

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION

Saint Louis County

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

132 East Monroe Ave
 St. Louis, MO 63122
 314-400-2115



Office of Extension
and Engagement
University of Missouri

Vice Chancellor's Office
108 Whitten Hall
Columbia, MO 65211
PHONE 573-882-2394
EMAIL StewartMars@missouri.edu

December 1, 2021

Dear county commissioners and friends of MU Extension and Engagement,

As we look forward to 2022, I want to take a moment to celebrate all that we have accomplished together this year. You, our closest partners, are key to improving Missourians' lives and opportunities.

You have been vital to the work that has already extended broadband access and workforce development strategies statewide. You have helped us connect with the right partners, working together toward meaningful outcomes that will help our communities thrive in our areas of greatest need around the economy, education and health.

During MU Extension and Engagement Week in October, we learned about some of the ways that MU's NextGen Precision Health Initiative will help Missouri improve statewide health care indicators from our current ranking of 38th in the nation to 25th.

COVID-19 has shown us that we must expand investment in our health care resources, knowledge and infrastructure. It has exposed the urgent need to make research and expertise available in communities and to empower individuals and providers to address every aspect of individuals' and communities' health needs — including the inequities of social determinants and their effects on people's health.

Our extension faculty is poised to help identify those needs and be the bridge to the health care providers and caregivers, the clinical trials and public health initiatives that can deliver improved healthcare access and outcomes in every county across our state.

I hope you see the impact of your hard work this past year throughout this county annual report. I thank you for your continuing support as we recommit ourselves to do what we do best: help communities thrive through civic engagement, community building and neighborliness. We look forward to continuing the programs, partnerships, and sharing of knowledge that foster kindness, caring, respect and deep connections in the year and decade to come.

Sincerely,

Marshall Stewart, EdD
Vice Chancellor, MU Extension and Engagement
Chief Engagement Officer, UM System

A note from our Chair

We are pleased to present the 2021 St. Louis County Extension Annual Report. This report highlights the impact MU Extension in St. Louis County had on our community in 2021 through our research-based educational programs. While we are continuing to face uncertain times and challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic, our dedicated team meets these issues every day with determination and creative solutions. As the 2021 St. Louis County Extension Council Chair, I am honored to work alongside these talented individuals in bringing quality education to youth, families, businesses, and communities.

Our mission is made possible because of the support we receive from our partners and collaborators MU, UMSL, neighboring county extension offices, and many, many more. Thank you to all who donate their time and money so we can continue offering our programs and services that impact so many in the St. Louis community. As we head into 2022, we carry on our efforts to empower Missourians and create a lasting impact. Thank you to everyone for your support; we appreciate you greatly.

Best Regards,

Sylvester Bolden

MU Extension funding is a three-way partnership of federal, state and county government. Federal and state funding provided by the MU system covers the salaries, training, computers and communication equipment of our professional staff. County funds support our local office in Kirkwood by employing our bookkeeper and support staff and helping with additional expenses associated with operations including staff mileage.

St. Louis County Appropriations Budget

Income

County Appropriations 210,652

Total Income 210,652

Expenses

Salaries/Benefits 83,615

Rents & Leases 98,000

Telephone 5,400

Office Supplies/Service 7,437

Professional Services 5,050

Equipment Rental 4,000

Insurance 1,500

Travel 5,650

Total Expenses 210,652

Additional Donors and Community Partners

- A Red Circle
- Better Family Life
- Beyond Housing
- Brentwood Public Library
- Brightside St. Louis
- Deaconess Foundation
- Ferguson-Florissant School District
- Gateway Greening
- Gateway LERA
- IBEW Local 1
- Invest STL
- Kirkwood Public Library
- Missouri Botanical Gardens
- Missouri Department of Conservation
- Missouri Foundation for Health
- Northside Community Housing
- Ready by 21, St. Louis
- Special School District of St. Louis County
- St. Louis Mental Health Board
- St. Louis Economic Development Partnership
- St. Louis County Parks Department
- St. Louis Public Library
- University of Missouri St. Louis

We work diligently to provide a Return on Investment of the St. Louis County through our impact and securing additional funding. This funding comes from programs, workshops and services in addition to local gifts. Our volunteers provide value through service in the St. Louis area.

Community Arts

KEY OUTCOME

In 2021, the St. Louis Storytelling Festival was, once again, held virtually. To honor Missouri's bicentennial, our tellers took listeners on a "Journey of Stories Across Missouri," and was an endorsed bicentennial partner of Missouri 2021.

Featured storytellers for 2021 all had significant connections to Missouri. Bobby Norfolk, Joyce Slater and Beth Horner were our first storytellers in a new collaboration with HEC Media to provide on-demand video content for registered participants to access prerecorded stories for K-12 audiences, families, and communities. There were 500 adults and 1,180 children/youth in the audience with 36 participating artists.



Labor and Workforce Development

KEY OUTCOME

The changing nature of COVID resulted in us continuing to offer the Labor Law Series (LLS) on virtual platforms. This expanded our reach into nearly all of the MO counties. In 2021, there were 3,889 participants including more than 500 from the St. Louis area. These responsive webinars brought timely information on topics such as: The Hidden Costs of Substance Misuse; Worker Rights in the Era of COVID-19; Labor Trafficking of U.S. Minors; Digital Behavioral Health Solutions; and You OK? Suicide Prevention for the Workplace and Stress Management.



"The Labor Law Series puts out great information that we can trust and that is relevant to addressing today's workforce development challenges."

- 2021 LLS Participant

Business Development

KEY OUTCOME

The Missouri Procurement Technical Assistance Center (MOPTAC) St. Louis office has participated in several recovery discussions, initiatives, webinars and efforts to assist small businesses with COVID-19 recovery. Our 2021 impact included:

- Number of new clients: 105
- Amount of counseling time: 910 hours
- Number of sessions: 765
- Participated events: 37
- Dollar amount of awards: \$24,603,662



Family Nutrition

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Education or SNAP-Ed) brought \$9,646,109 in federal funds to Missouri. The funds support engagement with 485,010 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients and eligible citizens of Missouri. There were 321,372 direct educational contacts.

This year we had 1,383,799 indirect educational contacts through newsletters, health fairs, food pantries, and the Show Me Nutrition helpline. 4,177 direct and indirect contacts were made in St. Louis County.

Participants in SNAP-Ed learn the importance of making healthier meals and snack choices and to eat breakfast more often. They are more willing to try new foods,



increase their physical activity, and make healthier food choices. Those who practice healthy eating and are physically active are more likely to contribute to a healthy labor force and enjoy a high quality of life throughout their lifespan.

Barb Larson, SNAP-Ed Nutrition Program Associate shared the following success story:

"I have been teaching virtual Eating Smart, Being Active classes on zoom with a group of young adults with developmental disabilities. We have made recipes together on zoom for the first several weeks. One of the male students was talking with me before the class and had stated that he has recently been cooking at home and helping his Mom make dinner. He said that his Mom is letting him help cook now because of the classes and that she has noticed that he is gaining new skills and is capable of following recipes and being safe in the kitchen. I enjoy working with this audience and watching them blossom and gain new skills right before my eyes."

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) brought \$1,626,730 federal funds to Missouri. These funds were used to enroll 796 limited-resource families in nutrition education and meal preparation classes, representing 2,847 family members. Additionally, 2,469 youth were enrolled in EFNEP classes. 336 of these youth and adult participants reside in St. Louis County.

This vital programming effort reduces healthcare costs over the participant's lifetime, saving taxpayer money in reduced public healthcare benefits and insurance premiums.



Nutrition and Wellness

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Living a Healthy Life Programs Improve Health Outcomes of Local Residents

Living a Healthy Life programs are 6-week evidence-based workshops that give participants the tools to build confidence in their ability to manage their health and maintain active and fulfilling lives.

MU Extension is a subcontractor on a 3-year federal grant which has made it possible to deliver these programs free of cost to residents across Missouri.

These workshops, originally developed at Stanford University and now managed by the Self-Management Resource Center, are held virtually over Zoom and are highly participatory.

Mutual support and success build participants' confidence in their ability to manage their health while maintaining active lives. Techniques to deal with symptoms of chronic conditions such as fatigue, pain, managing high and low blood sugar, shortness of breath, stress, depression, anger, fear and frustration are also discussed in the program. In 2021, a total of 14 workshops were delivered with 146 people taking the course. Many positive behavior changes and improved health outcomes were noted by completers of the course.

Meet Judy for example, a recent class participant. Just six months after completing the course Judy reached out to tell us,

"I was originally diagnosed with diabetes in 2017. At the end (of the workshop), I said that one of my goals was to get off medications. Well, I saw my primary doctor yesterday and he took me off the Metformin and thought I could manage it by diet alone. Told my doctor about the class and that I had adopted the Mediterranean diet plan. He was impressed with the class. If I continue improving, he may take me off the cholesterol medication. It took a while and there were setbacks, but I have to say that persistence was a key factor. I also went from 205 pounds to 138 pounds presently. If this will inspire anyone in future classes, you may use this info. Your program does work. Thanks to this class, I now have a toolbox to ensure that I'm going to stay on track."

Judy's advice to the group:

"Taking care of your health is not one of those things that you can put off until tomorrow. You have to do it now. Deterioration does not wait and as we age, time becomes very precious."



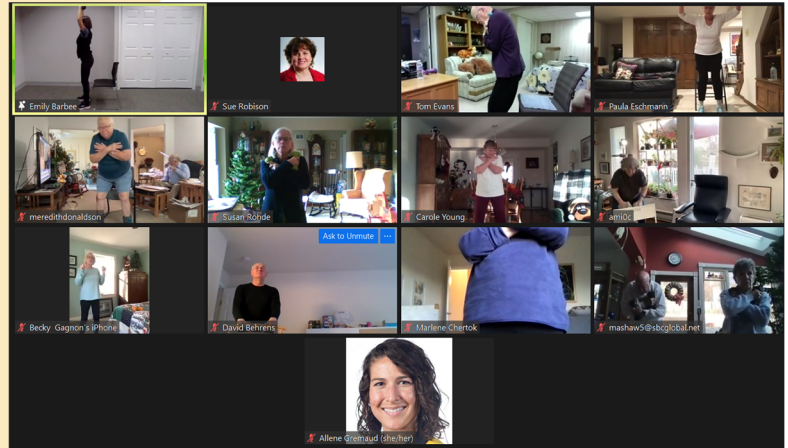
Nutrition and Wellness

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHT

Virtual Stay Strong, Stay Healthy Program Keeps St. Louis Residents Active and Healthy From Home

Stay Strong, Stay Healthy is a strength training program for older adults that incorporates the latest research to help participants develop the fitness, flexibility and balance that will enable individuals to live independently longer.

Since the fall of 2020, Urban East nutrition and health education specialists have been offering a virtual Stay Strong, Stay Healthy Level 2 course year-round. Several positive behavior changes and comments were shared with the instructors about how the structure, direction and pace of the program have helped them stay active at home when they otherwise would have been sedentary during the pandemic.



“It was a GREAT class. I like the pace, the addition of stretching interspersed, the modifications, the 14 reps. It was the best workout I have had yet. And I am not just saying that. I will incorporate some of your moves into my own that I do on alternate days.”
 -shared by one participant

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHT

In 2021, St. Louis County’s Nutrition and Health team partnered with the Ferguson-Florissant School District to bring Cooking Matters at Home to four different elementary schools in the district. Cooking Matters at Home is a virtual cooking and nutrition education class for families. Developed by Share our Strength and brought to Missouri residents through a collaboration MU Extension has with Operation Food Search (a St. Louis based non-profit), Cooking Matters at Home teaches families how to prepare balanced meals for the whole family, including picky eaters.

In a series of three lessons, Field Specialists in Nutrition and Health in St. Louis County Leslie Bertsch and Emily Barbee, reached 41 families at four different elementary schools. Here is what some of the families said about attending the Cooking Matters at Home classes:

- Participant Quotes -

“I enjoyed this class. It has brought me and my daughter closer together. I learned how to not waste food, incorporate it into meals, and how to freeze food. I’ve enjoyed it.”

“You’ve taught us to sneak in veggies to our meals. Last week, I added a sweet potato to beans and tomatoes to make a chili.”

“Sometimes it’s making it a priority to cook together ... just making an hour time cooking does help with bonding. It brings out passions in your children...”

Horticulture & Natural Resources

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

The St. Louis Master Gardeners logged more than 39,000 hours in 65 zip codes. There were 54 graduates from 33 zip codes in the 2021 Master Gardener training class.

Master Gardener volunteers, who happen to be veterans, efforts were highlighted by KMOV News on November 21, 2021. Here is an excerpt of that article:

“ST. LOUIS COUNTY (KMOV.com) -- Veterans keep the public gardens at Jefferson Barracks Park looking beautiful for visitors to see. Every week veterans head to Jefferson Barracks Park to pull weeds, dump limbs and tend to the plants.”



ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

St. Louis County residents, landscapers, commercial fruit and vegetable growers, and field crop growers submitted a total of **770 soil samples for analysis at the MU Soil and Plant testing laboratory**. Residents received detailed recommendations on how to fertilize their lawn and gardens to help their landscapes thrive and ensure that appropriate amounts of fertilizers were used to avoid fertilizer runoff and protect our waterways from nutrient pollution.

Nineteen St. Louis County residents attended **Soils 101 for Gardeners and Homeowners**. Students learned how to test their soil and grow a healthy lawn and garden. Students also learned how to protect the environment when fertilizing their lawn and garden and reduce fertilizer runoff to local streams and lakes.

The **Commercial Vegetable Production Webinar Series** was attended by **15** St. Louis County residents, who learned about growing vegetables to sell at local farmers markets and other outlets. Many topics were covered to help growers achieve success in their growing ventures!

Twenty-two St. Louis County residents attended the **Master Naturalist Certification Course**. This training prepares students to volunteer in the community and educate other residents about the importance of protecting Missouri's natural resources. Master Naturalists volunteer at public parks as well as Missouri Department of Conservation areas in St. Louis. Their projects include planting native gardens and monitoring populations of monarch butterflies and other threatened species in the region.

Twenty-three St. Louis County residents attended the **Produce Safety for Community Garden Webinar**. Students were managers and growers at community gardens and learned all about best practices to minimize risk of food-borne illness from produce that is harvested for the community and food pantries in St. Louis.

Eighteen St. Louis County residents attended the live weekly **Home Horticulture Town Halls**. We presented on topics and issues they are seeing across the state of Missouri and shared timely gardening topics.

Fifty-four St. Louis County residents subscribed to the **MU Extension Commercial Horticulture Video Newsletter**. It is designed to help support the growth of the fruit and vegetable industry. The newsletter provides brief video clips related to growing, marketing and selling their products.

Twenty-six St. Louis County residents attended the **Composting 101 class**. Students learned how to recycle garden and yard waste into compost to improve soils in their gardens and landscapes. Students learned what materials should be used in a compost pile and how to effectively manage a compost pile to produce a high quality finished product.

2021 Agriculture, Food & Forestry SBDC Center



Extension faculty who provide business counseling are located across the state to best serve the clients. They can assist with technical advice, financial management, business planning, business model pivots, value added propositions and many other services.

In the summer of 2020, a joint partnership between MU Extension and the Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) created the Missouri SBDC for Agriculture, Food and Forestry. This partnership offers no-cost, one-on-one personalized assistance for entrepreneurs, business owners, and farmers in Missouri. The center has a range of skills and specialties and serves all agricultural businesses with a particular focus on commercial horticulture, food and forestry, livestock and value-added meats.

In 2021, 830 counseling sessions were held with 198 clients statewide, reaching 86 counties. **There were eleven (11) total Ag SBDC Clients in St. Louis in 2021.** These current or prospective business owners received one-on-one guidance and support as they pursued COVID-19 business relief or other financial applications, developed or updated their business plans, evaluated their property's agricultural potential, and made decisions to sustain, grow or transition their business.

Annie's Project



ANNIE'S PROJECT

EMPOWERING WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

Annie's Project is an educational program that was created specifically for women in agriculture. This 18-hour course is a discussion-based workshop bringing women together to learn from experts in production, financial management, human resources, marketing and the legal field. In 2021, Annie's Project was taught online for the first time in Missouri. Three online Annie's Project courses were offered with a total attendance of 48 participants. There were three (3) participants from the St. Louis region.

The participants attended a weekly 2.5 hour live interactive online session via Zoom and completed self-paced activities and videos. Topics included: risk management, record keeping software,

ownership of property, insurance, financial statements, spreadsheets, writing a business plan, estate planning, leases, marketing, communication issues, and personality traits.

As a result of participation in Annie's Project, women are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to make informed risk management decisions regarding their agriculture business operations. In addition to the knowledge gained, participants learned about resources that can assist them in making business decisions for their farming operations. Missouri citizens benefit from a more vibrant and sustainable economy and greater food security.

"Most useful part of the program was the resources of information and comradery. It's nice to understand you're not alone. Sometimes with the internet it's too much information and it can overwhelm you."

- 2021 Participant

4-H Youth Development

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Embryology encourages hands-on scientific learning and discussion of issues related to human and chicken development as children take care of eggs that hatch into chicks in the classroom. This is a 2-week long session.

The program included training for teachers on curriculum, youth leadership in the classroom, risk management and care of eggs, chicks and incubators. 23 schools in the St. Louis area participated in 2021.



ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

4-H SMART CENTS Program Locations:

- Boys and Girls Club at O'Fallon Park YMCA
- Cardinal Ritter College Prep High School
- Carr Lane VPA Middle School
- St. Louis Catholic Academy
- St. Louis Public Library
- Yeatmen Middle School

4-H SNAC Program Locations:

- 12th & Park Recreation Center
- Carr Lane VPA Middle School
- Pattonville Middle School
- Yeatman Middle School

4-H Robotics Locations:

- Blossom Wood Elementary School
- Lucas Crossing
- National Society of Black Engineers
- St. Louis Catholic Academy Coding Program
- Stroman Elementary and Middle Schools

4-H Volunteer-led Community Clubs:

- 4-H Electric Dolphins
- Gang Green 4-H Community Club
- Sumner High School GRÖ Youth 4-H Community Club

4-H Youth Futures Locations:

- Cardinal Ritter College Prep High School
- Cherokee Recreation Center



4-H PROGRAMMING

- * **SMART CENTS** provides a financial literacy curriculum to youth and family members from a variety of backgrounds. The curriculum focuses on accessing pathways to prosperity and financial health.
- * **Youth Futures College Within Reach** offers programming to inform disadvantaged high school students and their parents with information about college and how to prepare for it, and to encourage the students to explore college and post-high school opportunities
- * **Community Clubs** are open to ages 8 to 18. Clubs meet monthly for group activities and club business. Each club elects officers and has an approved adult leader who supervises club activities.
- * **Robotic Program** teaches the basics of programming through an animation program designed by MIT called Scratch.
- * **Student Nutrition Advisory Clubs (SNAC)** are offered in school, before/after school services, and through the community helping youth to explore nutrition-fitness. This is an 8-week program.

Community Development

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

The **Youth Empowerment Program** trains 13- to 17-year old youth to acquire awareness and skills as community leaders. It teaches them how to develop and implement plans for youth-identified needs and issues through policy. This nine-month fellowship is administered through partnerships with Ready by 21 St. Louis, ReCAST, Missouri Foundation for Health, Northside Community Housing, St. Louis Youth Violence Prevention Partnership and St. Louis City Health Department. 16 youth completed the program in 2021 and worked on the community issues of bullying, racism and substance abuse.



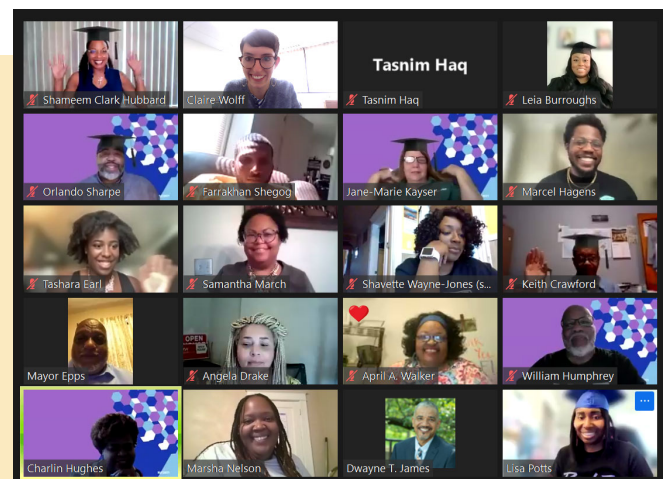
ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

In partnership with UMSL, **Neighborhood Leadership Academy** (NLA) has been offered since 2002 in the St. Louis region. The 2021 NLA engaged 87 participants statewide, from a wide variety of communities. The ten 3-hour sessions were held online through a Zoom format. The program, which runs for 10 weeks, brings together diverse residents from rural and urban regions around the state. Participants engage in building personal leadership skills, understanding community building principles and strategies, project planning, and enhancing organizational leadership and management skills.

“NLA showed me to really look at the strengths of the people in my organization. Because of our different strengths, different people will step up to be leaders in different ways for different projects.”

- 2021 NLA Participant

The 2021 **Neighborhood Leadership Fellows** (NLF) cohort had 23 graduates. This 9-month, 18-session fellowship prepared community leaders from the St. Louis Promise Zone (North St. Louis City and parts of North County) to work towards local system change. Fellows created an Individualized Personal Leadership Plan and worked in group projects aimed at addressing more equitable regional policies and preventing violence in the community. The 2020 group NLF is provided in collaboration with Creating Whole Communities (CWC) and the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership with funding from Missouri Foundation for Health.



“NLF is an opportunity for you to make systemic change in an area you care about. NLF gives you the tools, skills, access to resources and connections to help you implement a plan for change.” - 2021 NLF Participant

MU Extension St. Louis County Faculty & Staff

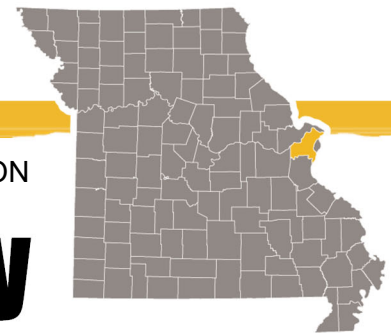
MU Extension Faculty & Staff carries out the University of Missouri's land-grant mission. Our faculty and staff bring researched-based knowledge and resources to St. Louis County.

Jody Squires, Ph.D *Urban East Regional Director*
Dwayne T. James, P.E. *Urban County Director*
Emily Barbee *Field Specialist in Nutrition & Health*
Leslie Bertsch *Field Specialist in Nutrition & Health*
Justin Keay *Field Specialist in Horticulture*
Barbara Larson *Nutrition Program Associate*
Vincent McKinney *4-H STEM Extension Instructor*
Terry Olishile *4-H Youth Program Associate*
Lisa Overholser *Field Specialist in Community Arts*
Holly Records *Extension Educator in Horticulture*
Claire Rippel *Community Engagement Specialist*
Donald Robertson *PTAC Specialist*
Gus Robinson *4-H Youth Development Specialist*
Douglas Swanson, Ed.D. *Field Specialist in Labor*
Lynette Watson *Business Development Specialist*
Melinda Farrar *St. Louis County Office Bookkeeper*
Janie Lewis *St. Louis County Office Support Staff*
Mary Lynch *Regional Office Support Staff*
Chandra Roberts *Nutrition Admin Support Staff*
Sarah Kelly *Communications Intern*

2021 St. Louis County Extension Council

The St. Louis County Extension Council are elected or appointed members to advise with programming, provide fiscal management and oversee operations for St. Louis County Extension.

Sylvester Bolden / Chairman *St. John*
Adam Brown / Vice-Chairman *University City*
Karen Jamerson / Treasurer *Jennings*
Nancy Luetzow / Secretary *Kirkwood*
Dr. Savita Bagga *Manchester*
Nathan Brandt *Affton*
Richard Breeding *Crestwood*
Eugene Franks *Ferguson*
Gretchen Luke *Bridgeton*
John Pimmel *Maplewood*
Angela Pinex *Olivette*
Rebecca Poon *Chesterfield*
Rob Rambaud *Wildwood*
Shavanna Spratt *Ferguson*
Lynn Squires *Hazelwood*
Lisa Thompson *Maryland Heights*
Ken Truemper *Glendale*
Beth Von Behren *Ferguson*



UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION

Saint Louis County

MU Extension is the outreach and engagement arm of the University of Missouri system providing research-based educational programs for youth & families, businesses & communities and horticulture.

132 East Monroe Ave

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