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# I. Academic Affairs Overview 2020-21



If 2020 taught us anything, it is that we can overcome many challenges, if only we are brave enough to embrace them. As we navigated our ever-evolving world, the faculty, staff and students at St. Louis Community College-Florissant Valley never stopped looking for opportunity in the adversity.

Through our food distribution and vaccination partnerships, the Flo Valley Family dedicated itself to making our community a safer, healthier place to live. Our campus served as the first dedicated mass vaccination site in St. Louis County and helped ensure that 26,597 vaccinations were administered between February and May. Through partnerships with the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis, we hosted several food-distribution events and provided food to thousands of our neighbors in the North St. Louis County community. Of course, our dedication did not stop there:



Dr. Elizabeth Gassel Perkins

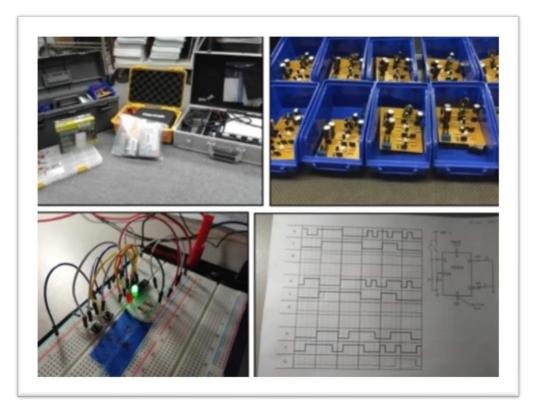
- Because we have one of the largest venues for events in North St. Louis County, we
  hosted North County Incorporated's Annual Leadership Awards in a very safe and
  socially-distanced manner. Thanks to the great work of our theatre and IT/media staff,
  the event was also broadcast throughout the community.
- Bob Langnas, art professor, judged the "Drawing Attention II" competitive art exhibition at Framations Custom Framing and Art Gallery in St. Charles, Mo. The show, which focused on drawing, ran March 5 through April 8.
- Mark Taylor, professor of teacher education, was elected board chair of North County Christian School.
- Kelly Mueller, professor of Spanish, empowered her students to use what they learned during the semester to create electronic greeting cards in Spanish for patients at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.
- Julia Jenner, professor of graphic communications, continued her work as an advisory board member to Special School District of St. Louis County.
- The Deaf Communications Studies program developed discussions between four interpreter education programs – including STLCC – to draft suggested guidelines for the Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to consider regarding current interpreting students completing their practicum and internship requirements remotely. Professor of Deaf Communication Eric Driskill, who spearheaded the work for STLCC, presented the report in Jefferson City on October 15.
- LaRhonda Wilson, associate professor of sociology, served on a panel for Tulsa Community College's Common Book program.
- The Graphic Communications program's Motion Media Design class participated in the "Evolve Project," a social justice organization looking to improve awareness about

equitable food systems, and an STLCC website project, "Valiant Women of the Vote: A Virtual Art Exhibition."

 Barbara Wachal, associate professor of English, volunteered as an external faculty advisor to an informal group of stakeholders from the History, Political Science and Communications programs at the University of Illinois Springfield. She helped these young scholars hone their writing and critical-thinking skills in preparation for internships or jobs in local, county and state offices.

As the proverb goes, "Necessity is the mother of invention." While we had to make changes in order to sustain basic functions, the campus's constituents did much more than maintain. The ingenuity and the care of our faculty and staff enabled students to meet and exceed their educational and engagement goals. Below are some significant innovations completed this year:

The engineering department partnered with the library and others to use federal funding
to provide Electronics Technology at-Home Kits to students. This project was selected
as the district and campus Innovation of the Year winner, as it allowed students to
continue important hands-on learning remotely, all while maintaining safety protocols.



Electronics Technology at-Home Kits

• The Dual Credit/Enrollment Partnerships (DC/EP) team streamlined and transitioned many of our systems and processes from paper to digital, most notably transitioning our dual credit registration system to a fully online process. Though the original plan was to pilot this process for the fall semester, the system had to launch due to COVID-19 protocols. The online system resulted in improved compliance and communication.

The campus continued to host our own events, though many of them virtually, and reached an even larger audience than in previous years. For instance, our Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. celebration received more than 600 views on YouTube, which is more than three times the number of individuals who are usually in attendance for our in-person event. Professor Sharon North's Underwood Memorial Lecture was presented virtually to more than 200 viewers.

Though we certainly prefer these events to be in person, we have demonstrated the capability to reach more faculty, staff, students and community members. This was all made possible, in part, because we had to find new ways to keep these important Flo Valley traditions alive during uncertain times. We truly ascribed to the adage of "the show must go on," and as such, we were able to host the following events virtually:

- The Center for Plant and Life Sciences continued to operate in person, as well, though they, too, offered a number of events, partnerships and learning experiences virtually. All outreach events were conducted virtually for the first few months of the pandemic, and when the opportunity for summer experiences opened up in person, the capacity was reached quickly. The demand for these in-person experiences was so great that additional offerings were added.
- Amy Brown-Marshall, associate professor of communications, assembled the annual
  communications department Student Speakers' Showcase in the spring that highlighted
  three of the brightest speakers from oral communications and public speaking classes.
  The students, who were chosen by their professors and classmates, gave informative
  speeches on how they survived going to school during the coronavirus pandemic, a
  topic selected by the students themselves.
- DC/EP hosted their dual credit faculty orientation via Zoom, which significantly increased the participation from STLCC employees and dual credit faculty.
- Linda Collins, professor of history, moderated a discussion of the film "Selma" for the Racial Justice Film Series.
- Howard Rosenthal, professor of human services, delivered virtual lectures to the entire campus, including: "How to Make Straight A's in 30 Days."
- The music department provided three full-length string/percussion orchestra concerts: one in the fall and two in the spring. The orchestra, directed by Ivy Allen, consists of multiple community members and students. An addition to this year's orchestra was Paul Higdon, professor of music, who supplied many of the woodwind and brass on the piano in addition to his performing a Mozart piano concerto. The brass and woodwind instruments were removed from the orchestra due to COVID-19 safety protocols.
- The Child Development Laboratory Center organized a virtual literacy event that included a guest reading of the book written by one of our student's siblings and her father, an educational piece from Ready Readers and classroom-specific activity breakout sessions.
- Dan Betzler, professor of deaf communication, Marie McCool, theatre manager, and Bryant "T" Williamson, assistant technical director of theatre, rehearsed virtually and streamed two full length theatre productions that followed COVID-19 guidelines.

• The Florissant Valley Art galleries produced several exhibitions on campus with limited viewing. They also produced two virtual exhibitions including the Annual High School Art Exhibition and the Art Department Student Exhibition.

Throughout the 2020-21 academic year, there was no such thing as "business as usual," though we did try exceedingly hard to maintain many of the traditional experiences for our students. Some of the ways that we worked to provide these learning experiences included:

- The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics division delivered the vital, inperson precision machining program curriculum to students throughout the pandemic.
  Modifications were accomplished for safety, while maintaining a safe and positive
  learning environment. This program was one of the first to return to campus because of
  its required hands-on work.
- The Child and Family Development (CFD) program instituted a virtual oral portfolio
  defense. Students were coached to create electronic portfolios, allowing students to
  share their documents among faculty and community assessors, who used electronic
  documents to provide feedback and critique their accomplishments.
- The science lab curriculum was modified to focus the lab schedule on critical learning objectives requiring face-to-face instruction. Online exercises were incorporated, and face-to-face lab time was reserved for high need/high impact objectives.

In addition to the excellent consideration provided by each faculty and staff member with each student engagement, dedicated support and programs were created to provide additional care. Of course, this enhanced care extended to our faculty and staff from our leadership, as well:

- Katy Gordon, professor of English, assembled pandemic-specific resources that included online learning articles, pandemic-support articles and information about College-specific resources in online learning, academic support and counseling.
- Despite the pandemic, the Liberal Arts division was able to continue to use various tools to engage faculty and staff in the division and keep the lines of communication open. The division produced a biweekly e-newsletter to keep stakeholders informed. The dean also held virtual brown bag lunches, staff meetings and training sessions.
- The Child and Family Development program held a virtual advising night during priority registration week to help students choose courses for the summer and fall 2021 semesters. Students met individually with faculty to review plans and interactive schedule course offerings.
- KCFV radio created and broadcasted content with the cooperation of the counseling department and the Student Assistance Program, to help get the word out about ways students could still access services even if they were fully or partially remote.
- Marie McCool and Bryant "T" Williamson participated in more than 50 training sessions
  presented by theatre professionals, safety experts and college personnel to continue to
  operate to operate under strict conditions.

 Neko Pilarcik-Tellez, assistant professor of graphic communications, interned at Augenblick Studios in Brooklyn, New York (virtually) in the summer of 2021. She worked on an animated pilot the studio is developing for PBS Kids.



Neko Pilarcik-Tellez lent a hand on "Teenage Euthanasia" an animated comedy series.

This work culminated in the same level of excellence that we always see from our campus and St. Louis Community College. Many of our faculty, staff and students were recipients of local, regional and national awards and recognition. Our students won scholarships to support the continuation of their studies, and our faculty were recognized for their talents and leadership.

Of course, the greatest celebration of achievement occurred during our College's first drive-through commencement ceremonies. Florissant Valley celebrated by hosting a drive-through ceremony for more than 100 student participants, and at the same time, the nursing students attended a walk-up pinning ceremony on the other side of the theatre. This elaborate event was made possible by the exhaustive work of many at the College, though it was spearheaded on our campus by Shanda Walker, my administrative assistant, and livestreamed by our IT/media staff to more than 1,600 viewers on YouTube.

Although we look forward to a new day when we can be together and return to something resembling normal, I take great pride knowing that the Florissant Valley family will continue to work to empower students, expand minds and change lives.

Respectfully yours,

Dr. Elizabeth Gassel Perkins

Campus President and Chief Academic Officer

St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley



# II. Highlights 2020-21

St. Louis Community College

- Access renewed efforts to update
   Blackboard organization shells. Updates
   included enabling student access to their
   Instructor Notification forms virtually, a
   variety of virtual student training sessions
   and events, and updated Blackboard
   informational content.
- Access provided federal work study opportunities to three students. Two students used access office services and were also employees.
- Access featured "Ask a Work Study Student" on Blackboard during the fall semester.





Ask a Work Study Student

- Access began a partnership in fall 2019 with Starkloff's AccessU program, which
  is specifically designed to work with all students who have disabilities and are
  participating in postsecondary education in the St. Louis region. Events for 202021 included:
  - Collaboration on "Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution" film discussion.
  - Training for Workforce Solutions Group programs.
  - Disability awareness sessions.



Archers received an opportunity to think about and discuss equality for teens with disabilities.

## **CAMPUS LIFE**

- Developed the districtwide campus life framework during summer 2020.
   Campus life managers and Keith Robinder, Ph.D., vice president of student support programs at STLCC-Wildwood, developed the structure that focuses on providing student engagement and success opportunities, and allows districtwide efforts, collaborations and unity in our programming.
- Hosted the Strive for Five Leadership Development Series during the spring 2021 semester. We provided five workshops to students to learn about their "talents/strengths" and how to use them in all aspects of their lives, especially in



leadership. We had 86 nominations from faculty and staff, and 68 students showed interest in participating.

STLCC Campus Life partnered with Strengths University to host a five-session leadership series based on the CliftonStrengths.

- Hosted 96 virtual events throughout the year. We collaborated with the student
  assistance program, TRIO, library, academic success and tutoring, and various
  faculty and staff to bring robust programming virtually. Some highlights of our
  events included the Racial Justice Film Series, Culinary Therapy (sponsored by
  SAP and the student government association), Wellness Wednesdays, Spoke
  Words by Joan Lyric Leslie, virtual games (escape room, bingo, trivia, etc.), ZuZu
  African Acrobats, and True Black History Museum.
- Florissant Valley's campus life and SGA collaborated with the student assistance program on various activities. We sent out multiple care packages to students who tested positive for COVID-19. Those packages were well received by students who were in isolation, and they felt the College showed care and concern for their well-being. We also sent 25 gingerbread house kits during December 2020 and 50 finals wellness care packages in May 2021.



Archers participated in enriching virtual events including Spoke Words by Joan Lyric Leslie.

## **DUAL CREDIT/ENROLLMENT PARTNERSHIP**

The dual credit/enrollment partnership team experienced a year of growth and improvement. We not only expanded our program offerings, but also expanded our team and increased our total credit hour count. We also streamlined and transitioned many of our systems and

processes from paper to digital, most notably transitioning our dual credit registration system from spreadsheets to a fully online process.

- Launched "Make It Count", a new dual enrollment program for second-semester high school seniors.
- Created a new online dual credit registration system that allowed us to improve and streamline registration support for dual credit students.
- Increased the number of approved, vetted dual credit instructors by 19% for fall 2020, allowing us to increase dual credit offerings by 16% in the fall.
- Increased the number of generated dual credit credit hours by 17% when comparing fall 2019 to fall 2020.
- Hired a new dual credit/enrollment partnerships district manager and a new Wildwood coordinator, which expanded the size of the team and improved our ability to support and grow district partnerships.

## MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The marketing and communications department built the trust internal and external audiences placed in Florissant Valley in the following ways:

- Secured positive television, radio and print news stories that highlighted STLCC-Florissant Valley students, employees and program offerings. From announcing opportunities with the article, "STLCC Program Aims to Inspire Black Males in Spite of Obstacles," to shining a spotlight on community service efforts with the article, "Love for Others Pushes Estes to Organize Blood Drive Planned Feb. 23" to celebrating college traditions with the article, "Wilson Named Recipient of 46th David L. Underwood Memorial Lecture Award," MAC ensured Florissant Valley's contributions were recognized and included in marketplace discussions.
- Placed ads valued at more than \$10,000 in local newspapers, including the Community News, Ferguson News Group, Independent News, and St. Louis American to promote Florissant Valley's educational offerings and events.
- Wrote the nomination responsible for securing North County Inc.'s Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Award for Florissant Valley.
- Perceived the need to shift the College's flagship program, the annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration, to a virtual format as early as July 2020 in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and as a result, created and distributed the OneDrive links and timeline for the submission of headshots and videos that enabled winners of the North County Churches United for Racial Harmony and Justice's Oratorical Contest to prerecord videos of themselves presenting their speeches. This material was included in the livestream program. MAC also drove the program's marketing that drew more than 660 viewers to the College's YouTube channel to hear the rousing speeches, sing inspirational music and watch as Christian

Hospital was honored virtually with the 2021 Dr. Rance Thomas Excellence in Community Partnership Award.



The 2021 Dr. Rance Thomas Excellence in Community Partnership Award winner and NCCU's Oratorical Contest Award winners.

Satisfied the Florissant Valley and NCCU's 2021 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration, African American History Month, Women's History Month and Underwood Memorial Lecture Award committees' – as well as numerous department's — requests for the creation of the annual report, programs, invitations, flyers, landing pages, videos and livestream links among other resources.



LaRhonda Wilson

## STUDENT AFFAIRS

- As an initiative for the employee and student engagement team, Deborah Carter, vice president of student affairs, and Mike Hudspeth, director of technology support services, headed a committee to select a health screening tool for the College and ultimately chose Healthfully. Carter and Hudspeth continued to work with Healthfully on the setup and implementation of the software for the College.
- Deborah Carter, Lynn Demirchian, coordinator of student enrollment; Angela Kang, manager of campus life; Danielle Lusk, coordinator of the student assistance program; and Renee Peeples, assistant to the vice president; served on the Florissant Valley/Wildwood student COVID response team. They followed up with students who were exposed to COVID-19 or tested positive for the virus following the College's protocols and used the Healthfully dashboard to assist with this effort.
- Amy Bird, manager of access services; Fran Hooker, manager of academic support services; Angela Kang, Danielle Lusk and Pam Wilson, associate professor of counseling; created a "STLCC Campus Care" survey/self-referral form in response to the pandemic. The team worked together to respond to the needs of students who completed the form.
- Deborah Carter co-presented with Anne Brackett, chief engagement officer, and Alicia Wojciuch, chief education officer at Strengths University, at the MCCA Annual Convention in November 2020. The title of their presentation was "Using Strengths Coaching to Maximize Your Team." Carter also gave a talk to software developers working for Healthfully in October 2020. She presented an overview of STLCC, the challenges and opportunities the pandemic brought STLCC, and how STLCC used the Healthfully app.
- Susan Watkins, student success advisor, and Danielle Lusk were chosen as the Florissant Valley winners of the League for Innovation Excellence Awards.

## STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

- Expanded services provided to students including designating, decorating or establishing:
  - A beach-themed relaxation room for students who need a quiet place to regulate their emotions or to use for prayer and/or meditation.
  - A clothing closet that provides professional wear to students who need clothing for college career fairs or interviews as well as provides casual wear to students and their families.

- A lactation lounge.
- A child/family friendly waiting room equip with children's books, toys and a children's table.
- Two student use offices equipped with a phone and computer with audio and visual capabilities that allow students to meet privately with a community agency or on-campus resource for in-person, phone or virtual meetings.
- Expanded Archers' Market services through a partnership with the St. Louis Area Foodbank and increased the size of the market.

## **TESTING CENTER**

- Achieved the National College Testing Association's Test Center Recertification
  after its original certification in 2015. Florissant Valley's Testing Center is the only
  center in the district that has earned this distinction. The center met all 11
  professional standards and guidelines of college testing.
- Provided in-person testing to more than 700 students after the COVID-19 closure beginning June 2020. This included placement testing, College-Level Examination Program Examination, Missouri General Education Assessment, high school equivalency certification testing and out-of-class testing.

## TRIO SS

- Offered 22 virtual programming opportunities outside of the program's normal services. Staff also participated in more than 10 different professional development opportunities.
- Awarded additional grant aid to 25 TRIO students after receiving a no-cost extension by the U.S. Department of Education.
- Enhanced its ability to assess student needs and strengths as staff completed Myers-Brigg Type Indicator certification training.



# III. Florissant Valley in the News





## Saint Augustine's University Board of Trustees Names 12th President

July 14, 2020

https://spectacularmag.com/2020/07/14/saint-augustines-university-board-of-trustees-names-12th-president/

Raleigh, NC – After a national search, the Board of Trustees at Saint Augustine's University (SAU) announces the appointment of **Dr. Irving Pressley McPhail** as the University's 12th president. The appointment is effective on July 15, 2020. The SAU Presidential Search Committee was comprised of individuals from local government, the Raleigh business community, higher education experts including SAU deans and faculty, SAU alumni, and Board of Trustee members.

According to the Board of Trustees Chairman, the Retired Honorable Justice James E. Perry, "The <u>Saint Augustine's University</u> Board of Trustees is pleased to welcome Dr. McPhail to the SAU community. We are excited about the breadth of experience he brings as a former University President and as a sought-after spokesperson concerning the important contributions made by minorities in the STEM



McPhail

field." Perry added that "the Board of Trustees would like to thank the Search Committee under the direction of Trustees Roderick Miller and Marley Bollinger for their outstanding work on behalf of the University in identifying an outstanding ambassador for the university."

Irving Pressley McPhail is the founder and chief strategy officer at the McPhail Group LLC. A senior executive in higher education, urban public-school administration, and the nonprofit sector, McPhail was previously the sixth president and CEO at the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering, Inc. (NACME), founding chancellor at the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC), president at St. Louis Community College-Florissant Valley, and president at Lemoyne-Owen College. He also served as university provost at Pace University, vice president and dean of academic affairs at

Delaware State University, and chief operating officer at the Baltimore City Public Schools.

Under his leadership, NACME received the 2012 Claire Felbinger Award for Diversity from ABET (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology). CCBC was named one of 12 Vanguard Learning Colleges in the United States and Canada in 2000 by the League for Innovation in the Community College; won the Bellwether Award in the category of Planning, Finance, and Governance in 2000; and was awarded the PBS O'Banion Prize for Leading the Way to Change in Teaching and Learning in 2003. The Council for Higher Education Accreditation recognized CCBC for its accomplishments and leadership with its Award for Institutional Progress in Student Learning Outcomes in 2006.

McPhail has held tenured full professorships at Delaware State University, Lemoyne-Owen College, and Pace University and served as an affiliate or visiting professor at the University of Maryland at College Park, the University of Pennsylvania, Morgan State University, and National American University. He is presently a professor of practice at the Dr. John E. Roueche Community College Leadership Center at Kansas State University. Working at the nexus of practice, policy, and research in language, literacy, and culture; postsecondary student success; underrepresented minorities in STEM education and careers; and community college leadership, McPhail is coeditor of Teaching African American Learners to Read: Perspectives and Practices (International Reading Association), coauthor of Success Factors for Minorities in Engineering (Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group), and author of more than 50 journal articles, chapters, monographs and technical reports.

Raised in Harlem, McPhail was educated in New York City public schools and is a graduate of the renowned Stuyvesant High School. He earned a bachelor's degree in rural sociology at Cornell University and a master's degree in reading at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He earned a doctorate in reading/language arts at the University of Pennsylvania as a National Fellowships Fund Fellow. He was awarded the Doctor of Humane Letters Honoris Causa by the New Jersey Institute of Technology in 2015 and the Doctor of Engineering Honoris Causa by the Polytechnic Institute of New York University in 2010. McPhail was an American Council on Education Fellow in Academic Administration at Johns Hopkins University, and he completed the Presidents Academy Summer Institute at the American Association of Community Colleges and the Institute for Educational Management at Harvard University. He is an Emergenetics Certified Associate.

His many awards include the Polytechnic Medal and the 2014 Vision Award from the New York University Polytechnic School of Engineering, the Educator of the Year Award from the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education (2012), the Ira D. and Rubye Hibler Hall Endowed Heritage Lecture Series Award from Langston University (2008), the Management Recognition Award from the National Community College Council for Research and Planning (2004-05), the Alumni of Color Achievement Award from the Harvard Graduate School of Education (2004), and the Pioneer Award

from the National Council on Black American Affairs of the American Association of Community Colleges (2000).

McPhail is president of the board of directors of the Society of Manufacturing Engineers Education Foundation; a member of the 50K Coalition Advisory Board and the University of Michigan School of Engineering Diversity/Equity/Inclusion Advisory Council. He is an at-large member of Cornell Mosaic and founding chair of the Strategic Planning Committee at the historic Shiloh Baptist Church in Harlem, N.Y.

McPhail is married to Dr. Christine Johnson McPhail. She formerly served as a professor of higher education at Morgan State University and president at Cypress College in Southern California. She is the author of a number of higher education publications and a national higher education consultant. The McPhails are the proud parents of a daughter and son, and five grandsons.

# INSIDE HIGHER ED UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT DIES AFTER CONTRACTING COVID-19

By Emma Whitford October 19, 2020

https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/10/19/saint-augustine%E2%80%99s-university-president-dies-after-brief-covid-19-hospitalization

Irving McPhail, president of Saint Augustine's University, died last week due to COVID-19 complications, the university confirmed Friday.

McPhail quarantined several weeks ago after learning he'd been in contact with someone outside the university who tested positive for the virus. About 10 days ago, McPhail received a positive COVID-19 test result, said James Perry, chair of the university's board of trustees.

After several symptom-free days, McPhail, who was 71, reported symptoms including headaches and a fever, Perry said. He was hospitalized soon thereafter and later put on a ventilator. He died about two weeks after contracting the virus.



Irving McPhail

One of McPhail's staff members also tested positive for COVID-19 -- McPhail had met with his staff before learning of his exposure to the virus. The staff member, whom Perry did not name, has recovered and is back at work. Two students at Saint Augustine's tested positive for COVID-19 and have also recovered, Perry said (*Update: University officials say there is no evidence McPhail's infection is related to the student infections.*)

McPhail is one of the most prominent higher education leaders who has died of COVID-19. <u>Mark Ivester</u>, president of North Georgia Technical College; <u>David Gipp</u>, president of United Tribes Technical College; and <u>Donald Kennedy</u>, former president of Stanford University, have also died after contracting the virus.

Saint Augustine's, a private historically Black university in Raleigh, N.C., enrolled about 900 students last fall. The university reopened to students for in-person instruction this fall.

McPhail came to Saint Augustine's in July as the university's 12th president. He is the founder and chief strategy officer at the McPhail Group LLC, a higher education consulting practice, and he previously served as founding chancellor of the Community College of Baltimore County. Before then, he was president at St. Louis Community College-Florissant Valley and president at Lemoyne-Owen College. He also served as secretary of the board of the American Council on Education in 2005.

On Friday morning, Saint Augustine's faculty members, staff members and students walked by the president's residence to <u>pay their respects</u> and lay flowers. In lieu of flowers, McPhail's family has asked that donations be made to their <u>endowed</u> scholarship fund.

North Carolina governor Roy Cooper shared his condolences on Twitter Friday.

"Today, we mourn the loss of Dr. Irving Pressley McPhail, a dedicated leader who made a positive impact on St. Augustine's University in the short time he was president. Our thoughts are with his loved ones and the St. Augustine's campus community," he wrote. Surviving McPhail is his wife, Christine Johnson McPhail, a daughter, son and five grandsons.

"He was with us for a short period of time, about 100 days, but we all embraced him and his wife," Perry said. "We will continue his legacy and the vision that he laid in the short time that he was there. He left big footprints to follow.

Maria Lumpkin, vice president and chief of staff at Saint Augustine's, has stepped in as interim president. She also served as interim president before McPhail was appointed. The university will hold a memorial service for McPhail Oct. 27. Details will be posted to the university's website. It will likely be part in-person and virtual, Perry said.

## **Shared Memories about David L Underwood**

Oct. 26, 2020

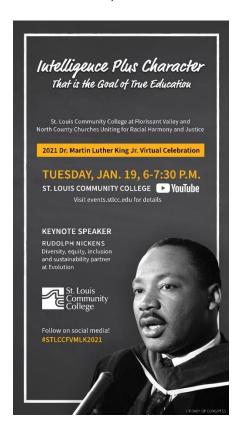
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMgdExRu69M

Mary Luebke, 2013 recipient of the David L. Underwood Memorial Lecture Award, interview with Annabelle Underwood (widow) and Cathy Underwood Herman (daughter) recorded May 8, 2019.



## ST. Louis American

Jan. 7 and 14, 2021



## ST. LOUIS AMERICAN

# STLCC-Florissant Valley, North County Churches to Present Virtual King Celebration

By Danielle Brown Of The St. Louis American
Jan 11, web article and Jan. 14 newspaper article
<a href="http://www.stlamerican.com/entertainment/living\_it/stlcc-florissant-valley-north-county-churches-to-present-virtual-king-celebration/article\_029d869e-5422-11eb-a3e8-4f2ffc7baeb7.html">http://www.stlamerican.com/entertainment/living\_it/stlcc-florissant-valley-north-county-churches-to-present-virtual-king-celebration/article\_029d869e-5422-11eb-a3e8-4f2ffc7baeb7.html</a>

The celebration of the life of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King will continue on Tuesday, Jan. 19, the day after the official holiday, with a program sponsored by St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley and North County Churches Uniting for Racial Harmony and Justice.

The program, which will be presented virtually from 6-7:30 p.m., on STLCC's YouTube Channel, will offer speeches and present awards recognizing those who have distinguished themselves by service to the community.

Rudy Dickens, diversity, equity, inclusion and sustainability partner at Evolution, is scheduled to be the keynote speaker. The theme of his speech is "Intelligence Plus Character: The Goal of True Education." Evolution is a coaching, consulting and investment firm.

Rudy Dickens, diversity, equity, inclusion, and sustainability partner at Evolution, is set to be the keynote speaker Tuesday, Jan. 19, at the Martin Luther King Jr. event sponsored by St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley and North County Churches Uniting for Racial Harmony and Justice.

Drawing upon almost four decades of experience in a range of areas related to diversity, equity and inclusion in the workforce, Nickens has cultivated a wealth of knowledge.

Many of his views relate with those of King in how he finds commonalities in everyone and builds relationships across all identities. Nickens said being chosen to deliver the keynote address is special and holds a lot of significance in why he works for diversity.

"I can't think of a time when this wasn't important to me," Nickens said. "In the talk that I gave for the community college's MLK program, I shared a moment about how, when I was 8 years old, I got to go to my first rally with my family to Washington, D.C., to hear Dr. King speak."

"I saw the effect on Black folks, poor, working-class Black folks coming together, standing up together. It was life-altering. I've spent my whole life trying to make that reality continue and to do what I can to have that moment that changed my life as a boy."

Nickens understands the historical importance of why, since 1986, the nation has recognized Martin Luther King Jr. Day as a federal holiday. King was born on Jan.15, 1929. He was assassinated on April 4, 1968, when he was 39 years old.

"It's as much about the community as it's about him individually," Nickens said. "I think one of the things that I thought about in him was he was not about a singular movement.

"Although people talk about his commitment to racial justice, which was important, he also worked to build movements that were inclusive of other struggles."

Nickens' resume is extensive. In addition to being a facilitator, educator and entrepreneur, he has also established an impressive career in business management and community development. Prior to his current role, he was the director of equal opportunity and diversity with the Missouri Department of Transportation.

Azariah Estes, a first-year general transfer student will be the student emcee; Aquita Lowe, a second-year general transfer student, and Zoe Wallace, a first-year general transfer student will serve as student speakers.

Viewers will also hear speeches from winners of the North County churches group's Oratorical Contest and will be able to join in singing along with an instrumental rendition of James Weldon Johnson's "Lift Every Voice and Sing," played by pianist Paul Higdon, professor of music.

Additionally, viewers will learn Christian Hospital is being honored with the 2021 Dr. Rance Thomas Excellence in Community Partnership Award.

"Christian Hospital and President Rick Stevens are incredible partners with St. Louis Community College through diverse avenues," according to Elizabeth Gassel Perkins, campus president and chief academic officer at STLCC-Florissant Valley.

"... Christian Hospital partners with our nursing and health sciences programs to offer valuable training to future healthcare professionals, she said. "Beyond the incredible partnership they share with STLCC, they strive to improve the health and welfare of everyone in the region by providing stellar patient care, educational opportunities and participating in outreach activities to all north St. Louis County residents."

More information about this event is available at stlcc.edu.

## ST. LOUIS AMERICAN

## Love Pushes 16-year-old to Plan Feb. 23 Blood Drive

For St. Louis American
Feb 16, 2021, Updated Feb 16, 2021
<a href="http://www.stlamerican.com/your\_health\_matters/health\_news/azariah-estes/image\_95dd428c-705b-11eb-90a1-5b6582626693.html">http://www.stlamerican.com/your\_health\_matters/health\_news/azariah-estes/image\_95dd428c-705b-11eb-90a1-5b6582626693.html</a>



Estes Organizes Blood Drive for First Time to Help Boyfriend, Others

Azariah Estes tries to make a positive impact wherever she goes. In January, she served as student emcee of St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley and North County "Churches Uniting for Racial Harmony" and "Justice's annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration."

Fast forward a month, and Estes is spearheading an American Red Cross-Ritenour High School Blood Drive. She is inviting the community to make a difference in the lives of others.

As a dual enrollment student, Estes will earn her high school diploma and associate degree simultaneously. She is balancing coursework at Ritenour High School with general transfer studies at St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley.

She is eager to help as many people as she can through the blood drive. "I just want people to know that this blood drive means so much to me and many others who battle with blood diseases," Estes said.

"Imagine being able to say, 'I was able to be a part of something that's saving people's lives."

"One pint of blood can make someone else's life span much longer, so please donate, and if you can't, please share this everywhere, so we can make an impact in the community!"

### **Blood Drive**

The American Red Cross-Ritenour High School Blood Drive is Tuesday, Feb. 23 from noon-5 p.m. at Hilton Garden Inn St. Louis Airport Ballroom located at 4450 Evans Place Drive, St. Louis, MO 63134. Anyone 17 and older interested in giving blood can make a donation. A 16-year-old may contribute with a signed parental consent form.

[To <u>register</u> in advance, visit <u>RedCrossBlood.org</u>, and type "Ritenour" in the "Find a Blood Drive" field, select Feb. 23 and secure a donation time.]

Safety measures are in place to protect donors and workers. For example, masks are required, and temperature checks will be performed on workers and donors before entering the donation site. In addition, beds will be spaced six feet apart, surfaces will be regularly wiped down and hand sanitizer will also be available.

Donors have a unique opportunity to help patients fighting COVID-19, because blood donations are tested for COVID-19 antibodies. If a blood donation includes the antibodies, plasma from that donation may now help coronavirus patients who need convalescent plasma transfusions.

### A Personal Interest, Motivation

Estes' motivation for organizing the blood drive is personal.

"What pushed me was the fact that I have someone special in my life who had to use the blood of donors in order to survive," Estes said.

"If it wasn't for the fact that that person is my boyfriend, and his battle with sickle cell has made our relationship stronger in the most beautiful way, then I probably would've been like most people who think the blood drive is a great thing to do but wouldn't donate.

"I never thought I'd ever be able to do something like this, but with the help of thinking about my relationship with my boyfriend, Xavier Blake, and my love to help others, I had to give it a try," Estes said about organizing the blood drive.

Her role includes registering people to give blood and answering questions they have about donating. The day of the drive, American Red Cross volunteers and workers will ensure the drive goes as smoothly and safely as possible.

"Azariah has been incredible throughout the entire process. She has really made a personal connection to the mission of the Red Cross and truly understands the importance of sustaining our community's blood supply to help patients in need," said

Connor Zielonko, account representative, donor recruitment, with the American Red Cross.

"Our volunteers come from all ages, but for Azariah to take the reins on her drive at 16 is truly impressive. Her enthusiasm and determination are incredibly admirable."

"It brings absolute joy to my heart. I love helping other people, and this is the biggest way I've been able to do so," Estes said.

"My name means 'helped by God,' so this makes me feel like I'm living in my purpose," she said. "I mean I'm literally helping to save people's lives! That is amazing and it makes me happy every time someone registers since that means more lives are being saved."



Karen Wade, co-chair of the Women's History Month Committee and library secretary, discussed the College's Women's History Month programs with Shirley Washington, anchor/reporter for KTVI/KPLR. This year's theme was "Valiant Women of the Vote." The Pulse of St. Louis broadcast aired March 13 at 7 p.m. on KPLR News 11 and March 14 at 10 a.m. on Fox 2.

### Education/Schools

#### LaRhonda Wilson Earns SLCC 46th David L. Underwood Memorial Lecture Award

St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley named LaRhonda Wilson, associate professor of sociology, recipient of the 4bt David L. Underwood Memorial Lecture Award.

The late David L. Underwood was known for his love of education. He was deeply concerned with the welfare of students and staff alike. His dedication went beyond office hours – and he tirelessly gave of his time and talents to further the educational mission at Florissant Valley.

Recipients of the Underwood Memorial Lecture Award demonstrate that same dedication and commitment. Chosen by a committee of peers, the recipient exhibits excellence in instruction and a genuine, humanistic concern for students, faculty, staff, and all of education.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic and safety concerns, Steve Ehlen, supervisor of the Engineering Technology Center, creatively shared information about this year colleges during a presentation held outside the David L. Underwood Library, before revealing Wilson's commission as the window of the Engineering Technology Center, creatively shared information about this year colleges with the Engineering Technology Center, creatively shared information about this year colleges the County Incorporated's 30 Leaders in their Thicks Award, the Organization for Black Sunner Rouche Excellence award, North County Incorporated's 30 Leaders in their Thirties Award, the Organization for Black Sunner Salute to Excellence in Education Award.

LaRhonda Wilson (right photo) at the campus at St. Louis Community College at Florissant

LaRhonda Wilson (right photo) at the campus at St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley where she received the David L. Underwlood Memorial awardf.





## Wedgwood Principal Wins SASSP Award

Wins SASSP Award
The St. Louis Association of
Secondary School Principals
(SASSP) has named Katy
Chambers (above photo),
principal of Wedgwood Sixth
Grade Center, as the SASSP
Middle School Principal of the
Year for the 2020-21 school year.
Chambers was surprised by
SASSP members and FergusonFlorissant School District
administrators during what she
thought was a virtual planning
meeting.

meeting.
"Thank you SASSP for the recognition and great surprise announcement" said Chambers.



#### **Hazelwood Central** Student Is National

Student Is National Merit Finalist
Jaden, (above photo) a
Central High School senior, is a finalist for the 2021 National Merit Scholarship. More than \$1.5 million students entered the 2021 National Morit Scholarship Program.
Merit Scholar designees are selected on the basis of their skills, accomplishments, and potential for success in rigorous college studies. 2021 National Merit Scholarship winners will be announced in four nationwide news releases beginning this month and concluding in July.

# TAKE SUMMER **CLASSES AT STLCC**

#### St. Louis Community College is a great choice for all your educational goals!

STLCC offers 80 career-focused programs that prepare students for high wage, high skill, and in-demand careers in the real world. Taking summer classes at STLCC is a great way to start on a new path, catch up or get ahead.

Session I begins on May 18 (3 and 11-week classes) and Session II begins on June 7 (6 and 8-week classes).

Registration is now open, so don't delay!

STLCC.EDU/SUMMER





# BUSINESS

SPONSORED CONTENT

# A movement in advanced manufacturing

Leaving back-to-back layoffs to leading assembly mechanics at Boeing



Theniesha Carter went to the CWI and learned about the Boeing Pre-Employment Training, a 10-week free program offered at Florissant Valley. After finishing the program she was offered an assembly mechanic position, with a career pathway-ladder of more responsibilities and pay increases.

## By Dr. Art McCoy STL.works Leader and Champion

As one of eight children growing up on Grand and Natural Bridge in St. Louis, life was not easy for Theniesha Carter. "I didn't grow up with a silver spoon in my mouth. In my life, I have been through many different circumstances," sad Carter. "My grandmother raised us to have faith, hope, and a great work ethic. I have told myself to put a smile on your face. Don't blane. Learn to work things out. Growing up with four brothers and three sisters, you learn how to work things out. "Carter demonstrated such tenacity throughout her childhood and well into adulthood. She graduated from Riverview Gardens High School in 2004 and was touted as a people-person and team player. Still, over the next decade, she experienced several cycles of getting a job and being laid off.
For a while, Carter worked at a local company pussionately supporting children and adults with developmental disabilities. Yet, budget cuts caused



her hours to be cut in half, especially being a newer employee. As a single mother, Carter was determined to end this cycle. While working part-time, struggling to make ends meet, she enrolled in St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley and started the early childhood program as a full-time student, toying with the possibility of starting her own business. Similar to so many people, Carter needed to earn more in months versus the years it often takes to acquire a degree, pay off debts, and meet life's other demands. So, she left college to start a new full-time job at a steel mill to earn more and feed her family. As fate would have it, she was laid off again in the spring of 2016. While laid off', a friend shared information with Carter about

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of 2016.

While laid off, a friend shared information with Carter about the Women in Advanced Manufacturing Initiative and suggested that she check out the Center for Workforce Innovation (CWI) at St. Louis Community College, an STL works partner.

See ROFING RA

## PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

#### SLCC's LaRhonda Wilson receives award



Wilson receives award
St. Louis Community College at
Florissant Valley named LaRhonda
Wilson, associate professor of sociology, recipient of the 46th David
One of the 46th Davi

education.

Wilson also serves as program coordinator for the campus service-learning program and is lead faculty for sociology, anthropology and psychology. Wilson is a member of the American Sociological Association, Delha Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., the Lincoln University Almmi Association, and Missouri Sociological Association, and Missouri Sociological Association.

#### Henley named director of marketing at COCA

COCA, the fourth largest multi-disciplinary community arts center in the U.S. and a leader in innovative arts education, announced



innovative arts education, announced the appointment of Alesha Henley as Director of Marketing, In her role, Henley will lead the organization's and ambitions for the future, Henley comes from the St. Louis Regional Chamber where he served as vice president, marketing and communications, and assistance of the future. Henley comes from the St. Louis Regional Chamber where he served as vice president, marketing and communications, and was a key member of the Esecutive Team.

#### Henson new co-anchor of Today in St. Louis

Multi-skilled journalist Rhyan
Henson has been named co-anchor
of Today in St. Louis at 9 a.m. on
Saturdays, alongside longtime anchor
Kelly Jackson.
Henson is a
native of St. Louis
and came to 5 On
Your Side in 2018
after workine at



Your Side in 2018 after working at several stations in Texas.

"Having the opportunity to help my hometown wake up on the weekend alongside one as universally liked and

2020-2021 Annual Report STLCC - Florissant Valley

## Boeing

Continued from B1

She went to the CWI and learned about the Boeing. a Per-Employment Training, a Per-Employment of the Work Keys Test and Layout and Measuring Assessment. "I was the last one done on the test, but I passes, dive Boeing managers interviewed me. It was the last one done on the test, but I passes, and the last one continued to the Measuring with Thying colors. "The program promises you have been done to the done of the Measuring with Thying colors." The program promises you have been done to the done of the Measuring with Thying colors. "The program promises you have been done to the done of the Measuring with Thying colors." The program promises you have been done to the done of the Measuring with the Measuring with



On August 19, 2021, Thenlesha Carter will celebrate her fifth anniversary at Boeing. Eight months before this milestone, she was promoted to lead assembly mechanic.

Florissant, Missouri, Inspired by his mother, the eldest son plans to follow in her footsteps very soon by enrolling in the Boeing Pre-Employment High School Training Program at the CWI at Florissant Valley. This program is one of two free St. Louis Community College training pathways for assembly so for assembly of the control of the



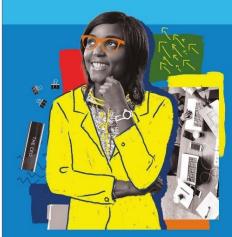
While Carter is thrilled about sharing these opportuni-ties with her family members, she does not stop there. "We need more women. I work with one other woman on my line,

a parts controller or PC. Over 900 people have retired over the past five years. Boeing is looking for skilled workers, talent, and diversity—we need people of color, and we need

women," exclaimed Carter,
She echoes Boeing executives'
sentiment, one of whom is the
chairperson for STL works'
Manufacturing subcommittee
of companies committee to
companies committee
of companies committee
of companies committee
while Boeing and STL
works are proud to spotlight
the success of MS, Tleniesha
Carter, we are equally proud
and cager to engage with you.
STL works matches employers,
training providers, and schools
with the skilled workers needed

to compete in a competitive economy. For those who might be interested but worried. Carter advises, "Never say what you can't tod. Go in with an open mind. Try it. If you fail, try it a couple of times. Learn from failures. Never give up. Just pash forward." with our website: http://std works. Learn for the mazzing career opportunities and training available to support you, your family, friends, youth, and more.





STLCC IS OFFERING A SPECIAL SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENTS THIS SUMMER.

STLCC will pay for three-credit hours at the in-district

STLCC.EDU/SUMMER







## Seven Inaugural NJCAA Foundation Hall of Fame Inductees Announced

May 07, 2021 https://www.njcaa.org/general/2020-21/releases/20210429h07v8p



### Lea Plarski

A pioneer in women's sports, Lea Plarski has seen tremendous changes and improvements across athletics, serving as an advocate, leader, and teacher. In 1995, the NJCAA created the Lea Plarski Award, an annual award that is presented to an NJCAA student-athlete who exemplifies sportsmanship, leadership, community service, academic excellence, and athletic ability. Plarski dedicated many years of service to the association and was the athletic director at St. Louis Community College (MO).

Plarski was instrumental in establishing the Women's Division of the NJCAA in 1975 - the first national collegiate athletic organization to develop such a structure. Plarski served as Vice President of the NJCAA Women's Division from 1975-90 and was tabbed president of the NJCAA in 1990, becoming the first woman to do so.

Plarski's fingerprints are on the 1994 Olympic Festival that took place in St. Louis and Southwestern Illinois. Some of her other involvements include the Women's Sports Foundation, the Amateur Softball Association, and the American Bowling Congress. Known for her tireless dedication to student-athletes, the Augusta, Kansas native received a lifetime achievement award from the St. Louis Sports Commission in 2020.



### **Graduation Ceremonies in the 'New Normal'**



The pomp and circumstance of a traditional graduation with the appeal of a tailgate party

Alex Fees (KSDK) 10:16 PM CDT May 15, 2021

https://www.ksdk.com/video/news/local/graduation-ceremonies-in-the-new-normal/63-5b27dc74-fff7-4be0-a9f2-75d0337a7eb8?jwsource=cl

FERGUSON, Mo. — A confetti-covered parking lot is the first clue that the graduation ceremony at St. Louis Community College's Florissant Valley campus might be an alternative version caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Graduates arrived by car and then got out to walk across a makeshift stage. It had all the pomp and circumstance of a traditional graduation, plus the appeal of a tailgate party.

Graduate Evita Brodtrick and her family were there to celebrate her nursing degree.

"We drove up and we got to walk out," said Brodtrick. "We did our graduation a little differently."

At the northeast corner of campus, staff members provided direction and encouragement.

"We are cheering for (students) when they come by," said Paul Huddleston, the station manager of KCFV-FM, the college's radio station.

COVID-19 contingency plan graduations like the one held Saturday were likely planned months ago. There's no way organizers could have anticipated that Americans would be slowly but surely emerging from behind the cover of a mask.

Tim Williams, the father of graduate Chelsye Pore, said that while he didn't see a lot of masks, that didn't concern him since the ceremony was outdoors.

But did feel like graduation?

"It worked!" said Pore. "I got to walk up there, so that was kind of cool. I'm glad we got to do this. I'm done. It's time for the next degree."

## ST. Louis American

Watson Works to Keep a Promise Plans to Graduate with a Degree at Age 52

Special to The America May 16, 2021 Updated May 18, 2021



Annsara Watson shares a moment with her mother, Karen Jones. Watson will graduate from St. Louis Community College with an associate degree in general studies this month.

When Annsara Watson graduates from St. Louis Community College this month with an associate degree in general transfer studies, she will be one step closer to keeping a promise. "It feels amazing to know that I am at the first completion step in my goals," said the 52-year-old nontraditional student. "It only pushes me to work harder to fulfill the rest of the promise."

Although she has tried to earn her associate degree since the late 1980s, Watson always came up short until recently. In fall 2019, Watson made a promise to her mother, Karen Jones, 74, a colon-cancer survivor, that before she draws her last breath, she will have her daughter's associate and bachelor's degrees.

Working to keep this promise has driven Watson to achieve academically and shine as a leader at St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley. A retired licensed practical nurse, Watson has been on the dean's list since she enrolled in spring 2020. She

boasts a 3.6 GPA, is a member of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and a representative for the Student Government Association. She also owns a multimedia business, Dominating Productionz, LLC.

What is even more impressive is the fact that Watson has achieved such success despite being diagnosed with cervical cancer in February 2008. "Nursing is my passion. I had originally gone to college to become a doctor, but I'm so happy that I chose this field instead," Watson said. "I believe that everyone has a calling and mine was nursing."

When Watson became ill with her first blood clot to the lungs, she was unable to do the job that she loved so much. "My mind was still willing, but my body could no longer handle the stressors of the field," Watson said. Earning an associate degree is a steppingstone to Watson obtaining her bachelor's degree in business administration and making good on her promise.

Karen Jones is glad her daughter is working to better herself. "She did promise me that, but I am not holding her to that. I'm just going along with the flow. What she does, she does for herself, and it won't be for me ... it will be for her," Jones said. "She adheres to that because it makes her push herself more, but I'm not holding her to that with a yardstick. I'm not pushing her, because I may take my last breath in the next five minutes."

Jones said that if she takes her last breath before Watson reaches her goal, she doesn't want her daughter to think she has failed. "If I do, I want her to continue to do the things she wants to do before she leaves this Earth," Jones said. "I'm proud of her. She has been through a lot of things that have set her back. She has been very ill, but she has been determined to go back to school."

When Watson graduated from high school, Jones did not think her daughter really applied herself. "She met this boy and had a son. She got her LPN, but now she wants to get her degree," Jones said. "She doesn't have to impress me and get a degree for me to love her more, but I am proud she is doing so well. I'm just amazed at the things she has accomplished and how good her grades are. I am in awe at how well she is doing."



Annsara Watson (left) shares a moment with her mother, Karen Jones. Watson will graduate from St. Louis Community College with an associate degree in general studies this month.

## 52-Year-old Woman Works to Keep a Promise to Her Mom, While Battling Cancer Gets Her Degree

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CIRCULATION





## ST. LOUIS AMERICAN

# SECRETS TO SUCCESS: BE HUNGRY FOR GROWTH BUT REMAIN HUMBLE, PASSIONATE ABOUT HELPING PEOPLE

May 30, 2021 Updated May 30, 2021

http://www.stlamerican.com/business/business\_news/secrets-to-success-be-hungry-for-growth-but-remain-humble-passionate-about-helping-people/article\_760435d2-c174-11eb-adae-b35b07f41689.html



Mercy Hospital VP Ursula Bonner-Wright Photo by Wiley Price / St. Louis American

Have you ever wondered how hospitals create the latest practices to provide patients the best care? Who shows them? Who leads the vital work of transforming good research into best practices, particularly during a pandemic?

At Mercy, the Clinical Care Redesign and Optimization department leads such work under the direction of Vice President Ursula Bonner-Wright. Its leaders are responsible for developing new clinical pathways—structured, interdisciplinary clinical standards—that detail essential steps in the care of patients with a specific clinical problem. Using the latest medical studies and evidence, they determine the best possible care and create better outcomes for Mercy patients.

Mercy, a proud Regional Business Council member and Chesterfield-based company serving four states, is dedicated to advancing the health, wellbeing, and workforce of St. Louis and beyond. Mercy's motto is "Your life is our life's work." During this COVID crisis, their 45,000-member health care workforce has proven to be real heroes. Among them, Vice President Wright is not only a hero but a <u>bright star supporting thousands of individuals</u>.

"As a young person, I watched my mother and aunt help people in their white starched nurse's uniform, white shoes—and, at that time, their caps. And I had the desire to follow in their footsteps," Wright recalled. After leaving Webster Groves High School, she started her professional journey as a student nurse at Mercy while earning an Associates of Science in Nursing at St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley. Gaining exposure and experience, she started as a full-time Orthopedic and Trauma Unit nurse immediately after graduation. Within two years, she became a clinical supervisor and used her skillset to lead a small team in providing care. Truly investing in their employees, Mercy provided tuition reimbursement for Wright's bachelor's degree in Nursing from Webster University, master's in business administration from Lindenwood University, and master's degree in nursing with a family nurse practitioner focus from Maryville University.

Mentors like Executive Vice President of Operations Donn Sorensen, Chief Administrative Officer Cynthia Bentzen-Mercer Chief Operating Officer of Mercy Kids Chris Crain, and Chief Quality Officer Keith Starke, MD, supported Wright in gaining additional leadership training and opportunities. Like other leading institutions, Mercy used the Six Sigma Training and Certification as an effective way to improve its health care services. Hungry to grow, Wright became a Lean Six Sigma Black Belt Leader in between her two master's degrees, learning Mercy's business operations from top to bottom with experiences ranging from improving finance processes to improving the distribution of linen services.

From 2016 to 2019, Mercy was named one of the top five large U.S. health systems by IBM Watson Health, annually, being among the first health care organizations in the U.S. to have an integrated electronic health record connecting all points of care. During that decade, Wright was a systems analyst, and afterward Clinical Performance Acceleration executive director, involved in creating this finely tuned electronic health record with clinical best practices hard-wired into the system, early warning triggers, and data reducing variation and compliance issues. In 2018, Wright was elevated to vice president of Clinical Care Redesign and Optimization. Her journey reveals how rising star-leaders are both born and created.

On June 7, Wright will celebrate 21 years at Mercy. Vice President of Operations for Mercy Clinic Adult Primary Care Tesh Jewell shared, "Ursula is a brilliant clinician and excellent leader. She is very passionate about helping to improve the overall health of our community through her work in quality, especially in more vulnerable communities. She is too modest to admit this, but Mercy is very fortunate to have such a strong and dynamic leader helping to advance our work in quality, safety, and clinical process improvement."

Mercy is dedicated to attracting and retaining more diverse clinicians, leaders and coworkers of color to critical roles within health care. "For me, it's important that we not only work to ensure we offer attractive compensation, benefits and a great working environment but that we also focus on mentorship, job training and creating awareness of the vast opportunities that exist in health care. It's equally important that we create career ladders/pathways for talented individuals who join our organizations in order to retain them. Mercy has many programs to address all of these avenues and recently, through our discussions with our Ferguson Clinic Advisory Council, we have discussed job training and mentorship opportunities that we would like to develop as part of efforts to be an integral partner within the community," Jewell said. <a href="STL.works">STL.works</a> supports companies and citizens in such workforce initiatives in healthcare, manufacturing, technology, and the trades.

For aspiring professionals, Wright sums up several secrets to success, "You must have a passion for helping people. It fuels you forward. Earning and learning programs are great ways to gain real experience and effectively grasp various difficult work concepts. Make sure to have many mentors as your personal board of directors. Mercy provides great opportunities, mentors, Women in Leadership and other support along each step. Always remember, ability without humility is a liability. So, be hungry but remain humble."

# CELEBRITY LANO!

# NELLY: ACCESS POINT PROGRAM LAUNCHES WITH ENDORSEMENT FROM CELEBRITY SUPPORTER

By Story Center June 5, 2021

https://celebrity.land/en/nelly-access-point-program-launches-with-endorsement-from-celebrity-supporter/

Access Point launches with endorsement from celebrity supporter Nelly: connecting motivated students to customized training, real experience, and a life-changing career in technology – with a paid apprenticeship upon graduation from high school and a guaranteed corporate technology job within a year.

Saint Louis, MO, June 05, 2021 –(PR.com)– The Access Point program recognizes that talent is equally distributed, while access to opportunity is not. To address that issue, Access Point forms an even tighter collaboration between K-12 school districts, higher education institutions, and major corporations, removing barriers and driving lifechanging opportunities for young people and underrepresented groups by providing access to job-focused education, mentorship, financial support, and long-term careers in technology.

"I talk with business leaders around the country almost every day, and everyone wants more diversity in the technology workforce," said Ron Daugherty, CEO and president of Daugherty Business Solutions. "But in order to achieve that, we have to do some things differently, because the same approach produces the same results. That's where Access Point comes in. It's a different approach and it can be a gamechanger."

Daugherty has partnered with St. Louis Community College and the University of Missouri-St. Louis on an initial pilot of 25 students from area school districts including, St. Louis Public Schools, Ferguson-Florissant, University City, Jennings, Hazelwood, Pattonville, Ritenour and Maplewood Richmond Heights. Upon completion of the initial phase of tailored training, students will immediately start a paid apprenticeship that will lead to a full-time \$40,000-plus salary and software engineering career while continuing their college education.

"The Ferguson-Florissant School District is very excited to partner with Access Point," said Dr. Joseph Davis, superintendent of the Ferguson-Florissant School District. "We remain steadfast in our belief that all kids can excel when given opportunity, mentorship, and access."

"Access Point is opening up doors for me and my future," said Fumi, a current Access Point student. "The coursework, instructors and support have been outstanding."

To celebrate the launch, Daugherty Business Solutions, a leading advisory services and technology consulting firm, hosted a kickoff event at TopGolf in Chesterfield, Mo., with Access Point partners, students, parents, educational leaders and Grammy Award winning artist Nelly.

"I'm impressed with Access Point," Nelly said. "It's not just an idea, it's real training, it's real jobs, and it can make a difference."

Key partners there to cheer on the students were senior leaders from UMSL and St. Louis Community College, who are bringing in additional support from Bank of America, Emerson and others.

"St. Louis Community College's mission and the meaningful change that Access Point brings to students in the region will be realized through training and a real-world entry point to a lasting career," said Hart Nelson, St. Louis Community College associate vice chancellor of workforce solutions.

"We are so excited and proud to be a partner in Access Point," said Kristen Sobolik, UMSL chancellor.

Access Point was launched in St. Louis and is quickly expanding across the country. The program will include hundreds of local participants in the 2021-22 school year with plans to add thousands more nationwide.

To learn more about the Access Point program, visit their website at accesspointprogram.com.



Nicklaus: 'Game Changer' Program Aims to Diversify St. Louis' Tech Workforce

## **By David Nicklaus**

Jun 10, 2021

https://www.stltoday.com/business/columns/david-nicklaus/nicklaus-game-changer-program-aims-to-diversify-st-louis-tech-workforce/article\_eaa79a23-5f40-584d-926b-3bad3bd9e626.html



Access Point student Dy'Nisha Lewis poses for a photo with recording artist Nelly at the software training program's launch party held May 15, 2021, at TopGolf in Chesterfield.

Dy'Nisha Lewis wanted a college education but wasn't sure how she'd pay for it. She found her answer when a teacher mentioned a new program that would let her earn money as a software programmer while also accumulating college credits.

Lewis, 18, a recent graduate of Jennings High School, is one of the initial participants in <u>Access Point</u>, a program designed to help young women and people of color start careers in technology.

Besides creating opportunities for young people like Lewis, organizers are trying to solve two problems for employers: easing a severe worker shortage and diversifying a tech workforce that's overwhelmingly white and male.

Access Point is being spearheaded by Ron Daugherty, chief executive of Daugherty Business Solutions in Creve Coeur. He and a few other area technology executives calculated that they'd need 4,500 more programmers within three years. Existing programs — including <a href="LaunchCode">LaunchCode</a>, regional universities and boot camps such as <a href="Claim Academy">Claim Academy</a> and <a href="Moower">Npower</a> — would turn out only a fraction of that number.

"We have to do some things differently. We have to shake up the system that is in place," Daugherty argued.

That meant looking at nontraditional sources of talent, especially young women and people of color. They haven't typically pursued computer science degrees, and many face obstacles to following a traditional academic path.

"Many of the individuals who will benefit from Access Point would never achieve a fouryear college education," Daugherty said. "They are smart enough and capable enough, but their economic circumstances would not let it happen."

Lewis, who took four years of technology classes in high school, is among 25 students who began Access Point courses in April at St. Louis Community College's Florissant Valley campus. By early August, they'll have completed 11 credit hours and will start paid apprenticeships at Evernorth, the Cigna division that includes Express Scripts.

After four to eight months, Evernorth expects the apprentices to qualify for permanent software engineering jobs earning at least \$40,000 a year. That won't end the students' involvement with Access Point, however. They're expected to keep taking classes part time toward a bachelor's degree, and they'll still have access to the program's "hypercare" counselors, whose job is to deal with obstacles that get in the way of students' career progress.

Two students, for example, have already needed help dealing with car breakdowns that made it difficult to get to class.

Fumi Adewale, a 2018 graduate of University City High School, likes the hands-on nature of the Access Point program. She's close to completing an associate degree in cybersecurity, but jumped at the chance to start her career while removing uncertainty about how to pay for more education.

"In school they give you the textbook version," said Adewale, 21. "Access Point shows you how it's done in the real world."

Access Point is working with several area districts, including St. Louis public schools, to recruit students. The plan is to enroll at least 100 high school seniors next January and have them start apprenticeships as soon as they graduate.

Daugherty is lining up more employers for next year, pitching Access Point as a way to help meet the goal of inclusive growth outlined in the region's **2030 STL Jobs plan**. He has personally invested \$1 million to get the program started.

As he prepares for a full rollout in St. Louis, he's talking to employers about expanding Access Point to other cities. If the technology industry is serious about inclusivity, Daugherty said, "This can be a game changer."



# 13 HSD Students Accepted to Emerson STEM Academy for Fall 2021

https://www.hazelwoodschools.org/site/default.aspx?PageType=3&DomainID=4&ModuleInstanceID=43&ViewID=6446EE88-D30C-497E-9316-3F8874B3E108&RenderLoc=0&FlexDataID=25558&PageID=1

Thirteen Hazelwood School District (HSD) students have been accepted to St. Louis Community College (STLCC) at Florissant Valley's Emerson STEM Academy for fall 2021. The Emerson STEM Academy is a dual enrollment program developed in partnership with Emerson Electric Corporation, STLCC, and school districts to provide students an opportunity to earn college credits or their associate degree while in high school.

Students are selected for this dual enrollment program after submitting an application, which includes essays, recommendations, and an interview. Participating students will receive textbooks and program materials for free, access to the Emerson STEM Academy Suite, a dedicated STLCC faculty liaison to serve as a mentor, and access to all benefits provided to STLCC students, including Universal Pass to ride the MetroBus and MetroLink at no extra cost, Academic Success & Tutoring, and Instructional Resources.

The HSD students who will be participating in the Emerson STEM Academy in the fall are:

- Daniel Awodevi
- Maura Booher
- Jamie Climaco
- Daria Ford
- Dakota Harris
- Bria Hughley
- Raishaun Keys
- Aryielle Metcalf
- Jordyn Peebles
- Kierstyn Utley
- Maya Viviano
- Jaloni Washington
- Tyleisha Washington

For information about applying to the Emerson STEM Academy, view the flyer here

# ST. Louis American

# STLCC Program Inspires Black Men Coping with College for First Time

St. Louis American Staff June 14, 2021

http://www.stlamerican.com/news/local\_news/stlcc-program-inspires-black-men-coping-with-college-for-first-time/article\_3cca544c-ccc6-11eb-83d7-e3f7d1937bd9.html



## **Recruiting for Black Male Achievers Academy**

Overcoming the academic achievement gap for many Black men begins with building a bridge to confidence in the classroom.

Learning to say, "I can," before declaring "I can't," is a key according to Franklyn Taylor, vice president for student affairs at St. Louis Community College at Forest Park.

STLCC is recruiting 100 African American men for its Black Male Achievers Academy, a free, six-week program serving Black men attending college for the first time in the fall.

The program engages students preparing for their first semester of college. STLCC created the program to help reverse a decline in recruitment and retention of African American students.

"(BMAA) students get the support they need to persist and graduate. They have a sense of belonging and someone to turn to when they need it. The extra support creates an opportunity for students to succeed," Taylor said.

"When students know staff and faculty are 100% committed to their success and believe in them, they will often persist, despite insurmountable obstacles. Which is why it is necessary to build a trusting relationship from the very beginning. Relationships are everything."

The curriculum includes a course in social science and reading, and students receive academic support in preparation for future English and math courses. There are also discussions on career options, financial fitness and social justice.

The BMAA will run June 21-July 30 and take place inperson on both the St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley and STLCC-Forest Park campuses.



Chester Henderson, an information and enrollment assistant with the STLCC's continuing education program, is proof that interactive programs like the Black Male Achievers Academy can lead to success. Photo courtesy of STLCC.

To participate, Black male high school graduates with a 1.5-3.0 grade point average who have not yet attended college can email a recommendation letter from their high school counselor or a teacher to Taylor at <a href="mailto:ftaylor65@stlcc.edu">ftaylor65@stlcc.edu</a>. He also can be contacted at (314) 644-9212.

There were 23 participants confirmed for the STLCC at Florissant Valley campus and 30 for its Forest Park location.

In addition to the instruction and support, students will receive three credit hours and an academic scholarship to STLCC for up to \$3,000 for two-academic years.

Chester Henderson, an STLCC continuing education program information and enrollment assistant, participated in a previous STLCC program like the BMAA called African American Male initiative. It was in session from 2009-2017.

Henderson left Parkway West High School before graduation to work and support his child. He later completed GED course work and received a diploma.

"I grew up in North St. Louis surrounded by the complexities of an urban environment. Survival was always a challenge. I lost so many childhood friends at a young age to gun violence, and it was a hard pill to swallow. It's hard to look to the future when you are seeing things like this daily in your community," he said.

"I always wanted to do better for myself and my family and that's when I made the decision to go back and further my education. I'm so happy I did, because so many doors have opened because of that."

The AAMI guided Henderson through the educational process and helped him graduate with an associate degree in human services from STLCC in 2017.

"As a first-time student, I needed help understanding and navigating the process of being a student. I wanted to know how to be successful," Henderson said.

Following his STLCC graduation, Henderson was hired to work full-time for the College and has held several positions before being promoted to his current role. "With the Black Male Achievers Academy in place, the College's efforts to recruit and support Black male students will be strengthened," he said.

#### Financialtel.website

## St. Louis Community College Helps Support Black Males Attending for First Time

Muadhalsai 15 Jun, 2021 https://financialtel.website/?p=263

St. Louis Community College (STLCC) at Forest Park in St. Louis is addressing the need to build a bridge of confidence in the classroom through the Black Male Achievers Academy (BMAA), which is still <u>recruiting</u> 100 Black males.

The program is targeted to assist Black men who are attending <u>college</u> for the first time in the fall, according to The St. Louis American. The BMAA is designed to improve recruitment and retention of African American students. According to the article, the BMAA will be held from June 21-July 30 on the St. Louis Community College-Florissant Valley and STLCC-Forest Park campuses.

A social science and <u>reading</u> class, preparation for upcoming English and math courses, and other discussions will be held. Participation benefits include receiving three credit hours and a STLCC academic scholarship of up to \$3,000 for two-academic years.

Education Week once <u>reported</u> that young Black men who attend and graduate from colleges in the United States have the lowest test scores in both K-12 education as well as college. For these reasons, improving academic confidence, support and motivation can prove vital for them to become successful. A program like BMAA may provide beneficial tools for young Black males who need a solid, positive reference point.

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Black male high school graduates who have not yet begun college must possess a 1.5-3.0 grade point average to apply for the BMAA program. A recommendation letter written by their high school counselor or a teacher must also be emailed to Franklyn Taylor, vice president for student affairs at St. Louis Community College-Forest Park, at ftaylor65@stlcc.edu. Taylor's work phone number is (314) 644-9212.

The Atlantic once <u>reported</u> about the importance of youth establishing lasting relationships and mentors in high school, leading into college. Additionally, the America's Promise Alliance pointed out that youth from disadvantaged backgrounds face more challenges than a middle-class youth who may grow up having access to supportive coaches, tutors, or mentors.

# St. Louis Community College Helps Support Black Males Attending for First Time

#### Andrea Blackstone

June 15, 2021

https://ambrosiaseattle.com/st-louis-community-college-helps-support-black-males-attending-for-first-time/

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# **BLACK MEDIA DAILY**

# CURATORS OF BLACK MEDIA

St. Louis Community College Helps Support Black Males Attending for First Time

BY J.D. SMITH/ NO COMMENTS AT JUNE 15, 2021

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# **Building a Legacy for Women Artists**

Jun 16, 2021 <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xUgIAcZL3rU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xUgIAcZL3rU</a>



Janice Nesser-Chu presented as part of the Women's Caucus for Art panel at the 2013 College Art Conference in New York. The conference focused on how women artists, art historians, and leaders of art organizations can ensure that the art and the records of the lives and accomplishments of women artists are preserved and made known to present and future generations.



Saturday, June 19 https://www.facebook.com/2165475920190446/videos/2968514140094263

Franklyn Taylor Ed.D., campus vice president for student affairs at St. Louis Community College-Forest Park, discussed the Black Male Achievers Academy on iHeartRadio, Hallelujah 1600 AM, from 4:17-9:21 as part of the Freeman Bosley Jr. Show. The broadcast also streamed on iHeartRadio.



# IV. Florissant Valley Awards





### **FLORISSANT VALLEY AWARDS**

#### **RECOGNITION OF RETIREES**

Deborah Carter, Bruce Davis, Donna Friedman, Carol Hake, William Hoffman Jr., Carletta Kemp, David Kobe, Valerie Larkins, Jeffrey Martin, Adrienne Mazdra, Robert Miller, Sharon North, Renee Peeples, Catherine Reilly, Eric Shultis, Susan Watkins, Paul White, June Williams

#### RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEES WITH FIVE YEARS OF SERVICE

Willie Banks, Brandi Barsaloux, Cornel Childs, Maria Darris, Mea Hampton, Geoffrey Littleton, Rashad Ross

#### **RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEES WITH 10 YEARS OF SERVICE**

Joseph Bauer, Terri Buford, Linda Collins, David Doering, Fran Hooker, Monteil Peoples, Kery Walker

#### **RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEES WITH 15 YEARS OF SERVICE**

Julia Hoffman, Danielle Lusk, Richard Moeller, Patricia Suess

#### RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEES WITH 20 YEARS OF SERVICE

Wayne Bryan, Robert Langnas, Beverly Mixon, Paul Oswald, Barbara Schmermund, Mark Taylor

#### **RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEES WITH 25 YEARS OF SERVICE**

Byron Austin, Virginia Naumann, Mark Tornetto, Franklin Wilson

#### RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEES WITH 35 YEARS OF SERVICE

LaVaughn Smith

#### RECOGNITION OF HONORS PROGRAM FACULTY

Steven Bai, Brian Bozek, Amy Brown-Marshall, Aaron Champene, Margaret Coates, Tim Courtois, Margie Dorland, Eric Driskill, Donna Friedman, Katherine Gordon, Paul Higdon, Carletta Kemp, Elida Kraja, Bob Langnas, Valerie Larkins, Emily Lasek, Tim Layton, Kelly Mueller, Eric Shultis, Elizabeth Pilarcik-Tellez, Michael Quintero, Song Watkins-Park, Paul White



#### LEAGUE FOR INNOVATION EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNERS

Danielle Lusk and Susan Watkins

### PART-TIME CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Alicia Young

#### **ADJUNCT FACULTY OF THE YEAR**

John Ferrari

### **FULL-TIME CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR**

Tracy Hinton

#### PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Angela Kang

#### **NEW FACULTY MEMBER OF THE YEAR**

Neko Pilarcik-Tellez

### **EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE TO THE COLLEGE**

Terri Buford

#### 2021 DAVID L. UNDERWOOD MEMORIAL LECTURER

LaRhonda Wilson

