and expressed appreciation to the school board, staff, volunteers and community partners for their support of the innovations and initiatives that have been instituted as part of Learning Reimagined.

A video of the meeting along with printable handouts and other links are available online at www.ucityschools.org/APR2018.

Hardin-Bartley and her team plan to meet with U. City parents, staff and other interested community members in informal settings to talk more about next steps for U. City Schools and what these things looks like for students and families.

For more information regarding hosting or attending a follow-up talk, register online at www.ucityschools.org/2019NextSteps.



U. City Schools’ Trauma Informed Intervention Specialist Roxy Isaguirre uses community circles to engage and encourage student participation and discussion.

Humanizing Learning Reimagined Grant Supports “Next Step” in Becoming Trauma-Informed

A two-year, \$300,000 grant awarded to a St. Louis-based nonprofit organization is helping The School District of University City humanize the educational experience for all of its students.

One of three St. Louis area districts benefitting from the grant provided by America’s Promise Alliance, University City is able to utilize the knowledge and experience of Alive and Well Communities, a group committed to creating trauma-informed communities throughout Missouri to better understand the impact of trauma and toxic stress on learning and develop practices that support the students.

“We are very much in the beginning stage of what it takes to become a trauma-informed district,” said Gary Spiller, executive director of Student Services and Innovation. “Trauma is real. It doesn’t know a race, a gender, an age, but it’s very real, and our district is taking a proactive step to number one, recognize the reality, and number two, support our students who are dealing with trauma, and provide our stakeholders with the means to navigate it.”

Trauma can play out in both obvious and subtle ways. For example, a home struggling with food and rent insecurity can stress children and present challenges to learning.

A key step in the process was the recent hiring of Roxy Isaguirre as the District’s trauma informed intervention specialist. She said that among her responsibilities, she helps students who are recovering from a traumatic experience or dealing with stress to learn different strategies or coping mechanisms that help empower themselves during those moments when they may feel overwhelmed.

“It’s just a very different approach and a way of humanizing how we

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Tinker Tour Stops in U. City



Mary Williams, University City High School journalism teacher, was downright giddy to hear that UCHS alumnae Mary Beth Tinker, Class of 1970, would be speaking in her classroom.

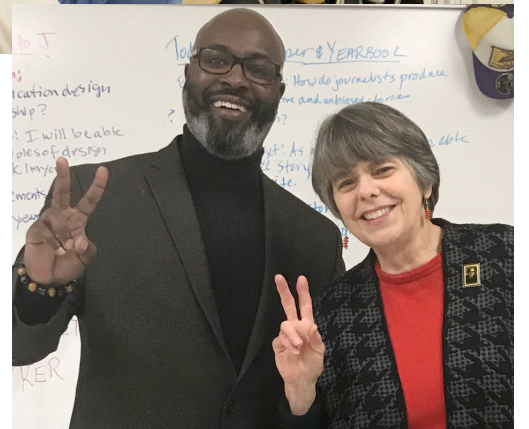
Tinker gained prominence for her role in the Tinker v. Des Moines Independent School District Supreme Court case, which in 1969 ruled that Tinker could not be punished for wearing a black armband in protest of the Vietnam War, while she was a student at Warren Harding Junior High School in Des Moines. The case set a precedent for freedom of speech in schools. Williams was excited that Tinker, now an American free-speech activist, was able to visit with the Introduction to Journalism, Newspaper and Yearbook students.

“I think she is a First Amendment rock star,” Williams said. “When I found out she was coming, I was on cloud nine. I’ll be honest, I think this is one of the coolest things that has ever happened to me.”

It was a memorable experience for the students as well, and a timely one for journalism students. Williams said they had recently studied First Amendment law, including how it pertains to scholastic education, and some students even worked on a project involving the Tinker case. Additionally, Williams said several of her Yearbook students had studied the case in Government class.

“I thought it was pretty cool seeing and talking to somebody who we had literally just learned about in class, who was a part of history and part of the legislation of free speech,” said junior Nathan Hill.

It was also pretty cool to know that Tinker graduated from UCHS, which Williams said made Tinker’s story more relevant for the students.



University City High School Principal Mike Peoples stops by classroom to greet guest speaker Mary Beth Tinker, UCHS Class of 1970.

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From our Superintendent of Schools



Sharonica Hardin-Bartley
Superintendent

Dear University City Families,

It has been an exciting start to the new year in The School District of University City. All around me I see dynamic progress in our long-term goal of Learning Reimagined.

Let’s start with our State of the District event on Feb. 25 that was open to the public. That night I presented our strategic plan to 110 members of the University City community. You can learn more about the plan on our website at www.ucityschools.org/StrategicPlan. We are very proud of the path we have charted for our district through this plan. There are five essential components:

- Rigorous, modern and relevant learning experiences
- Joy and well-being
- Talented educators skilled and enabled in Learning Reimagined
- Leveraging all hands
- Resources for our vision

In this issue of Pride, you will see signs of these components already happening in our district.

On Feb. 14 a group of our high school students led by seniors Rowan Hoel and Leah Zukosky created their own memorial and silent protest to address gun violence by placing 46 pairs of shoes on the steps of University City High School. The shoes marked the one-year anniversary of the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. The shoes represented the 46 lives lost in school shootings since Columbine, and the fact these lost souls can no longer protest gun violence in our country – so other youth have to march on for the cause. I am so proud of these students. In my mind, this is an embodiment of Learning Reimagined, when students are empowered to voice their opinions for change in our world.

You will also read in this issue about our Early College program. Our students are now able to enroll in college credit courses while also completing their high school

degrees. These students are on track to graduate not only with a University City High School diploma, but also an associate’s degree. After graduation they can go on to complete a bachelor’s degree or move into a career. This program gives our students quality options for learning that meet real-world needs. For example, having two years of college right out of high school is a tremendous financial relief for many of our families.

You will also learn about the hiring of Roxy Isaguirre as the District’s new trauma informed intervention specialist. She will help in our work to enhance social-emotional learning and development in our schools so we can spark joy and well-being in all of our students - because we know that students who are healthy, empowered, safe and supported learn better. And, by the way, it was exciting to learn that earlier this year the District was highlighted by the national group America’s Promise Alliance for our work with Alive and Well Communities to accelerate health and well-being in our schools.

As I write this, the University City Board of Education is preparing to approve a landmark resolution at its Feb. 28 meeting. It fully supports the District’s commitment to the whole child through both restorative justice practices and a social justice focus. This is a powerful statement about who we are in University City, the progressive mindset of our community and the deep resolve of our board to fully support all of our students. Two of our board members, Kristine Hendrix and Chelsea Addison, graciously took the time to explain the resolution on a video. I invite you to take a look at the video and read the resolution at www.ucityschools.org/BOE.

I wish you all a bright and joyful spring.

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

From our Board of Education



Lisa Brenner, Ph.D.
Board of Education
Director

Dear University City Families,

The landmark Iowa Association of School Board’s “Lighthouse Study” found that effective Boards of Education monitor data to ensure that the superintendent and, subsequently, the school district are effectively implementing their mission and vision. The School District of University City (SDUC) Board of Education is tasked with finding ways to quantify and evaluate the fulfillment of the District’s mission, “Transform the life of every student, every day” and vision, “Where all students graduate college and career ready.”

By now, you know that the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) finally released the Annual Performance Review (APR) for the District and our overall score was much improved. While the Board is pleased with these results, we recognize that APR does not tell the whole story. The ability to measure academic growth has been hampered by multiple changes in state standards and tests over the last five years. Therefore, the Board has been monitoring the District’s use of formative academic tests to ensure they are being used to monitor student growth and as a tool for meaningful interventions at the school, classroom, and individual student level. In addition, for our students to be truly ready for college and careers of the future, we know that they need to be well-

rounded, adaptable, critical thinkers with the ability to collaborate with others and communicate effectively. These skills are not readily apparent in standardized test scores. So as a board, we are challenged with looking for evidence to measure these qualities. We are doing this by monitoring multiple data points including suspensions, climate and culture surveys, attendance data, and teacher attrition. We also are looking for evidence that our students are being given opportunities to engage in project-based learning, to present to the public, and to be exposed to diverse and rich experiences. When the Board of Education gives clear expectations to the superintendent, has access to quality data, and monitors that data for accountability, the Board fulfills an important role in the success of the school district.

So, while our APR score was higher this past year, there is no complacency for this Board of Education. We have to continue to monitor beyond the state’s performance measures to ensure that our superintendent is making continuous improvement in fulfilling our mission and vision. Our children deserve no less than high expectations from the SCUC Board of Education.

Lisa M Brenner
Lisa M. Brenner, Ph.D.
Director, SDUC Board of Education

The personal opinions expressed in this article may not reflect that of the entire school board.

District Welcomes Two New Hires

The School District of University City is pleased to announce two new hires. Kashina Bell, Ed.D., will begin on July 1 as the assistant superintendent for people and general administration. Nancy Cambria assumed her new role as the director of community relations on Feb. 15.

Bell served as assistant superintendent of Student Services for the School District of Clayton. She was also a principal in the Parkway School District and assistant principal in the Hazelwood School District. She was previously a math teacher and is considered an amazing school leader who greatly impacted academic achievement for her students. Bell obtained her master’s degree from Lindenwood University and a doctorate in Educational Leadership from Maryville University.

Cambria served as communications manager for Health Equity Works, a Washington University in St. Louis initiative. Previously, she was a reporter for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and wrote stories to help spark change and improve the lives of children and families in the community. Her nationally-recognized reporting on toxic stress and children was recognized in the New York Times as one of the top pieces of solutions journalism in 2017. Cambria holds a master’s degree from Ohio University.



Kashina Bell, Ed.D.



Nancy Cambria

Ms. W Makes “IT” Happen

The school library is no longer a musty room filled with old books and encyclopedias. Today’s library media center is rich with innovative technology and research tools.

On Feb. 13, The School District of University City’s lead librarian Kelly Werthmuller, “Ms. W,” was officially recognized with the Making IT Happen award in the category of Library Media Specialist at the Library and Media Literacy Luncheon during the 2019 Midwest Education Technology Conference (METC).

“Our mission is to change the way people use our libraries,” Werthmuller said. “We want to focus on emerging technology and digital citizenship as well as ensure that all of our students have access to quality books and research materials. Today’s library is a dynamic space, far removed from the rigid quiet zones of yesterday. We encourage students to explore, create and innovate, even if it means making some noise.”

Werthmuller has been with the District since 2002. She began her tenure as a middle school teacher and has spent the past 12 years as the teaching librarian at Brittany Woods Middle School.

Making IT Happen is an internationally-recognized award for educators and leaders in the field of educational technology integration in K-12 schools, sponsored by the International Society for Technology in Education.

For more information, visit www.metcedplus.org.



Kelly Werthmuller

Humanizing Learning Reimagined From page 1

work with each other,” Isaguirre said. “You’re validating what they’re going through and letting them know that it’s okay to have feelings, but how they react to those feelings is what we can control.”

Spiller said Isaguirre is giving these students the means to help themselves whether it’s in a school setting or the outside world.

“One of the things I like about Roxy’s work is she’s equipping students for life,” Spiller said. “These are strategies and mechanisms that students can use anytime they get into difficult situations so they can focus on the situation and move forward.”



Feb. 14 silent march student organizers Rowan Hoel and Leah Zukosky distributed informational flyers to students on the front steps of University City High School.

Students Host Silent March

In remembrance of the young people who died in the Parkland, Fla., school shooting and in other mass school shootings, students from the University City High School’s Women Empowerment Club held a silent march on Feb. 14, 2019, the first anniversary of the shooting, to bring awareness to the issue of gun violence. Forty-six pairs of shoes were laid upon the front steps of the school to represent the lives lost in the six separate mass school shootings that have taken place since Columbine.

The silent march was organized by UCHS seniors Rowan Hoel and Leah Zukosky under the supervision of club sponsor Elizabeth Goodbrake.

“Parkland was such a huge event last year, and I think it’s important to not let it go unnoticed, said UCHS senior Leah Zukosky. “After major shootings, people start talking about guns for a few weeks, and then it kind of dies out. I think it’s important not to let this die out, and to actually make a change.”

In 2018, a gunman opened fire at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland. Seventeen students and staff members were killed, 17 others were injured. It was the deadliest shooting at a high school in United States history.

“Bringing actual shoes that represent the victims of these shootings puts it into people’s minds that this can happen here, and because it’s so easy to get a gun,” said Hoel. “A visual representation is a lot more powerful than just saying this is what’s happening.”

Special thanks to Fox Channel 2, KMOV Channel 4, KSDK Channel 5 and the St. Louis Post-Dispatch (StLToday.com) for covering the morning event. For links to news casts, Facebook LIVE video, U-Times student article and more photos, visit www.ucityschools.org/SilentMarch2019.



Student Artists Win Walgreens Expressions

University City High School student artists Areanna Whittington (center left) and Taiyanna Clark (center right) are congratulated by their art teachers Marnie Claunch (left) and Todd Yancy (right) for being winners of the 2019 Walgreens Expressions Contest - Media Arts division. Read more at www.ucityschools.org/2019WalgreensExpressions.

University City Board of Education Candidate Statements

Three residents have filed for candidacy in the April 2, 2019, election for two, three-year seats on the University City Board of Education. An asterisk (*) indicates the incumbent. The candidates, in order of filing, submitted the following statements and photos:

Matt Bellows

Raised in a family of public school educators, I was taught that a strong school district is the backbone of a vibrant city. A strong school district teaches students how to be committed citizens. I am seeking a position on the School District of University City’s Board of Education because I want to ensure all students in our district progress successfully through our district’s schools, are career ready, and become engaged citizens.

I currently serve on the University City Education Foundation Board of Directors and chair the fundraising committee. The Foundation raises funds for distribution to teachers throughout the district who are implementing innovative learning, and it is incredibly rewarding to have a part in creating this margin of excellence. I also fully support the district’s “Learning Reimagined” initiative and hope to be a part of this initiative’s further implementation that humanizes, personalizes, and problematizes learning.



Lamont E. Reed

Hello my name is Lamont E. Reed. I attended Pershing Elementary, Ronald E. McNair, Brittany Woods Middle and I graduated from University City High School. I’m a proud alum of the class of 1994. Shortly after graduation, I enlisted in the United States Navy. I pursued one of my passions and studied Culinary Arts and Business Management. I am now a Letter Carrier for the United States Postal Service.

I grew up in a family of educators, social workers, nurses and like myself, military veterans. I have a lot of family who are currently employed or involved with the St. Louis Public School District. Education has and always will be a passion of mine. I take every opportunity to help children and needy families. I instill the same morals and values I was taught in my children and any child I come in contact with.



I’m currently the President of the University City High School Alumni Association. I volunteer in the district whenever I’m available. I have partnered with many organizations and churches in the community to help with needy families and students. Helping others is something I’m very passionate about. I think this is truly needed in our community. So many families are having to do without.

I would be honored to serve on the University City Board of Education. I look forward to bringing fresh ideas to assist the district. I think we need to address the trauma a lot of the children are suffering from. I also think we need to figure out how to fix the the problem of parent involvement with children and the school district. University City is the place I call home and I plan on giving back to this district and our community for a long time to come. I look forward to meeting and answering any questions you may have of me. I look forward to your vote and support.

Thank you.

LaVerne Ford-Williams*

After 37 years of devoted service to the School District of University City as a teacher and an administrator I was blessed to retire and follow my passion of becoming a University City Board Member.

During my tenure in the District, I worked at both the elementary and secondary levels. Early in my career, I taught at Pershing, Delmar Harvard, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Ronald E. McNair schools as well as supervised summer school programs for several years at Jackson Park, Brittany Woods and University City High School. The last thirteen years of my career were spent working at Brittany Woods Middle School as the Assistant Principal. Now, I can proudly say that I continue to work diligently to build strong, productive and rewarding relationships with our students, their families and our community.

I have had the honor of serving you as a member of the University City Board of Education for three years.



I continue to be dedicated to:

- Ensuring excellence in education for all students.
- Maintaining high expectations and sustaining full accreditation.
- Working with the current Board of Education to address any matters brought forth by parents, students and the community.
- Ensuring overall accountability for all employees within the University City School District.
- Uniting with all stakeholders to continue efforts towards overall improvement and sustainability of the District’s teaching/ learning programs and services.
- Supporting efforts to ensure that school funds are spent prudently and effectively to provide maximum educational benefits for our students.

As a returning Board member, I will devote myself to continue making a positive difference and strive to support an effective lasting change.

I am seeking your **support and vote on April 2nd**.

Feel free to contact me at: laverne4ucity@gmail.com

Facebook: LaVerne Ford-Williams for U-City School Board



RESET Parent Education Series Supports Children’s Well Being

Parent Educator Candice E. Cox, a licensed clinical social worker, is leading a three-part parent education series entitled RESET at Brittany Woods Middle School. Sessions are designed to assist parents in supporting their children’s well-being in school and in life by providing greater social and emotional awareness, stronger communication skills and healthier relationships.

During the February session “Chaos vs KHAOS” (Keep Healing and Overcoming Struggles), parents received a better understanding of age-appropriate development stages and how stress affects home, school and work environments.

Sessions are scheduled for 6-7 p.m. at BWMS, 8125 Groby Road 63130:

- Monday, March 4 - Session 2: “Sticks & Stones” - Learn how communications can create or destroy relationships between parents and children.
- Monday, April 8 - Session 3: “Huddle Up” - Identify and discuss positive ways to build healthy relationships with school staff to create successful, emotional pathways for children.

The District’s department of Student Services is coordinating RESET. Co-sponsors include Organized KHAOS and Project Restore. These sessions are free and open to the public. No pre-registration is required. More details are available at www.ucityschools.org/RESET2019.



Parent Educator Candice Cox leads sessions to help U. City parents develop stronger and healthier relationships with their children.

U. City Student’s Artwork Chosen for State Capitol Art Exhibit

A colorful oil pastel created by University City High School sophomore John Ruland was chosen by District 14 Senator Brian Williams for the 2019 Senate Art Exhibit. John’s art will be displayed in the Senate Parking Garage Hallway at the Capitol building in Jefferson City through 2019.

John and his classmates didn’t travel far for inspiration...just to U. City in Bloom’s gardens alongside the school. His piece, Planting A Symphony, was created last fall in about six hours. It was submitted to UCB’s Plein Air contest by his art teacher, Marnie Claunch.

“I first heard about the competition on a normal day, during drawing class with Ms. Claunch,” John said. “She always tells us about opportunities, which is one of the reasons I like her, especially as my art teacher. Urging us all to sign up, she told us about how painting ‘in plein air’ - a French expression - is an excellent way to create art from life.”

John says his father, who spent some time as a sculpture restorer and ceramicist, provided early inspiration. He also credits his art teachers from elementary through high school with helping him to fall in love with the creative process.

“John really goes above and beyond in order to get better,” Claunch said. “He’s like a sponge. He just soaks up all the advice and even the criticism he’s given. Being the best artist he can be is what drives him.”

John, along with the other featured artists from across Missouri, will be recognized by the Missouri Art Education Association during an awards ceremony at the State Capitol building in Jefferson City on March 11.



Student artist John Ruland created his award-winning drawing during U. City in Bloom’s fall 2018 Plein Air competition.



Residency Artist Cbabi Bayoc Creates Mural with UCHS Students

The students in Marnie Claunch’s Drawing and Pre-AP Studio Art classes can take pride in knowing their artwork will be seen by University City High School students for decades to come.

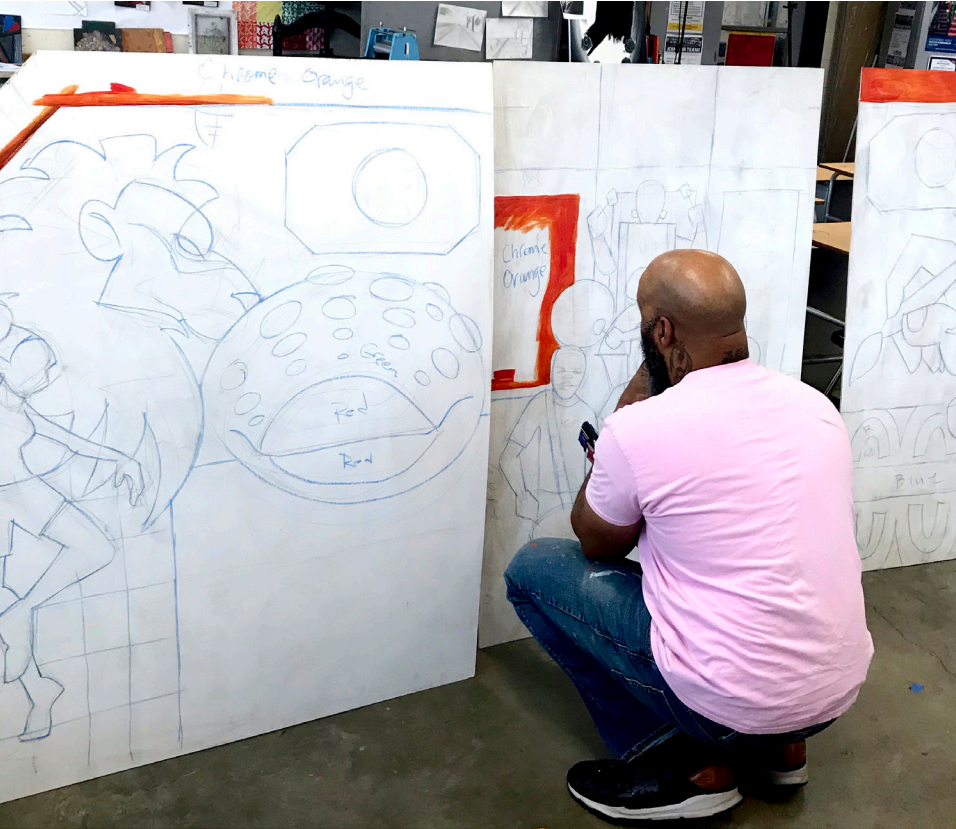
At the beginning of the school year, UCHS Principal Michael Peoples mentioned that it would be nice to see some murals around the school. Claunch told him about Cbabi Bayoc, a local artist who has become known for his paintings depicting positive images of African Americans including an outdoor mural he produced with students and families at Julia Goldstein Early Childhood Education Center in November 2018.

“I thought it would be perfect,” Claunch said. “I wanted the students to work with an artist and see, from beginning to end, what it’s like to actually think like an artist, how you envision and then follow through with a big piece like this.”

Bayoc met with 23 high school students in January to discuss the mural. After brainstorming, they decided to focus on the fine arts: dance, music, visual arts and theatre. Bayoc cut three wooden panels to look like a stage, then worked with the students to sketch their mural. Finally, the students started painting.

“The students were really motivated by being able to create a mural for their school,” Claunch said. “The idea of working with subject matter that looks like the people around you, that’s just really inspiring.”

Claunch said the mural will hang in the main hall over the entryway to the office. “The students are super excited,” She said. “I mean, we’re so excited. They love the idea that it’s going to be permanently installed.”



Local artist Cbabi Bayoc worked with high school students to develop the concept for a mural, focusing on the fine arts: dance, music, visual arts and theatre. Final artwork will be installed in the main entry of University City High School.

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New dance teacher at UCHS brings wealth of experience

It's a new era of dance at University City High School as the students said goodbye to Heidi Morgan, the long-time dance teacher, and welcome Nicole Thomas to the program.

Thomas is a professional dancer who received a bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Illinois. She has taught all over world, including London, the West Indies and the Caribbean. With her extensive experience in dance, Thomas hopes to broaden the students' horizons.

"She has lots of connections with choreographers around the world and has brought in many of them to help," sophomore Reuben Thomas said. "She wants the best for her dancers and really knows how to help us."

The instructor's main goal is to take the talents and gifts of her new students and give them opportunities to develop their skills to the highest level. She said the students possess talent and she wants to guide them to greatness.

"I am looking forward to developing community partnerships and relationships so people all over the metropolitan area can see how talented our students really are," she said.

Despite following a long-time and well-admired dance teacher, Thomas does not feel she is replacing Morgan, but continuing the dance

program she built and nurtured.

"It's a transition and (Morgan) left a great legacy," Thomas said. "I just want to continue that legacy and keep it growing."

Directing and delivering the annual Kinesis concert in December was natural for Thomas, who has been producing concerts since college. As a new instructor, there were some challenges to overcome.

"The most challenging thing was getting students to adjust to a different style of teaching, though it hasn't been too difficult," Thomas continued. "The students were otherwise excited and in a good place."

After the concert, students reflected on the experience. Sophomore Brenнын Wilke, who is participating in dance for the first year, found Kinesis to be a great learning and bonding experience.

"I liked the concert because I was onstage getting to help all my friends get our act together," Wilke said.

Thomas said she learned a lot and is looking forward to preparing for the spring Kinesis concert.

"Knowing what resources are available is important," she said. "I can utilize those resources beyond what I do here in the classroom. It will help immensely."

Bringing experience from many different schools and in varying places throughout the world, Thomas has not always received the support and respect for her career that she deserves.

"I've been in a position where dance is seen as secondary, or what we're doing is not as important, but here I do feel valued," Thomas said. "The support that is given throughout the District and within the building is an immense benefit."

A new dance teacher at UCHS is not the only change to the dance program within The School District of University City. This year marks the first year of the middle school dance program, giving Brittany Woods Middle School's students the opportunity to develop their skills and creativity.

"I think it's a great opportunity to foster our program here at the high school...to really feed and nurture these young artists and get them prepared for a life in the performing arts," Thomas said.

The passion that Thomas possesses for dance, in addition to her determination to validate the art of dance, will contribute to building a successful program for the future.

"This is a career for some people and it's just as important as any other career," Thomas concluded.



While performing in her beginners to dance to a song by Scott Joplin, junior Makayla Clark looks out at the crowd. "My favorite part of Kinesis is the costumes," Clark said.

First year University City High School dance teacher, Nicole Thomas, comes to the high school with a strong background.

"I feel like she has a lot of connections and experience," Clark added.



Intermediate Dance class students senior Denise Washington along with sophomores Shadonna Robinson and Essence Green perform an Afro-Caribbean dance. "I like the technicality of the dance," Washington said. "It was a very intricate dance and it was hard to learn."



As a student in Dance 1 and 2, senior Dawnyee Carter performs a tap dance during the Kinesis concert. "Tap is my favorite part of Kinesis, and [our teacher Nicole Thomas] is showing us a lot of different things."



In a pop-style dance, senior Camryn Rogers takes center stage doing the splits to the song "Baby I'm a Star." "It was a really hard dance to learn in such a little time," Rogers said.

STORY BY UCHS JUNIOR GRACE KLEIN ~ PHOTOS BY UCHS SENIOR SIERRA TYLER



Brittany Woods students Ciara Roddy, Chloe Lovely, Anna Herron, Annalise Forester and Jamiya Miller take a bow at the end of the December 2018 Kinesis concert at University City High School.

Special thanks to UCHS Journalism teacher Mary Williams and her student staff for their hard work on this center spread.

(Right) Stefani Hudson, Ericka Campbell, Lamiyah Martin and Sieanna Ball take a Lateral T pose in their seventh-grade dance class at Brittany Woods Middle School. "I joined dance because of how fun it is, and the way the dances are critiqued," Hudson said.



Camryn Thomas warms up with her classmates Sieanna Ball, Lamiyah Martin, and Lacey Spearman before practicing a new dance.



Brittany Woods adds dance program to curriculum

A favorite quote of Ashreale McDowell, dance teacher at Brittany Woods Middle School, is by Phylicia Rashad: "Before a child talks, they sing. Before they write, they draw. As soon as they stand, they dance. Art is fundamental to human expression."

It would seem the families at Brittany Woods agree. After many years of gentle pressure from the community and a lot of support from Heidi Morgan, former dance teacher at University City High School, Brittany Woods has a full curriculum of dance classes this year. McDowell is eager to help students expand and discover their dance abilities.

"I want my students to be able to create art and their own personal expression and voice through dance," McDowell said.

Before teaching at Brittany Woods, McDowell was the mind and movement leader at The Biome, a charter school in St. Louis. She continues to work as a core dancer and choreographer for Consuming Kinetics Dance Company, where she is the assistant artistic and executive director.

When McDowell heard about the opportunity to teach at the middle school, she said she wasn't extremely interested, but as she thought about it, she realized it was the best way for her to teach young people how to express themselves through movement and impart her wealth of dance knowledge.

"I really like sharing my art form with others, especially youth, but my goal is to inspire them to be creative in a different art form or just a new way," she said. "I want my students to know that you can make a career out of doing what you love, and that the arts are just as important as being a doctor, lawyer, etc."

As the new school year began, the Brittany Woods community came together to support McDowell.

"They made sure that I had everything I needed," she said. "Any concerns that I had, I was able to express, and the community was on

board to help."

Several parents expressed enthusiasm for the middle school dance program.

"My first semester, a lot of parents were happy that they had the option of dance here because some of them went to U. City High School and they were a part of Kinesis," McDowell said.

Some students are taking dance for the first time. A few seventh-grade dance students were nervous about being able to keep the pace, along with the new techniques, but were pleasantly surprised after they joined.

Seventh-grade dancer Stefani Hudson had never taken dance before, but when she heard about the program, she knew it would be a great opportunity to meet people and discover something she now is passionate about.

"My favorite part is that the program helps students be active and social," Hudson said.

Other dance students, such as seventh-grade dancer Lamiyah Martin, who has been dancing since she was three years old, have improved their abilities and become stronger in the routines.

"(McDowell) is patient with you no matter how bad you may be. She's there to help and support you," Martin said. "Dance has helped me not only be fit physically but emotionally, too."

McDowell has seen improvement in all her dance students. "In just this short amount of time, I have definitely noticed growth," she said. "I am excited to see where they will be by the end of the year. I have no doubt that our concert in the spring will be just as amazing as our past winter concert."

In addition to the Brittany Woods dance concerts, eighth-grade students were given the opportunity to perform during the winter Kinesis concert at University City High School.

"They're really stepping out of the box, and it can be exciting and it can be a little bit uncomfortable, but they're trying and that's all I ask," McDowell said.

STORY BY UCHS JUNIOR ISABEL BLUMENHORST ~ PHOTOS BY UCHS JUNIORS ELIOT FULLER & GRACE KLEIN
DESIGN BY UCHS SENIOR LINSEY SPARKS

District Holds 33rd Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration

On Jan. 17, University City High School hosted “I’ll Make the Difference,” the 33rd annual University City Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration. The program featured keynote speaker Mary Beth Tinker, UCHS Class of 1970. The Rev. Dr. E. G. Shields Jr., UCHS Class of 1985, was awarded University City Board of Education’s MLK Spirit Award. A variety of students also performed. A brief reception followed the program. Student artwork remained on display in the UCHS Student Arts Center through February. For more details, visit www.ucityschools.org/MLK2019.

Tinker Tour Stops in U. City From page 1



Social activist Mary Beth Tinker (UCHS Class of 1970) returned to her alma mater to share her experiences before, during and after a landmark 1969 Supreme Court decision that ruled students’ first-amendment rights do not end at the school house doors.

“She talked a little bit about her life here, and they thought it was cool that someone like them had become such an important figure in recent history,” Williams added. “The authenticity of it all was wonderful.” Tinker’s message was powerful as well, Williams said. Tinker used her experience to encourage the students to be similar agents of change. “To learn about someone who was so young, so close to our age who had that type of impact, it was really kind of inspiring,” junior Isabel Blumenhorst said. “When (Tinker) speaks to students, she asks them about their lives - their issues and what is going on. She tries to get them to come up with solutions about how to positively address things,” Williams said. “She wants students to empower themselves to make a difference like she did.”

“She wanted them to understand that no matter how young you are, you have a voice that matters.”
Cate Pautsch
Brittany Woods Middle School
Dean of Students

Tinker served as the keynote speaker for University City’s annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration on the evening of Jan. 17, and the next day she visited with students in the eighth-grade social studies classes at Brittany Woods Middle School. Cate Pautsch, BWMS dean of students and instruction, said the students were able to relate to Tinker, who was just 13 when she wore the armband to school. “She’s clearly very passionate about the work that she’s done, and she’s very passionate about making that connection with the students, inspiring them to take a stand and use their own voice,” Pautsch said. “She was a middle school student when it all began, just like they are, and she wanted them to understand that no matter how young you are, you have a voice that matters, and you can take a stand and make an impact. We have a great group of eighth graders who are recognizing their voice in this world and are excited about using their voice to make changes in the community, and it was very valuable for them to hear from such an historic person who was once like them.” Pautsch said Tinker’s visit was equally valuable for the adults, too. “It was just as exciting for our staff and our school administration to have her here as it was for students,” Pautsch said. “She stayed after to talk with the teachers and share different resources she had for empowering student voices within our school. So it was a great day.”

Shields Named 2019 Spirit Awardee



The Rev. Dr. E. G. Shields Jr. was presented the 2019 the University City Board of Education’s Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Spirit Award during the Jan. 17 celebration. This UCHS Class of 1985 alumnus served on the District’s Board of Education. He is a pastor and social activist with more than two decades of community service. Shields was nominated for his involvement in the fight for equal rights, which includes advocating on behalf of racial equality for all at the state capital. The MLK Spirit Award Selection Committee included Board President Joanne Soudah (far left), Vice President Kristine Hendrix (center left) and Director Tracy Gritsenko (far right). Also pictured are Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley (center right) and Shields (center).



University City High School students explored digital art using Microsoft applications during a workshop at the St. Louis Galleria store.

Microsoft Hosts MLK Workshop

University City High School alumnae Arika Parr, Class of 1997, helped several current UCHS Lions get a taste of life as a professional in digital arts while also exploring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Parr, a community development specialist with Microsoft, hosted several student artists from Todd Yancy’s Graphic Arts and Studio Art classes in a workshop at the Microsoft store in the St. Louis Galleria. The students learned how to create digital art using Microsoft applications FreshPaint and Paint 3D. After listening to Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech, they expressed their thoughts in the form of digital art. “Students came up with an idea that reflects Dr. King’s vision and then illustrated their idea,” Parr said. “Year after year, students create inspired pieces that reflect their feelings and pay homage to one of our great civil rights leaders.” This was the second consecutive year that Yancy coordinated this opportunity for UCHS students. “One of our objectives is to prepare our students to be career ready,” Yancy said. “With this MLK workshop, we expose the students to the types of things they may encounter at the next level.” On Jan. 21, the students brought their parents to the Microsoft store for a reception where they presented their artwork and explained to the audience the motivations for their illustrations. Each student also received a \$100 Galleria gift card courtesy of Microsoft. “We try to provide a quality education and make sure the students are ready to be competitive when they leave University City,” Yancy said.



Virtual Instruction is Launched

In anticipation of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s new policy for virtual instruction by fall 2019, The School District of University City piloted “Launch” this past summer. Currently, more than 70 University City middle school and high school students are enrolled in Launch. “Launch provides students with significant online options to personalize their course selection,” said Ian Buchanan, assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. “Taught by certified Missouri teachers, students learn at their own pace. Thanks to the coordination of Bob Dillon, high school students who enroll can garner school credits through this virtual academy.” Launch is provided free of charge to students enrolled in the District. It is also available for a fee through the District for students who do not attend the District. For more information, including course offerings and enrollment process, visit www.ucityschools.org/Launch.

A Mindset Shift that Will Help the School District Fulfill Its Vision

The School District of University City knows that the responsibility for putting its students on the right path doesn’t end when they are handed their diploma. “The whole goal of high school education is that students are successful in their post-secondary pursuits,” said Susan Hill, director of Prek-12 college and career readiness and access. That is an important shift compared to years past, she said. “At one time, it was considered a success if a student graduated from high school and was admitted to college,” Hill said. “Now we believe it is our duty to ensure students get to and through their post-secondary education and are career ready.”

The District’s new vision ensures all students graduate college and career ready regardless of whether they plan to go to college. That’s part of what helps set U. City Schools apart from other districts. “It’s a mindset shift,” Hill said. “We accept our responsibility. We also want to make sure that students know all of their options, and are matched with high-demand careers, and go on to live fulfilling lives.” “The contemporary workforce is changing and education needs to respond to that,” she said. “Five years ago, no one would have dreamed of going after a high-paying job without a bachelor’s degree, but a lot of employers and major corporations are frustrated with the lack of skills and talent in their hiring pool. They’re placing more value on mindset, skills, certifications...and there are so many other options for young adults to get certificates and credentials that will secure well-paying jobs without a college degree.” Over the past few years, the District has added new programs and courses to propel students toward postsecondary success. The Early College program allows University City High School students to earn an associate’s degree in General Studies while simultaneously earning their high school diploma. The first cohort of students will walk across the graduation stage with both degrees in May of 2020. (See story in Sept. 2018 PRIDE available at www.ucityschools.org/PRIDE.) At UCHS, students can take advantage of expanded dual credit and dual enrollment opportunities on the high school campus, thanks to the

Sophomore Wins at The Big Pitch

Aspiring business owners from University City High School’s Entrepreneurs class competed at The Big Pitch on January 23, 2019, coordinated by David German, UCHS mathematics and entrepreneurial teacher. UCHS sophomore Areanna Whittington placed second in the evening’s competition and won \$500 for her unique jewelry company, Arey’s Creations. Whittington makes one-of-a-kind earrings, necklaces, chokers, bracelets and handmade soaps. “These types of competitions are a great way for students to win capital for their business, but more importantly, for them to gain valuable experience speaking in front of people in a persuasive way,” German said. The Big Pitch event was co-sponsored by Black Entrepreneurs, Inc., which donated \$1,500 in prize money, and hosted by Regions Bank. In addition to University City, students from Clayton, Jennings, Ladue, and Normandy high schools also competed at The Big Pitch. Local educators and business professionals mentor German’s students throughout the school year. Students learn first-hand tips for growing a successful business. Community members interested in sharing their expertise may contact German at dgerman@ucityschools.org. For more information about all the UCHS student-entrepreneurs and their business models, visit www.ucityschools.org/entrepreneurs.



Areanna Whittington is congratulated by her teacher, David German, for being a 2019 winner of The Big Pitch.

“The District’s vision is that we graduate students who are both college and career ready.”

Susan Hill
Director of Prek-12 College and Career
Readiness and Access

advanced degrees of highly qualified teachers who have the credentials to serve as both high school teachers and adjunct professors. Partnerships also promote college and career readiness. For example, NAF has been working with high school leadership to launch career academies in engineering and health science. (See story in Sept. 2018 PRIDE.) Current eighth- and ninth-grade students can become members of these academies through the course selection process for the next school year. New and updated career and technical education programs have also expanded student experiences to address the rapidly changing world of work. The Entrepreneurship education program, led by UCHS teacher David German, has already established a presence. Visit www.ucityschools.org/Entrepreneurs for more details. (See The Big Pitch story on this page.) “Our work is far from finished,” Hill said. “We continue to develop career pathways and are looking at ways we can ensure all students graduate with both a high school diploma and college credit and/or an industry-recognized credential or certificate. Giving students real-world, post-secondary experiences while they are still in high school is the best way we can ensure all students are ready for the next step whatever path that may be.”



News from Centennial Commons

The 2019 Heman Park Swimming Pool season begins Saturday, May 25. Avoid the long lines and stop by Centennial Commons, 7210 Olive Blvd., to renew your season pass TODAY! It's quick and will assure you won't have to miss a minute of swimming on opening day or throughout the season. Questions: contact Centennial Commons at 314.505.8625 or Relay Missouri at 800.735.2966 (TDD).

DID YOU KNOW? Centennial Commons is a participating Weight Watchers facility. Meetings are scheduled Mondays from 6 - 8 p.m. For more information, contact Weight Watchers or go to weightwatchers.com.

Open Gym Pickleball is available – Seasonal Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays – 5 – 6:30 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays – 1 – 3:30 p.m. and Sundays – 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. It is free for members, daily admission and ID card is required for all others or there is a 10 visit punch card available for \$20. For more information, inquire at our Centennial Commons control desk.

The Natatorium lap swimming is available now until Friday, May 24, 2019. The lap swimming schedule is as follows: Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays – 6 – 8 a.m. and Tuesdays and Thursdays – 7 – 9 a.m.



No Cost Memberships for Seniors – Centennial Commons is both a SilverSneakers® and RenewActive® participating fitness facility! Both programs, RenewActive® and SilverSneakers® are designed specifically to help seniors achieve better health through regular exercise and health education. Please contact your health plan to see if you qualify. SilverSneakers® Members – sign up TODAY for our FREE SilverSneakers® Fitness Classes! For more information, stop by Centennial Commons, 7210 Olive Blvd., or call 314.505.8625 or Relay Missouri 800.735.2966 (TDD).

UNIVERSITY CITY CELEBRATES THE “State of the City” Thursday, March 7



The Historical Society of University City invites you to come to City Hall for the celebration of the 150th birthday of city founder E.G. Lewis along with the “State of the City.” Join us in the historic Council Chambers where Mayor Terry Crow and City Manager Gregory Rose will give a full account of where University City stands, including opportunities and challenges. They will answer questions from the audience, as time allows. The program is at 7 p.m. Thursday, March 7, in the Council Chambers on the fifth floor of City Hall, 6801 Delmar Blvd. Refreshments will be served after the program, including a birthday cake honoring E.G. Lewis, who was born March 4, 1869. The event is free and open to the public.



Terry Crow was a member of the City Council representing the First Ward for ten years before being elected Mayor in 2018. He is a partner in the law firm of Crow Takacs LLC. Formerly CEO of Edward Jones Trust Company and Guaranty Trust Company of Missouri, he earned his law degree from the University of Missouri – Columbia.

Gregory Rose took over the job of city manager at the end of December, 2017. The City Council voted unanimously to choose him after a nationwide search. He has worked in University City before, as assistant city manager from 1997 to 2001. A native of Texas, he is an Air Force veteran and holds degrees in public affairs and public administration from the University of Texas at Dallas. He was city manager of Maricopa, Arizona before returning to University City.



News from Centennial Commons

University City – Recreation Division is now hiring for Part-time and Summer Seasonal Positions. Interested applicants should submit an application to Centennial Commons, 7210 Olive Blvd., University City, MO 63130. You may download the application at ucitymo.org or pick one up at Centennial Commons.

Another Summer of Fun!

Children will have a blast at the city's Summer Camp and Teen Activities Programs, which include swimming, tennis, field trips, arts and crafts and more! The programs will run for eight weeks (June 3 – July 26) at Centennial Commons, 7210 Olive Blvd. See below for fees.

Register now for the following programs:

Camp B4 and After: A before (7:30 a.m. – 9 a.m.) and after (3 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.) camp program available. Breakfast and afternoon snack provided, an additional fee applies.

FEE SCHEDULE

Summer Camp Program - entering 1st - 6th grades			
Fee Per Child – 1 week		Fee Per Child – 8 Weeks	
Resident \$60.00	Nonresident \$80.00	Resident \$460.00	Nonresident \$600.00
Teen Activities Program - entering 7th - 8th grades			
Fee Per Child – 1 Week		Fee Per Child – 8 Weeks	
Resident \$70.00	Nonresident \$92.00	Resident \$540.00	Nonresident \$700.00
Camp B4 and After - entering 1st - 8th grades			
Fee Per Child – 1 Week		Fee Per Child – 8 Weeks	
Resident \$48.00	Nonresident \$62.00	Resident \$360.00	Nonresident \$460.00
Camp B4 OR After - entering 1st - 8th grades			
Fee Per Child – 1 Week		Fee Per Child – 8 Weeks	
Resident \$24.00	Nonresident \$31.00	Resident \$180.00	Nonresident \$230.00

Positions include:

Part-time:

Control Desk Associate
Building Monitor
Fitness Attendant

Seasonal:

Summer Camp Counselors
Heman Pool Cashiers
Heman Pool Concessions
Lifeguards
Lifeguard Managers

PLEASE NOTE: SUMMER CAMP REGISTRATION WILL END WHEN EITHER CAMP IS FULL OR FRIDAY, MAY 17TH AT 5 P.M. – WHICHEVER COMES FIRST!

Remember: Summer Camp scholarships are available for University City residents who meet income guideline requirements and Parkview Gardens Neighborhood Association provides scholarships for those children who live within their residential boundaries. Note: All scholarship requests and paperwork must be received by or before 5 p.m. Friday, May 3.



U. City Retired Educators Invite Their Former Colleagues to Lunch

The next date for the University City Retired Educators luncheon is Tuesday, May 14, 2019, at 12:00 noon. It will be held at The Pasta House Company - Party Room, 8213 Delmar Blvd. in University City.

“It is a way to reconnect while supporting one of our local businesses,” said Joanne Soudah, retired U. City kindergarten teacher and current president of the University City Board of Education. “All retired U. City educators from preschool through high school are invited for a purely social time.”

“Those who have attended past lunches with this group, state how fun it is to re-connect with old friends and acquaintances over a good meal,” Soudah said. “And I would add - ‘and not to have to rush off to recess duty!’”

The \$16 per person meal includes the buffet luncheon with Sicilian grilled

pesce, chicken flamingo, pasta with red sauce, steamed broccoli, Pasta House Company's special salad and baby loaves of bread. Tax and gratuity are included.

Soudah also states the following disclaimer on her email invites: “The group is open to all interested retirees or past employees of The School District of University City. We are not currently sponsored by or affiliated with the school district, but may choose as a group to affiliate at a future date.”

A special thanks to another retired Flynn Park teacher, Donna McWilliams, who supported Soudah in organizing the group. For more information regarding this retirees' luncheon, or to be added to the email list, contact Soudah at ucityretirededucators@gmail.com.

Annual “Safe at School - Safe At Home” Event Seeks Community Support

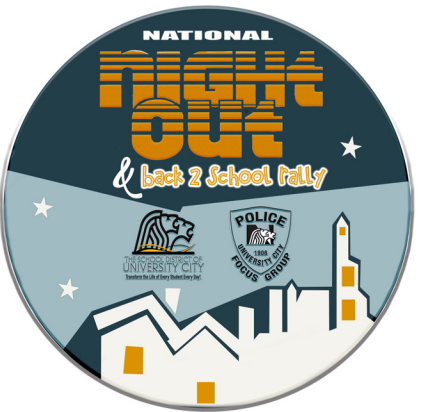
The University City community is invited to University City's seventh annual National Night Out and Back-to-School Rally on Tuesday, Aug. 6, 2019, in a new location at Centennial Commons in Heman Park, 7210 Olive Blvd. 63130.

Help kick off the new school year, increase neighborhood spirit and strengthen community/police partnerships at this annual event co-sponsored by the University City Police Department and The School District of University City. The event's theme is Safe at School - Safe at Home!

Last year's free activities included a live DJ and other

entertainment, food and beverages, hair cuts and styling, immunizations, enrollment help, backpack and school supply giveaways and more.

This year's planning committee is seeking community support including sponsorships, donations, booths and volunteers. More details including links to this year's registration forms are available at www.ucityschools.org/NNOBTSR; or contact the District's Communications Office at (314) 290-4001 or communications@ucityschools.org.



Summer Learning Academy Begins June 3

The School District of University City offers the 2019 Summer Learning Academy (SLA) for students who will be in first- through twelfth-grades in the 2019-20 school year with varied criteria for enrollment. The 2019 SLA runs Monday-Thursday beginning Monday, June 3 and concludes on Thursday, June 27. Students will attend the SLA site for their 2019-20 grade level.

“Our District's Summer Learning Academy is a great way for students to engage in instruction based on their personal needs to ensure their readiness for success in the following school year,” said Elizabeth Gardner, director of instruction. “If you are looking for summer experiences for students beyond summer school, we have partnered with numerous local organizations to offer enrichment opportunities.” More information is available at www.ucityschools.org/UCHSSummer2018.

Parent notifications began during spring Parent/Teacher Conferences. The pre-registration deadline is May 4, 2019. For more information, visit www.ucityschools.org/ SLA. Printed copies of any SLA form is available through the District's office of curriculum and instruction. Call (314) 290-4020 for any questions or to request printed copies.



All-District U City Strings

Spring concert
for students in grades 4-12
and including guest performers

**Tuesday
April 16, 2019
6:30 p.m.
University City
High School**

Ed Crenshaw Gymnasium
7401 Balson Avenue (63130)

Free & open to the public!

The School District of University City presents

ALL MUSIC ALL PEOPLE

featuring
Flynn Park and Pershing Elementary Schools,
Brittany Woods Sixth Grade Orchestra,
University City High School Concert and Jazz Bands
(Other schools and groups will be featured next year.)

**Music in Our Schools
Celebration Concert**

Wednesday, **March 27, 2019 - 6:30 p.m.**

University City High School
Charles A. Banks Auditorium
7401 Balson Avenue 63130

na me

Dated Material. Distribute as soon as possible.

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT of UNIVERSITY CITY

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ECRWSS

Summer Showcase Spotlights Jobs, Camps and More

Looking for summer activities for K-12 University City students, including full/part-time jobs, internships, camps or other programs?

Invite your neighbors, friends and families for The School District of University City's "Showcase of Summer Camps, Summer Jobs & Careers in the Trades" on Saturday, March 9, 2019, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at University City High School, 7401 Balson Avenue, University City, Mo. 63130.

This event will host representatives from District partners including, but not limited to, corporations and nonprofit agencies. They will share current openings for full/part-time employment and internship opportunities specifically for high school students. Colleges, universities, nonprofit and community organizations will share information about their summer camps and summer programs for K-12 students.

“We hope that students and families will accept our invitation to join us as we work to support our community and empower our students, families and neighbors,” said Kimberly Merrill, UCHS guidance counselor and event co-coordinator.

More details, including booth registration, are available at www.ucityschools.org/Summer2019Showcase. For more information, contact Kimberly Merrill at (314) 290-4093 or kimmerrill@ucityschools.org.



invites you to attend the annual

Honorees & Retirees

Thursday, May 9, 2019
7 p.m.

Jackson Park Elementary School
7400 Balson Ave. 63130

Paying special tribute to:

Our Distinguished Retirees
PACEsetter & Superintendent's Choice Awardees

Announcing 2018-19:

Teacher and Educational Support Person of the Year

Free and Open to the Public

Watch for details to come at

www.ucityschools.org/H&R2019

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Kristine Hendrix, Vice President	CarolAnn Cole, <i>Communications Specialist</i>
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The School District of University City
Sharonica L. Hardin-Bartley, Ph.D., PHR
Superintendent of Schools
CarolAnn Cole, Communications Specialist
Curtis Convears, Communications Specialist

314-290-4000
ucityschools.org

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Attention ALL U. City families with K-12 school-age children:

Looking for summer activities including full/part-time jobs, internships, camps or other programs?

**Saturday,
March 9, 2019**

10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

University City High School
7401 Balson Ave. (63130)

For more information, visit www.uctvschools.org/Summer2019Showcase.



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School Board Election Issue