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UNIVERSITY CITY HIGH SCHOOL TO INDUCT 11 NEW MEMBERS INTO PRESTIGIOUS HALL OF FAME

University City, MO - The School District of University City is delighted to announce 11 individuals have been selected to be inducted into the prestigious University City High School Hall of Fame in October, 2021.

These University City High School alumni have made a tremendous difference locally, nationally and internationally and join dozens of other amazing honorees who have helped to shape the world. The group includes a physician dedicated to the humane medical care of Alzheimer's and dementia patients and their families, a lawyer dedicated to representing children and families in the family court system, the president of a shipyard that builds nuclear aircraft carriers and submarines, scholars in history, mathematics and law, an internationally acclaimed artisan glassmaker, a Hollywood actor, a U.S. military veteran with 27 years of service to the United States, a local supporter of University City Schools, an international expert in housing for underserved populations worldwide, and a nationally recognized opponent of the death penalty who has worked vigorously to get his message to the general public in books and film.

The celebration and formal induction of University City High School's finest graduates will take place Friday evening of Homecoming Weekend, October 1, 2021, at University City High School. The new inductees are:

Kathryn (Pierce) Banks, Class of 1993

Kathryn Banks has dedicated her career to providing legal services for children and families who need important representation in the family court system. From a love of mock trials in her 9th grade civics class at University City High School, to her first job as a child care professional after graduating from the University of Kansas, to her decision to earn her law degree at the University of Missouri - Columbia, Banks has kept the welfare of children at the center. As an Associate Professor of Practice in the School of Law and the current director of the Children's Rights Clinic at Washington University, she supervises law students who are specially licensed to practice law in a legal clinic that provides free legal services to children and families in St. Louis County. The work she does elevates the rights of parents and children in the court system and provides fair representation for families that cannot afford these critical services on their own. While a student at the University of Missouri, Banks was president of the Black Law Student Association and received the prestigious Thurgood Marshall scholarship. She serves on the board of the National Association of Counsel for Children



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where she is working to bring best practices in child welfare advocacy to Missouri. Her contribution to the community was recognized in 2019 with a Spirit of Justice Award by the St. Louis Bar Foundation.

Jennifer (Roman) Boykin, Class of 1982

A love of mathematics and a fascination with her father's career building F-18s at the then McDonnell Douglas factory, led Jennifer Boykin into the multibillion dollar industry of shipbuilding. Today she is the executive vice president of Huntington Ingalls Industries and president of Newport News Shipbuilding in Virginia. She oversees a historic shipyard, which has approximately \$4 billion in annual revenues. She is the first woman to lead the shipyard in its 135 year history. The shipyard is sole builder and refueler of nuclear powered aircraft carriers and one of only two in the country capable of designing and building nuclear-powered submarines. Boykin earned her bachelor's degree in marine engineering from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and her master's degree in engineering management from The George Washington University. She began her shipbuilding career in 1987 in the company's nuclear engineering division. Boykin is a national advocate for STEM education and awareness, especially for programs focused on women and minorities. She has dozens of awards, board appointments and community service involvement, including founding two STEM programs for girls and underrepresented populations in the Newport News community.

Donavan "Donny" Nelson Butler, Class of 1989

Donavan "Donny" Butler served in the U.S. Army for 29 years of continuous service until his retirement as an Army Master Sergeant in 2018. After joining the military in 1989 right out of high school, Butler's career first took him to Germany at the end of the cold war and then South America where he was based in Panama and engaged in operations in Belize, El Salvador and Columbia. He worked on bases in San Antonio, Texas and Fort Knox, Kentucky and became a military combat trainer, an Army basic instructor and an applied suicide intervention skills trainer. He received the prestigious Meritorious Service Medal and more than 35 other medals and honors during his career. But his most coveted accomplishments include the work he did advocating for equal opportunity and the protection of civil rights oppression, bias and prejudice within the military culture. This work spanned decades and required continuous monitoring of superiors and commanding officers. He attributed his drive to do what was right for his peers to his education in University City Schools, which stressed integrity and character, and a U. City community that taught him to look out for others. His love of adventure started as a youngster playing on the banks of the River Des Peres in University City.

Reena Goldthree, Class of 1999

Dr. Reena Goldthree took a love of intensive scholarship at University City High School all the way to the Ivy League where she became an assistant professor at Dartmouth College and is now an assistant professor in the Department of African American Studies at Princeton University. She is also an Associated Faculty Member in Princeton's Program in Gender and Sexuality Studies and in the Program in Latin American Studies. Goldthree specializes in the history of Latin America and the Caribbean, with a focus on social movements, political theory, labor and migration, and Caribbean feminisms. She earned her bachelor's degree from Columbia University and her master's and doctorate degrees from Duke University. In addition to publishing in dozens of academic and general journals, she has been honored with fellowships and grants from prestigious organizations, including



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Mellon Foundation, Woodrow Wilson Foundation, and Fulbright. She is completing a book manuscript entitled *Democracy shall be no Empty Romance: War and the Politics of Empire in the Greater Caribbean*, which examines how the crisis of World War I transformed the Afro-Caribbeans' understanding of and engagements with the British Empire.

Linda “Cookie” (Dickson) Jones, Class of 1983

Linda “Cookie” Jones is a community volunteer and active with U. City Schools, holding a variety of roles for several decades and during key points in the District’s development. As a University City Schools parent, she first began volunteering for the District in 2005 when she became an active member and later president of the Barbara C. Jordan Elementary School PTO. From there she became involved in the University City High School Alumni Association and served as its president for many years. From 2009 to 2015 she was a member of the University City Board of Education. During her tenure on the Board she served as secretary, vice president and president. She is currently president of the University City Education Foundation. Jones also participated in peace and school initiatives during the Ferguson unrest that deeply affected district students and staff. She has served in civic roles with the University City Sports Association and the University City Park Commission. Jones graduated *Magna Cum Laude* from Lindenwood University with a bachelor’s of science degree in Business Administration and later earned a business analysis certification from Washington University. She is currently the owner of Touch of Tenderness CDS, LLC, a University City-based business that manages staffing for in-home health care services assisting elderly and disabled clients.

Daniel Kaufer, Class of 1977 (deceased)

Dr. Daniel Kaufer was a beloved member of the University of North Carolina School of Medicine (UNC) who helped pioneer the treatment of individuals with memory disorders, including Alzheimer’s. A neurologist, he was the founding director of the UNC Memory Disorders Program and the chief of the Memory and Cognitive Disorders Division within UNC’s Department of Neurology. Dr. Kaufer was deeply devoted to patient and family care. He recognized that patients with memory disorders put severe stress on family caregivers. Through clinical research as well as advocacy, he sought to improve the experience of family caregivers as well as the loved ones they cared for. He strove to raise awareness about the causes of neurocognitive disorders to empower people to keep their brains active and healthy. After graduating from University City High School, he received a Bachelor of Science degree in molecular biology and zoology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he also received his Doctor of Medicine degree. He completed his neurology residency training at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and a fellowship training in behavioral and geriatric neurology at the University of California at Los Angeles. Dr. Kaufer was elected as a fellow into the American Academy of Neurology and the American Neuropsychiatric Association and as President of the Society for Behavioral and Cognitive Neurology.

Earl Kessler, Class of 1959

With a bachelor’s degree in architecture, Earl Kessler took his early observations and experiences in the Peace Corps and parlayed it into a professional career devoted to housing and sustaining communities in some of the most vulnerable places in the world. Kessler received his bachelor’s degree in architecture from Washington University. He then spent three years in the Peace Corps in Columbia, creating and working on projects to



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upgrade rural school construction and improving slum conditions in Cartagena. From this experience, he realized there were many underserved parts of the developing world in need of such projects. He returned to the U.S. and went to graduate school at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) where he earned the degree Master of Architecture: Planning for Developing countries. He took his expertise around the world to help with housing and urban planning in places like Haiti, Columbia, Ecuador, Panama, South Africa, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Nepal, Bhutan and The Philippines. He was called to help countries during some of the bleakest times, including Haiti after its devastating 2010 earthquake and southern Thailand after its 2004 tsunami. His expertise spans critical areas regarding human basic needs, including disaster risk management, shelter improvements and affordable design for some of the world's most problematic slums, urban environmental improvement, community infrastructure, and climate change impacts and consequences.

David Levi, Class of 1977

David Levi's successful artistic career was nurtured in the art classrooms at University City High School and on the nearby Loop through his early years as a ceramicist at the Craft Alliance Center of Art and Design. He became interested in glass while pursuing his bachelor's of fine arts at Washington University. Following his 1983 college graduation, he spent a year in Sweden as an apprentice and then returned to St. Louis where he founded Ibex Glass Studio with fellow University City High School graduates Sam Stang and Dimitri Michaelides. Ibex Glass Studio served the St. Louis glass scene for eight years until 1993, when Levi moved the studio to a small island in Washington State. While located in St. Louis, the studio repeatedly hosted UCHS chemistry teacher Daniel Lane's students to learn about the chemistry behind glass making. In those years Levi developed into one of the world's premier glass artisans. In the late 80s and early 90s, he was invited to exhibit at the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC, and the American Craft Museum in New York City. In 1987, he won the American Craft Council Young Americans Award for innovative craft artists and designers under age 30 and a National Endowment for the Arts grant. He was one of 73 artists selected in 1993 to be part of President Bill Clinton's and Hillary Clinton's White House Collection of American Crafts. His work can be found in permanent museum collections throughout the United States. His wavy nesting glass designs are believed to be an influence in several consumer product containers for hair products and other personal items. In 2006, Levi moved to Corning, New York to be the project manager and process engineer at the famous Steuben Glass Company, the oldest crystal making company in America. He then moved to Berkeley, California where he designed a manufacturing and retail facility for the Seattle-based company, Glassbaby. Levi returned home in 2018 and is now the studio director at the Third Degree Glass factory on Delmar Boulevard in St. Louis.

Helene (Wagman) Sherman, Class of 1962

Dr. Helene Sherman has dedicated her adult lifetime to teaching both students and other teachers a love and proficiency of mathematics. After teaching elementary, middle and college level mathematics, Sherman joined the faculty of the University of Missouri - St. Louis where she taught mathematics, mathematics education and STEM courses in the College of Education for more than 40 years. She is now a professor emeritus. During her career, she authored and co-authored dozens of books and scholarly articles, including nine commercially published textbooks, one of which was translated into Korean and into Arabic, and also the landmark online learning programs *Digits*, a middle school mathematics curriculum, and *Metrics and More*, a hands-on



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measurement activities program for students in Kindergarten through grade 12 students. She has been honored over the years for her love of teaching, her tremendous impact on math education, her influence on K-12 mathematics instruction and her devotion to equity in the learning and teaching of mathematics in the St. Louis region. She is beloved by math teachers who testify her mentoring drastically improved their skills and student outcomes in their classrooms. She has received the Missouri Governor's Award for Distinguished Teaching, the Emerson Electric Outstanding Teaching Award, the Missouri Council of Teachers of Mathematics Outstanding Teaching Award, the Mathematics Educator of Greater St. Louis Higher Education Outstanding Teaching Award, the University of Missouri-St. Louis Distinguished Alumni Award, and the College of Education Distinguished Teaching Award. Sherman earned an A.B. from Washington University and an Elementary Education M.Ed., and an Elementary Education Ed.D. from the University of Missouri-St. Louis. She continues to give back to the regional community through numerous volunteer and board activities.

Richard Stack, Class of 1970

After earning a B.A. in psychology from Indiana University, Richard Stack studied for his law degree at the University of Missouri-Kansas where he witnessed numerous faults in the criminal justice and legal systems, particularly regarding the poor and the application of the death penalty. He wrote his thesis on the politics and legality issues of hunger. That experiences defined him and emboldened him to become, not a practicing lawyer, but a supporter of the poor, an activist, a communications specialist, and a fierce, nationally known opponent of the death penalty. His career started remarkably after law school in 1977 when he moved to Washington, D.C. and created the Capital Area Community Food Bank, one of the first of its kind in the nation. Stack served as its executive director for nine years. During that time, he also joined the School of Communications faculty at American University focusing on the intersection of media, litigation and the criminal justice system. After leaving the food bank, he worked in public relations and consulting and specialized in nonprofit/advocacy communications. His communications savvy, along with his ability to market and fundraise for his causes led him to become a dominant figure in the fight against the death penalty in the United States. He served as a *pro bono* media advisor for the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty. He authored two books arguing against the death penalty, *Grave Injustice: Unearthing Wrongful Executions* and *Dead Wrong: Violence, Vengeance and the Victims of Capital Punishment*. In 2018, he co-directed the highly regarded documentary "In the Executioner's Shadow," which followed the lives of a former state executioner, a Boston Marathon bombing victim and parents of a murder victim who decided to fight for the life of their daughter's killer. Stack is now an associate professor emeritus at American University, where he was honored with multiple awards for his teaching and scholarship. He continues with his consulting practice.

Stephanie Williams-Nelson, Class of 1977

University City High School's former homecoming queen Stephanie Williams-Nelson took her love of dance, cheerleading and high school musicals and parlayed it into a whirlwind dance, television, movie and philanthropic career that has spanned more than four decades. She attended Webster University and the University of Missouri-Kansas City on dance scholarships. But it was her performances on the MUNY stage in Forest Park and the Starlight Theater in Kansas City that led her to New York City and make a go of it as a dancer. She earned a coveted scholarship at the prestigious Alvin Ailey Dance Academy and then quickly landed



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dancing roles in Broadway and Off-Broadway productions. She danced at the White House for President Jimmy Carter. Williams then moved to Los Angeles to portray the role of dancer Stephanie Harrison on the hit television series, "Fame." While on "Fame," she served as assistant choreographer to director/actress Debbie Allen. She went on to play major character roles on the soap operas "The Young and the Restless," "General Hospital" and "One Life to Live." During her role as Amy Lewis on "The Young and the Restless," Williams was featured on the cover of TV Guide as part of the "three hottest soap-opera couples," and was a nominee for the NAACP Image Awards as a best supporting actress in a daytime drama. Her resume includes dozens of guest spots on television shows, including "The Love Boat," "Moesha," "Parenthood," and "A Different World," and was even Alexis' secretary, Pamela, on "Dynasty." She also has had roles in numerous films, including "The Fan," "Boiling Point," "Meteor Man" and "Back to the Future, Part II." Williams also has created nonprofits and enrichment programs to help children develop social and emotional health and achieve academic success and college and career readiness both in Los Angeles and in the St. Louis region. Now living back in the St. Louis area, Williams-Nelson has been an active supporter of University City Schools.

This year's Hall of Fame inductees will join a long and prestigious list of alumni who have made advancements in fields that include the sciences, medicine, the arts, industry, entertainment, social justice and more. They include playwright Thomas "Tennessee" Lanier Williams, internationally renowned rap artist Cornell "Nelly" Haynes, and Marlon West, the lead effects animator for beloved Disney films, and many more. The new inductees' photos will join more than 100 others in the main entrance hallway of University City High School.

The UCHS Hall of Fame was established in 1999 for the purpose of honoring graduates from each era of the school's dynamic history. The induction event occurs every other year. Each January, the District publicly calls for nominations. Registration for the event will begin this summer with details to come at www.ucityschools.org/HOF2021. To learn more about the UCHS Hall of Fame, including a list of impressive inductees and their biographies and how to nominate for 2023, visit www.ucityschools.org/HOF. For more information, contact Nancy Cambria at ncambria@ucityschools.org.

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