Honoring those who move Columbia forward
Continuing to honor Columbia’s unsung heroes

When I took over as director of community outreach in May, I was excited to have the opportunity to be more connected to the community. The project I was most excited to get started on was the Progress Awards.

My predecessor, Matt Dulin, created an incredible program in 2017, and I hoped to be able to carry it forward and continue to stay focused on honoring the unsung heroes of our community. It was a pleasure to see that word of the awards had spread, and I found community members ready to support this year’s awards from the start.

As the nominations rolled in, it became the highlight of my day to scroll through them and read about the incredible people serving our community and moving the community forward.

This year, we had 83 nominees across the 10 different categories with 120 community members nominating them.

In reading about the winners, I learned about an effort to create community book clubs having a ripple effect on race relations, a club for elementary students that encourages learning about STEM, a successful campaign to decrease waste during the city’s biggest festival, a new approach to health care that seeks to make it personal for everyone, a pair of entrepreneurs not just building their business but helping others do the same, the development of a program to connect students with job shadowing, the way a man with a vision is making an agriculture park a reality, a choral director making sure vocalists of all ages are able to participate, a company that encourages employees to volunteer in a number of organizations around the city, and a man who honors everyone who comes into his establishment, carrying on Sherman Brown Jr.’s impact.

And that was just the 10 winners you’ll read about here. In every nomination letter, I learned something new about our community and the people who are impacting it.

We gathered editors and the 2017 winners to consider every nominee and select the winners you will find in this section. We want to be clear that no one who advertises with the Missourian has any say over the winners.

We are excited to introduce you to this year’s 2018 Progress Award winners and nominees in this section. If you think someone is missing in this group, don’t worry. Nominate them next year.

THE CATEGORIES

Progress in the Arts: Recognizes a community member who has made an impact by advancing the role of art and artists in Columbia. The arts can include music, theater, poetry, prose, paint, photography, sculpture or any other creative art form.

Progress in Civic Engagement: Recognizes an individual who holds an elected, appointed or staff position in government who demonstrates a commitment to being engaged with citizens and upholds the ideals of open, fair and transparent local government.

Progress in Corporate Citizenship: Recognizes a firm with a presence in Columbia that demonstrates a commitment to community service and involvement by supporting efforts in education, the arts, sustainability, social justice or entrepreneurship.

Progress in Education: Recognizes an individual educator, administrator or support staff member or a program at an educational institution who has made an impact on his/her school or community at large through innovative approaches to teaching, programs, community outreach or mentorship.

Progress in Entrepreneurship: Recognizes a business owner or business owners who have successfully launched a startup or small business based in Columbia for at least a year. The recipient ought to reflect a commitment to their communities and support fellow entrepreneurs.

Progress in Health Care: Recognizes a health care provider who has made an impact in Columbia by delivering high quality and innovative care, supporting public health through outreach and education, and modeling responsible health practices and medical ethics.

Progress in Philanthropy: Recognizes an individual or group that has modeled the way for what it means to give back to those most in need in our communities through fundraising and inspiring leadership to others in doing so.

Progress in Social Justice: Recognizes a community member or program that has made an impact in advancing the values of equity, diversity and inclusion in Columbia.

Progress in Sustainability: Recognizes a community member who has made an impact on environmental sustainability through innovative practices, education and continuous improvement.

The Sherman Brown Jr. Award: Recognizes a community member, like its namesake, serves his or her neighbors, patrons or customers with the highest esteem and commitment to treating each and every person “like gold.”

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4 Progress in the Arts
Emily Edgington Andrews, a director seeking inclusivity

6 Progress in Health Care
Bridget Gruender, a helping hand in health care

8 Progress in Civic Engagement
Rose Wibbenmeyer, supporting students’ futures

10 Progress in Entrepreneurship
Lloyd and Fontella Henry, serving opportunities

12 The Sherman Brown Jr. Award
David Johnson, building community

14 Progress in Social Justice
Don Day, using conversation to bring understanding

16 Progress in Philanthropy
Adam Saunders, a visionary for a new park

18 Progress in Sustainability
Patricia Weisenfelder, leading the green charge

20 Progress in Corporate Citizenship
Shelter Insurance, supporting Columbia since 1946

22 Progress in Education
Tojan Rahhal, bringing STEM to young students

Reporters
Hannah Britton
Kyle Brown
Kasey Carlson
Magdaline Duncan
Samantha Koester
Trevor Rowland
Danny Rozen
Ashley Skokan
Virginia Ward
Jing Yang

Supervising editor
Elizabeth Stephens

Photo editor
Jesi Dodge

Photographers
Bailey Valadez
Jason Vance
Jesi Dodge

Designer
Kyle Brown
TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT’S POSSIBLE WITH CENTRAL BANK OF BOONE COUNTY.

Central Bank of Boone County

573-874-8100 • facebook.com/boonebank • Member FDIC
PROGRESS IN THE ARTS

Emily Edgington Andrews, a director seeking inclusivity in Columbia’s choral programs

With scholarships and grants, Andrews makes it possible for all to participate.

BY JING YANG
news@columbiamissourian.com

Emily Edgington Andrews found her passion in music during college, and she has built her life and work around it in Columbia.

Andrews was appointed artistic director for the Columbia Chorale in 2013. During her tenure, the organization has expanded to include 10 choral ensembles and community programs under the title of Choral Arts Alliance of Missouri.

Andrews’ efforts have made it possible for anyone to participate — regardless of age or financial situation. Under her leadership, the chorale has provided scholarships and grants to make community events possible.

In addition to her work with the chorale, Andrews is the director of community outreach and assistant choral director for the MU School of Music, vocal music teacher at the Columbia Independent School and conductor at Sacred Heart Catholic Church. She talked with us about her work in the Columbia music scene.

Why did you choose to develop your career in arts?

I was born in Hannibal, Missouri, and grew up in Kansas City, Kansas. I played volleyball and basketball for nine years but have always been active in the arts — singing in choir during elementary and secondary school, taking private voice and piano lessons. An inspiring high school choir director drew me to study music in college, and my collegiate director (R. Paul Crabb) continued to fuel the passion through my undergraduate and graduate years.

I love people and music, so marrying the two seemed an obvious career choice. I’ve been fortunate to have a wide variety of professional experiences.

What’s your role in the Choral Arts Alliance of Missouri?

As artistic director, I oversee the functioning of the organization in collaboration with the board of directors, cultivating the programming for the 10 choirs each season, managing the various artistic staff and conducting several ensembles, including Columbia Chorale, Canta Bella and Cambiare (two youth choirs in CAAM’s youth extension Columbia Youth Choirs).

Our mission is to create exceptional choral opportunities to all individuals from beginning youth to professional musician. When I began in 2013, there was only one choir for adults, Columbia Chorale. This was during a time of transition in the school system and the funding was being cut for the arts particularly at the middle levels.

I recommended to the Columbia Chorale board of directors that we expand to include a youth choir extension. Each year since then we have expanded our reach to include diverse and varied programming options for interested singers of all ages and musical levels.

Can you give examples about your collaboration with other arts groups in our community?

I strive to create compelling concert programs that involve partnerships with other organizations that will add authenticity and strengthen a theme. We are stronger when we can come together, regardless of our background and beliefs.

This fall, CAAM’s Columbia Chorale partnered with the MU Asian Affairs Center to present a Japanese-themed concert, bringing in a taiko drumming group from St. Louis and commissioning a new work by a Japanese composer to mark the occasion.

In April 2019, CAAM will partner with Missouri Contemporary Ballet to present Carl Orff’s “Carmina Burana” in the composer’s original conception of “total theatre.” Often programmed as a concert work with orchestra or wind ensemble, pairing with the dance company makes for an even more stunning visual effect.

Since the ensemble’s conception in 2014, our select adult choir, Columbia Chamber Choir, collaborates with the Columbia Civic Orchestra in a concert that premiers new music by composers with a Missouri affiliation. CAAM also happens to be a Partners in Edu-
 ALSO NOMINATED

Scott Braudis
Alex Campbell-Graves
Luci Cook, Leola Davis and Amanda Rainey
Julia Gaines

Catherine Park
Kirk Trevor
Valerie Berta Torales
Lucy Vianello

Emily has grown the Columbia Chorale into an organization that offers outstanding performance and learning opportunities for vocalists in the mid-Missouri area for ages 7-90. She strives to collaborate with other community arts groups including the Missouri Contemporary Ballet, the Missouri Symphony, Columbia Symphony and outstanding soloists and instrumentalists. She has managed to work with others to ensure all interested people can participate regardless of ability, talent or financial conditions.

From the nomination: Here is an excerpt from one of the nomination letters for Emily Edgington Andrews

"What do you think has been your greatest contribution to the Columbia community, in terms of the arts?

As I've grown as a musician and educator, I've become increasingly more focused on using music to build relationships between people while striving to maintain a high artistic quality. I believe music is so powerful that it can be used as a vehicle to promote positive social change, to give representation to a minority population through specific programming, to bridge gaps between diverse groups of people by giving individuals opportunities to celebrate and respect uniqueness, and to provide opportunities to use music as a means of healthy expression.

I think because of my desire for inclusivity, accessibility and high quality, CAAM is an asset to our community, enriching countless lives."

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE RECIPIENTS!

Thank you for all that you do to make Columbia a great place to live, work and learn.

Quality Collision Repair

Carol Miller, CEO

Central Missouri Auto Body
533 N Hwy 763 | Columbia, MO 65202 | 573.875.5877 | www.centralmoautobody.com

5353 N Hwy 763 | Columbia, MO 65202 | 573.875.5877 | www.centralmoautobody.com
PROGRESS IN HEALTH CARE

Bridget Gruender, a helping hand in health care

Gruender’s direct primary care practice is making health care accessible in Columbia

BY DANIEL ROZEN
news@columbiamissourian.com

Ever since she was a little girl, Bridget Gruender always wanted to be a medical doctor. Her road was a long and uncertain one, but it ended with her achieving her dream. Now working as the owner and physician of Liberty Family Medicine, Gruender has focused in on a new goal: Making health care more affordable by spreading direct primary care practices.

Gruender talked with us about the state of health care in this nation and how it can be improved.

What do you think has been your greatest contribution to the Columbia community in terms of health care?

Affordable access to health care. Most people can’t afford what they feel they need. Urgent cares are expensive. Going to a primary care doctor’s office is expensive, with a co-pay and/or visit fee if you don’t have insurance. Offering an affordable option for those individuals is huge. Along with that, affordable care includes medications and labs, which we offer in the clinic as well.

So, it’s not just the visit, it’s what they need to complete their health care. Afterward, following up in the labs, taking the medications, making those affordable.

So your practice is a direct primary practice?

Direct primary care is the type of practice; we’re a family medicine clinic. So, my training is in family medicine. I was trained to see all ages and all types of conditions. I see children all the way through geriatric patients. I do chronic care, so diabetes, high blood pressure, depression, anxiety, things like that as well as acute care, so strep throat, coughs, viral illnesses, pneumonia, somebody cuts themselves, I can sew that up, that kind of thing.

Direct primary care basically just means you charge a membership fee for the services that you offer. So it’s different in that it’s not a fee for service, which is, for instance, what an urgent care is. They offer a service, they charge you a fee. It’s different.

What does it mean to you to be recognized for progress in health care?

I think that’s a really great honor, honestly. This is something, if physicians continue to adopt this type of practice, it could change the face of health care for the entire nation, which is huge. Direct primary care has been around for about 20 years, or maybe a little longer. There are over 1,000 practices like mine around the nation. We’ve been open for 2½ years. We were the first in Columbia, and we’re the only one seeing all ages, which is huge. It’s spreading like wildfire, which is great. Being recognized for something like that, it feels good because it’s going to make a lot of changes.

Why do you think your category, health care, is important?

Your health is really all that you have. If you don’t have your health, you have nothing. A lot of people can’t afford the care they need to get their health to a good point or to keep their health at a good point.

I don’t know what the other categories are, honestly, but, in my opinion, health care is the most important category because if you don’t have your health, you have nothing. Affordable health care, helping people reach their health goals, helping people stay healthy, it’s huge.

What are you doing right now to, like you said, spread this wildfire of direct primary care?

The initial vision was just for me to

If you don’t have your health, you have nothing. Affordable health care, helping people reach their health goals, helping people stay healthy, it’s huge.

Bridget Gruender
owner and physician, Liberty Family Medicine
have a community of patients that I cared for very intimately. At the heart of my practice is the relationship with the patients, with me. Not with somebody else. Not with a care coordinator or a nurse. Of course, if they have a relationship with my nurse, I think that’s great, but for me to be their primary contact is the goal.

As far as continuing to spread, we’re ready for another physician. I have enough patients in my panel that I would like to add another physician who is able to do the same thing. If they don’t want to do … the little tasks that mean so much or own a business, run a business, all of that.

They don’t have to do that. They can come on as an employed physician, have a better way of life, make a good salary, have a good connection with their patients, and that will continue to spread.

When you were getting into medicine, did you always want to get into direct primary care?

No. I didn’t even know about it. They don’t tell you about it in med school because they want you to stay in the system. They want you to be an employed physician and continue to make money for the systems.

I actually learned about it from two fellow residents when I was in residency. They didn’t, as a residency, talk or teach about direct primary care, and this was six years ago now. So, not early in the movement by any means because it’s been around for 20 years, but still, there’s so many people who don’t know about it. It’s not the traditional route, so it’s not what’s taught. It’s honestly the smartest and most cost-effective route.

From the nomination: Here is an excerpt from one of the nomination letters for Bridget Gruender

Bridget Gruender has changed the way health care feels and works. She has made a successful effort to provide affordable membership-based healthcare for everyone. Her bedside manner is beyond anything I have ever encountered. She has personally helped us on weekends, nights and when we have been on trips that have kept us from a costly ER visit. She is so much more then a doctor. She treats us as family. She is what health care should be. A relationship. Her care is worth a million dollars but it only costs a little. My family is so grateful for her and her care.”
PROGRESS IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Rose Wibbenmeyer, supporting students’ futures

Wibbenmeyer created a program to offer job shadowing opportunities for high schoolers.

BY KYLE BROWN
news@columbiamissourian.com

W hen Rose Wibbenmeyer was growing up in St. Louis, all her parents wanted was for her and her seven older siblings to graduate high school. Neither of her parents had an education beyond the eighth grade.

But Wibbenmeyer’s childhood dream went much further: She planned on being a lawyer.

Wibbenmeyer graduated from the MU School of Law in 1994. Shortly thereafter, she passed the bar exam and began working for the state public defender’s office. Over the course of seven years with the public defender’s office, she worked in appeals, trial and capital divisions.

In 2001, Wibbenmeyer started working in the city of Columbia prosecutor’s office. In 2010, she moved to the civil side and began her current position as assistant city counselor.

Wibbenmeyer used her connections in city government to start the Community Scholars partnership with Hickman High School. She discussed her motivation for creating a program to give at-risk students an opportunity to succeed with the Missouri. This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

ALSO NOMINATED
Centro Latino
Shane Creech
Caritas Habimana
Lyra Noce
Rep. Sara Walsh
Janet Thompson

It’s really great to see everyone stepping together as a community to help raise the children in our community.”

Rose Wibbenmeyer
assistant city counselor

From the nomination: Here is an excerpt from one of the nomination letters for Rose Wibbenmeyer

Rose is an unsung hero who tackles tasks beyond the scope of her government responsibilities. ... Rose has worked tirelessly to develop a community-based program that gives our students opportunity. She has been their advocate, their champion and their biggest cheerleader.”

Can you talk about the Community Scholars program?

What we wanted to do at the city is we wanted to take advantage of existing programs and targeted them to those kids most in need. So the state of Missouri has the A+ Scholarship Program. With the state of Missouri’s A+ Scholarship Program, if you have a 2.5 GPA, you’re a good citizen; you stay out of trouble with the law; you have to get a proficient or above on the algebra exam; and you have to do 50 hours of tutoring or mentoring, of which 25 percent can be job shadowing. If you do all those things, the state of Missouri will pay for two years of community college or trade school. So it’s a brilliant design. As a community, we want people to stay out of trouble with the law. We want them to be good citizens. We want them to have some sort of motivation to graduate high school and do at least you know, an associate’s or trade school or at least jump start their college education, right.

So if we could take that and assist by setting up a program whereby we would take the kids most in need and jump start the A+ Scholarship Program through that job shadowing piece, and they could earn 12 1/2 hours of job shadowing as they’re entering high school, they’re more likely to finish the the rest of the 50 hours. And then more likely to keep their grades up, more likely to have good attendance, more likely to do all the things we want them to do more likely to graduate high school. So that was the theory.

What made you want to start the Community Scholars program?

I saw so many kids and adults whose path got very disrupted because they didn’t have hope. They didn’t have a path they didn’t know what to do, you know, so they would end up committing crimes or having other bad situations in their life.

I think I saw it most with when I was in capital cases... If someone’s charged with the death penalty, the trial goes in two phases, the guilt and innocence phase. And then there’s the penalty phase, and in the penalty phase, the defense attorney tries to put on mitigating evidence to show why the client should live. So we would trace back generations of the client’s family, and we would reach out to teachers schoolmates of the client from kindergarten on.

And what we saw, what I saw, especially is that often times you could see the past where things were going bad. There’d be like an elementary school teacher who would say, “Oh my gosh, this child, I felt so bad for this child. There just weren’t any resources available to help them. I tried everything I could, but there was not enough resources.”

Why is civic engagement important to you?

I like working for the city because you get to do interesting things and good things for the community. But when the City Council adopted the strategic plan, it really was a different thing. It looked at social equity and increasing the opportunity for people in our community who have not had the opportunities that we’ve all had.

It was also a challenge to get our head around how we can accomplish these goals — these are noble goals, but how can we actually accomplish them? And so this partnership and developing this program aligns perfectly with the strategic plan and what our goals are, which some of the primary goals are to increase the number of people who graduate from high school.

Since we started this, different community organizations have helped. This is just an amazing community. It’s really great to see everyone stepping together as a community to help raise the children in our community.
SHELTER STRONG

J.D. Power has awarded Shelter Insurance® “Highest in Customer Satisfaction Among Auto Insurers in the Central Region” 2 out of 3 years.

ShelterInsurance.com/JDPower
More than 30 years ago, Lloyd and Fontella Henry believed there was a niche for barbecue in Columbia. Lloyd was a State Farm agent who dreamed of owning his own business. Fontella became Columbia's first black female police officer whose family owned several barbecue restaurants in St. Louis. Together, they became co-owners of a barbecue restaurant in downtown Columbia.

As their careers progressed, they sold their restaurant to a friend. But when the opportunity arose again in 2013, they brought their homemade barbecue back to Columbia. This time, on wheels.

In 2015, Big Daddy’s BBQ became a stand-alone restaurant on Business Loop. Together, the Henrys provide barbecue to the community and employment to those in need of a second chance.

We talked to Lloyd and Fontella about their work and their nomination. This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

**ALSO NOMINATED**
Alex Campbell-Graves
Byron Neighbors
Cara Owings and Jennifer Schenck
Amanda Lee Quick and Raigan Mastain

**What influenced you to open a business in Columbia?**
**Lloyd:** I grew up in an entrepreneurial surrounding with family members and always knew that, at some point, I would become a business owner. Fontella is not really the risk taker. But she has come along because that’s what I decided to do, and she’s been a great partner.

**Fontella:** Yeah, it’s a lot of fun. And I thought the food truck would be a whole lot of fun. And it is. All the people you meet, the happy faces.

**Big Daddy’s BBQ provides employees with training and experience to help them manage a business of their own someday. Will you tell me more about that?**
**Lloyd:** We do a lot with people that are getting second and third chances that most other people probably would not give a chance to again or surely would not put time into them. We hope that, in some cases, they will leave and go out and get jobs elsewhere and be able to progress through jobs to management. We just take a chance.

**Fontella:** I think we’re pretty open about allowing them to take leadership roles, allowing them to learn and make mistakes. They get to watch us, and we get to mentor them at the same time. One person in particular wants to know all the aspects of business.

**I think his next step is going to be to own a restaurant himself. They’re trained on everything that we do because no one person is really a designated person for just that job because we’re a small operation. You may do anything, so you’re well-rounded.**

**Lloyd:** We approach it, we’ve done this and we need to do it even more. When we bring people in, we say, ‘Look, you’re not the designated cook because we are a small operation and growing. You have to do whatever has to be done. You’re cooking. You’re prepping. There’s dishes. You have to be able to do a little bit of everything.’ We are right there next to you, watching you, helping you, coaching you, scolding you. So it’s a lot of hands-on that they get.

**What does being recognized for the entrepreneurship category mean to you both?**
**Fontella:** Well, it’s humbling. It really is because everything we do — it’s not for the glory. And that someone would feel that way and to nominate us is humbling. It really is very much appreciated.

**Lloyd:** We were surprised. There are awards we’ve been nominated for — some we end up getting and some we don’t. But, a lot of times, we like it because it shows others that anything is possible. Those that are dreaming about doing something see that you can achieve almost anything, and, if you do it the right way, most folks are going to recognize it. The people in the area where the restaurant is, they let us know how proud they are that we opened the restaurant where we did. Not that we do what we do for the recognition, but when it comes along we appreciate it.

**What does Columbia mean to you, and what does it mean to serve the community through your business?**
**Fontella:** Well, Columbia to me, now, is home. We’ve been in Columbia longer than I’ve been anywhere else. It’s been full of opportunities for us. It’s been a place for us to meet friends, raise our kids. It’s a safe place for us. But, more than anything, I think the opportunities and just the people that you meet in the community. Columbia is home.

**Lloyd:** I agree, it is. No hesitation. It has been such a good town to us and for us, and our kids were raised here, a great school system here. We’ve grown from here, and we’ve learned a lot from Columbia. I mean, we love the people. We love that it’s a small town, but it’s very diverse. From the day we showed up in Columbia, it just felt like home. We’ve made some tremendous friends, and we’ve had some tremendous experiences. I just love Columbia.

Those that are dreaming about doing something see that you can achieve almost anything, and, if you do it the right way, most folks are going to recognize it. The people in the area where the restaurant is, they let us know how proud they are that we opened the restaurant where we did. Not that we do what we do for the recognition, but when it comes along we appreciate it.”

**Lloyd Henry**
co-owner, Big Daddy’s BBQ
As entrepreneurs, Fontella and Lloyd Henry have used passion, planning, and perseverance to develop a growing, well-run business serving a diverse clientele who love their food. Their genuine enjoyment of their work is obvious. They engender a sense of community with their customers, making return visits almost inevitable. They are leaders in the community with an incredibly generous nature, sharing, often in private with no expectation of publicity, the fruits of their success. They also support their employees, who not only learn their own part of the business operation but also receive guidance on managing budgets and finances so that they might also someday become entrepreneurs.

“Fontella and Lloyd Henry have created a model for developing small businesses in the Columbia community, based on initiative, organizational skills, good communication, and a strong work ethic.”
SHERMAN BROWN JR. AWARD

David Johnson, building community one customer at a time

Johnson says his efforts to make sure his customers are cared for has enriched his life and created an extended family.

BY MAGDALINE DUNCAN

December 5, 2018 :: Columbia Missourian :: PROGRESS AWARDS :: 1312  ::  Progress Awards  ::  Columbia Missourian  ::  December 5, 2018

The tiny building of Broadway Diner has been a part of Columbia community since 1958 and under the ownership of David Johnson’s family since 1999. The retro restaurant is probably familiar to anyone who’s lived in Columbia. As important as the eatery is to the town, the town itself is even more important to Johnson and his family.

Johnson says by trying to make people’s days just a little bit better, he’s made himself better. Johnson talked with us about his history with the diner and why his relationship with customers is so important to him.

How did you start running the diner?

My dad had another diner, so it seems like my family’s always been involved in the restaurant and hospitality business. So I grew up doing that. It wasn’t what I had wanted to do my whole life, but I certainly enjoyed it. I was away at school, and I was working at the diner during the summer — working nights and going to school at Lincoln in Jefferson City — and my brother was killed in a car accident. My dad was unable to come back to work, and a few years later he was diagnosed with cancer.

I don’t mean to say that my dad didn’t care about his customers, but he didn’t have the diner be a family business. I think he expected me to take over and run it. And he had the ability to remember a person’s name and face and make him feel at home.

When he died in 2016, his son of the owners Ed and Velma Johnson, Shane Winter took over the diner and included the generosity and compassion of mid-Missourians. They are such a source of strength, and I was working at the diner while he was cooking, cleaning, running the establishment. You can count on him to feed not only your stomach, but your soul.

So what are some of the little, daily things about working at the diner that you enjoy?

No one's perfect, and I’m not just customers but customers who have become friends, and I’m not just customers but family obituary read: “He was a great man whose values of citizenship, altruism and responsibility are a model for us all.”

That’s right. A part-time gig to get through the winter turned into a 40-year career. It means the world to me. Especially when you have the diner be a family business.

What does that mean to you to have the diner be a family business?

It means the world to me. Especially for many years, the Johnson family has served the community by feeding excellent food to all who enter the door. David Johnson, son of the owners Ed and Velma Johnson, is the manager that takes care of business at the diner. He will greet you with a smile while he is cooking, cleaning, running the cash register or when he will sit with you to make sure you are taken care of in his establishment. You can count on him to feed not only your stomach, but your soul as well. David knows his customers, listens to them, shares happy times, not so happy times, and continues daily to be a beacon in the downtown area. Since the diner is close to all of the campuses, many students find the varying hours a haven for their late or early need for food throughout their college years. They also find a friend that is there to hear their heartaches and dreams. Through the years, many of those students return to the diner that holds great memories of the time they spent in Columbia, but more importantly, they return to a man who was always there for support. David is a great man of character who orchestrates this easily, and maybe he doesn’t even know his ability to honor people. But honor people, he does.

Who was Sherman Brown Jr.?

A widely known and beloved member of the Columbia community, Sherman Brown Jr. owned Lindsey Rentals, a party and equipment rental store, for over 30 years. His attention to customers, warm smile and uncanny ability to remember a person’s name and face won him universal admiration.

When he died in 1966, his wife of 20 years, Pat, sold the business. He was a 1969 graduate of Hickman High School and an Army Reservist from 1970 to 1979. Although Sherman did not have a formal education beyond high school, anyone that knows him agrees he has his doctorate in people.

A scholarship fund in Brown’s name has been established for Columbia Public School seniors who embody his values of citizenship, altruism and responsibility. A section of Providence Road was renamed the Sherman Brown Jr. Memorial Highway. The Missionary is proud to have Brown’s legacy included in the Progress Awards.

By Shane Winter

When you walk through the doors at the Broadway Diner, you may have to wait a bit to find a seat. The reason for this is that many years, the Johnson family has served the community by feeding excellent food to all who enter the door. David Johnson, son of the owners Ed and Velma Johnson, is the manager that takes care of business at the diner. He will greet you with a smile while he is cooking, cleaning, running the cash register or when he will sit with you to make sure you are taken care of in his establishment. You can count on him to feed not only your stomach, but your soul as well. David knows his customers, listens to them, shares happy times, not so happy times, and continues daily to be a beacon in the downtown area. Since the diner is close to all of the campuses, many students find the varying hours a haven for their late or early need for food throughout their college years. They also find a friend that is there to hear their heartaches and dreams. Through the years, many of those students return to the diner that holds great memories of the time they spent in Columbia, but more importantly, they return to a man who was always there for support. David is a great man of character who orchestrates this easily, and maybe he doesn’t even know his ability to honor people. But honor people, he does.

ALSO NOMINATED

Heather Demand
Amy Enders
Kenny Greene
Barbara Horrell
Verna LaBoy
Whitney Moore
Armita Phelps
Paul Prevo
Valerie Shaw
John Wampler
Rose Wibbenmeyer
Shane Winter

From the nomination: Here is an excerpt from one of the nomination letters for David Johnson.
David Johnson, building community one customer at a time

Johnson says his efforts to make sure his customers are cared for has enriched his life and created an extended family

*BY MADAGALINE DUNCAN madagalduncan@missourian.com*

As many times as they've shared great sadness — and more importantly happy times — we've been able to do that. This is why I enjoy working at the diner. It's the type of work that you enjoy. You don't have to work at the diner; you could work at any restaurant; you could work at any retail store, for over 30 years. A part-time gig to get through the winter turned into a 40-year career. How did you start running the diner?

My dad had another diner, so it seems like my family's always been involved in the restaurant and hospitality business. So I grew up working at the diner. And eventually, through a series of life events this became my calling. A part-time job to get through the winter turned into a 40-year career.

Why are some of the little, daily things about working at the diner that you enjoy? My customers not only are there regularly, but at a certain time if they're considered a regular. It's probably a daily and an hourly arrival that we're looking for. So it's not that they're scheduled, but I can kind of plan my day on who I'm going to see next. So that's kind of fun. And of course if someone doesn't show up, or if you don't see someone for a day or two you worry, wonder, you check in on them. You want to know how they're doing. So it sounds like you've developed a lot of friendships with your customers.

David Johnson, manager, Broadway Diner

What's it like running a diner in a college town?

Hugely popular are always incredible. Part of the cool thing about being in a college town is there's always a daily weekend, there's always an alumni weekend, there's always someone coming back to Columbia for some old reason who graduated 30 years ago and stops in. It happens almost every day. It's really cool to hear old stories or new stories, how they found the diner or had their first date or that kind of thing. It's really cool. And it happens almost every day.

Can you tell me about one of those times you've helped someone who had a really difficult time?

There are good folks here — the best. The people of Columbia? This community is full of people who are way better than I am. I've never been a part of a better community than Columbia, Missouri. There are good folks here — the best.
Don Day, using conversation to bring understanding

Day formed a community book discussion that brought 14 churches together

What do you think we can do to improve social justice in Columbia? Why is it important?

One of the best ways to improve it is to get to know each other. Statewide and nationally, we’ve had a lot of encounters with people of different races. Really, if you get acquainted about people and learn about them, you find out they have a lot of the same problems and challenges that you do, and you find out they’re really great people. And so I think people that don’t have any contact with people of another race really don’t understand them at all.

I’ve been really lucky — at our church (Broadway Christian), I helped coordinate a community garden. We have refugees from Myanmar, people from different African countries, Asians. When I see people make a remark about immigrants being a threat to our society, I just want to … They don’t understand the work efforts these people have and the contribution they make to our society.

You were nominated, in part, for your leadership on a book discussion project with Broadway Christian Church. Can you tell us how it began?

I felt like we should apply for a grant to support a book study on racism. We studied a book called “America’s Original Sin,” and by the time we got done, we had about 14 churches involved. Probably 140 to 150 people participated.

Once we got the grant, we overspent it by at least a thousand dollars buying books. I talked to our minister, and we went around and talked to a number of ministers here in the community.

One black couple that I’m friends with found out about it, and she said, “You let Catholics in that?” I said, “sure we would,” and they started coming. They went through the race riots in Chicago and really had stories to tell about things that happened to them. So, the more we met people and heard their stories, the more interesting it got.

Why is it important to educate yourself on those kind of topics?

I grew up in north Missouri, where there were no black people. Even during the ‘60s, I was just getting out of college, so I didn’t pay any attention to what was going on, and I’m ashamed of that. I was busy starting a career, and I just wasn’t watching the news that much. I’m ashamed of some of the things that have been done to — I mean, you name it: Native Americans, black and Japanese people. We’ve not done too well.

Do you feel like you’ve seen Columbia improve in terms of acceptance?

I’ve heard talk about the Sharp End. It was an area downtown that was mainly black businesses, along where the post office is and the public housing was. Well, they came in with urban renewal and tore all that down and rebuilt it.

It sounded great to improve the community by building all this, but a lot of the black businesses went under because they couldn’t afford those new buildings.

The events on campus a few years ago really brought it all to the forefront. You know, it’s kind of funny, I was walking across campus, and I tried to speak to everybody I met, especially black people — I wanted to reach out — and not a soul would speak to me, they just looked straight ahead.

I think that’s part of how our society has gotten nowadays. If I’m driving out in the country, and I meet a car, I wave at them, and our kids would say, “Who was that?” and I’d say, “I don’t know.” “Well, why’d you wave?”

So, you know, we just don’t have the interaction that maybe we once had, and that’s been a really big thing for me to get to meet some of the people we’ve met.

What other projects are you working on?

We got another grant to support a civil rights pilgrimage, which came about as a result of the book study. We’ll start out at Memphis and the civil rights museum there, then go to the hotel where Martin Luther King was shot. We’ll go to Montgomery next. In fact, on Sunday, we’ll worship in the church where the bombing took place that killed four little girls — 16th Street Baptist Church. Then we go on to Birmingham. The one thing I wish we could do is go down to Selma. I guess I’ll just have to go back.

One of the things we’ll be asking participants as a result of that is “what do you want to do next?”

ALSO NOMINATED

Luci Cook, Leola Davis, Amanda Rainey
Caitlin Cunningham
Caritas Habimana
Kentrell Minton
Missouri Disability Empowerment
Refugee and Immigration Services
Kari Utterback
Tara Warne-Griggs
Katie Burnham-Wilkins
Loreli Wilson

Really, if you get acquainted about people and learn about them, you find out they have a lot of the same problems and challenges that you do, and you find out they’re really great people.”

Don Day
leader of community-wide book discussions on race and social justice
Members from at least 14 congregations participated in ‘Critical Conversations in Troubled Times’, a wide-reaching exploration of racism in Columbia. Following a kickoff dinner, discussions spanned across seven groups. Each group was racially diverse. Some groups met weekly, others monthly. A copy of “America’s Original Sin” by Jim Wallis was provided to each participant and served as a springboard for conversations.

Frank discussion of tough topics followed. Friendships, hopes and shared passion for continuing to work together also emerged. All of the groups asked over and over, ‘What are we going to do next?’ Indeed, this was only a first step. One group identified the need for a credit union for minority-owned businesses. Another plans an interfaith Habitat Build. Another is organizing a Civil Rights Pilgrimage.

Don Day came up with the idea that a book discussion could guide us to better understand racism and how we can work together in Columbia for social justice. Don wrote the grant for funding to purchase the books and shepherded the formation of the various discussion groups. I participated in one of the groups — and observed firsthand the quiet leadership Don provided.

The discussions and friendships, future joint efforts would not have been possible without Don. Although Don would not seek to be recognized, he made a significant contribution to our community. The book discussion is only one example of his countless acts of service. ... Don is always giving, striving for more equality, justice and kindness neighbor to neighbor.”

From the nomination: Here is an excerpt from one of the nomination letters for Don Day
PROGRESS IN PHILANTHROPY

Adam Saunders, a visionary for a new park

BY KASEY CARLSON

Adam Saunders first came to Columbia from Springfield to attend college at MU in 2003. He became involved with Sustain Mizzou, a student-run nonprofit group that aims to promote sustainability on campus. When he started graduate school in 2008, he became one of the co-founders of the Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture, a project of Sustain Mizzou that split off and became its own nonprofit in 2009.

In the 10 years since its conception, the center has grown into an active organization in Columbia’s community. The center’s new project, a 10-acre agriculture park, is a partnership with the Columbia Parks and Recreation Department, the Columbia Farmers Market and Sustainable Farms and Communities. The park is on track for construction to be complete this winter. Saunders has led the fundraising campaign, raising $3.8 million in public and private donations for the park. The goal: Take open, underutilized park space and turn it into a place for hands-on education, demonstrations, market space and a public venue.

Saunders talked with us about his work with agriculture and philanthropy in the Columbia community and what’s next for the Center for Urban Agriculture.

From the nomination: Here is an excerpt from one of the nomination letters for Adam Saunders

Over the last two years, Adam has led the capital campaign to build Columbia’s new Agriculture Park. In addition to bringing in national and regional funds, his leadership has rallied donors across many sectors of the local community including .... Adam has never met a stranger and his charisma connects with so many people. ... The new Agriculture Park will serve this community for generations to come.”

ALSO NOMINATED

John Baker
Joe Bradley
Anthony Conway
Christi Farmer
George Kennedy
Curt and Krista Kippenberger
Harry S. Truman Veterans’ Memorial Hospital
Jackie Rivera and Emily Frantz
Welcome Home Inc.
Mel West
Thank you for your contributions to achieving our shared vision that Columbia is the best place for everyone to live, work, learn and play.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE NOMINEES!

city of Columbia
CoMo.gov • 573.874.CITY (2489)
PROGRESS IN SUSTAINABILITY

Patricia Weisenfelder, leading the green charge

Weisenfelder uses two community roles to make changes to help the environment

BY HANNAH BRITTON
news@columbiamissourian.com

Columbia tends to generate a lot of trash. But as the city makes an effort to become greener, one resident leads the charge: Patricia Weisenfelder.

At the True/False Film Fest, arguably the city’s biggest event of the year, she is dedicated to reducing pollution and waste.

Weisenfelder’s passion for green living grew out of time spent in Seattle. After earning her master’s degree in public administration and a certificate of sustainability from Seattle University, she returned from the West Coast because of family ties and her work to promote sustainable living took off.

We talked with Weisenfelder about her commitment to building a more sustainable community.

What got you interested in sustainability?
I don’t know if there was one “aha” moment. From 2012 to 2016, I lived in Seattle. You’re just kind of thrown into a culture that’s aware of it and also provides an atmosphere that makes it easier for you to do it. More opportunities to be sustainable. It just became obvious. It was more of a lifestyle than effort.

What do you do in Columbia?
I have two different sustainability roles. I am the sustainability coordinator for True/False, but then I also work with the city of Columbia doing community relations for the Office of Sustainability. I do a lot of outreach and engagement, communications and social media for the office about some of the efforts that they’re putting in, but also the climate action plan which is what we’re working on right now.

Could you tell me a little bit more about the climate action plan and your involvement?
We know the climate is changing, so we’re trying to get ahead of it and build a road map of how Columbia can reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, but also prepare for the changes that are already happening. I do a lot of the staff support for the task force. The mayor appointed a task force of several individuals across the community... it just brings in a holistic view to the planning process.

What do you do for True/False Film Fest?
We basically are tracking our progress over time. We recycle and compost at all of the venues. We track the amount of food waste we are collecting and diverting from the landfill. Ultimately we would like to be a zero-waste fest, kind of focusing on the solid waste aspect of sustainability.

The data that we have so far is kind of showing us what we’re doing that is working and maybe what we can do better. Every year I have an excellent group of volunteers.

I run the “Green Team”... basically my role is organizing them and making sure that the waste is being collected and diverted properly. You know, one thing about True/False is that there are a lot of moving parts, so making sure people are in the right place at the right time and working with the events that the fest puts on.

Besides your work, how do you promote sustainability in your everyday life?
I would say one of my strongest assets is my peer-pressure ability. People forget, people do things out of habit, and I think if you talk about it and if you keep it top-of-mind then you will be able to influence people’s behaviors.

We do recycle, we compost, we have had the home energy audit that the city provides, and we keep our air pretty low. We try not to buy a bunch of junk, just thinking about our consumption and our use of resources. And I think there’s benefits to both sides of that; our utility bill is lower. Show people that you get more by using less sometimes.

How do you feel about Columbia’s progress toward sustainability?
I think we’re moving forward. I’m very optimistic about where we’re going. It’s always a work in progress. When I moved back to Columbia, I noticed that there are so many opportunities, and I think the attitude of Columbians... you know, I think they really want to be sustainable, they are environmental, and they do care about the community.

If I could find ways to make it more convenient or make them aware of the opportunities that are out there to make it easier for them, then I think that there are a lot of ways we can grow. Everyone and every business or organization can do a little bit more to protect the environment, protect resources for future generations.

Ten years ago there wasn’t a job in Columbia with “sustainability” in the title. Now there are several, and I think that’s really exciting professionally. Businesses are showing the importance of sustainability by creating a position to back it.

"Everyone and every business or organization can do a little bit more to protect the environment, protect resources for future generations."

Patricia Weisenfelder
community relations specialist, city of Columbia

ALSO NOMINATED
Barbara Buffalo
centro latino
Doug Elley
James Owen

From the nomination: Here is an excerpt from one of the nomination letters for Patricia Weisenfelder

"Patricia is all about the small changes people can do in their everyday lives to make the world a more sustainable place. ... I think there are very few of us who get to say our work is our passion, but Patricia is one of those people. She was doing this work before it was ‘cool,’ and I know she will continue to do the work.”
The Way You Look Tonight

The Music of Jerome Kern

Thursday, February 14, 2019

6:00 pm cocktail reception
6:30 pm dinner
7:30 pm concert gala

Holiday Inn Convention Center
2200 Interstate 70 Dr. SW
Columbia, MO 65203

Join faculty and students of the School of Music voice area, accompanied by the Mizzou Concert Jazz Band, as we pay tribute to one of the greatest American composers of the 20th Century.

$100/ticket, includes donation to the Friends of MusiScholarship Fund

Purchase tickets by January 31 through the School of Music office
573.882.2606
140 Fine Arts Building

1920s-era costumes are encouraged!

School of Music
University of Missouri
PROGRESS IN CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP

Shelter Insurance, supporting Columbia since 1946

Shelter has planted its roots in Columbia for nearly 75 years, giving back wherever it can

BY TREVOR ROWLAND
news@columbiamissourian.com

Shelter Insurance Co. has been a presence in Columbia for nearly 75 years. During that time, Shelter has repeatedly demonstrated its dedication to the community through its support of education, diversity and social justice.

We spoke with Rick Means, chief executive officer and chairman of the board, and Matt Moore, president and chief operating officer, about the company’s role in the community.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Why is Corporate Citizenship important to Shelter Insurance?

Means: Coming up through the claims department, you learn what insurance is about, but you also learn customer service and how important it is. As you go on in your career you really learn how we’re good corporate citizens, and that means a lot as well.

Moore: It’s helping people, and we have an opportunity to make an impact in this community through that process and not only just through our product. The needs are great in this community, the poverty level in our community is great, there’s just multiple issues. I think people look at Columbia as this really affluent town and in some respects it is, but there’s also a very different side of Columbia that I believe we have an obligation and an opportunity to impact. It goes back to doing the right thing; we have the ability to do it so we need to do it.

Means: Insurance is about a promise. We want to deliver on that promise, but we also want to, within the communities where we live, work and play do what we can to help our agents and our employees in those areas. That helps us deliver on that promise as well. We want to sell insurance, and we want people to buy insurance from us and we want all that kind of stuff, but at the same time, we want to do what we can to make a difference in those communities.

How does Shelter select which events to sponsor and which nonprofits to donate to?

Means: It’s not an easy process because we get a lot of opportunities and try to do as much as we can. Through our Shelter Foundation, we try to support a lot of not-for-profits. We have a committee that reviews

It goes back to doing the right thing; we have the ability to do it so we need to do it.

Matt Moore
Shelter Insurance president

the requests and votes on which ones to support. The ones that have the biggest impact with us are the ones that our employees and agents are involved in that help children, but again we look at all of them and sometimes it’s a tough choice because of how many requests we get.

Moore: I would add that we’re not just in Columbia, we’re in 20 states as well so we have to be a little sensitive to that too. We get involved with other organizations throughout our operating territory through our foundation. As Rick said, we really look for organizations where our employees are involved in leadership or are contributing themselves. Those are some of the things that we look at when we make some of those decisions.

How does Shelter Insurance encourage its employees to be active in their community?

Means: I think a lot of that starts at the top with leadership because they see us involved, and our leadership group has done a great job from that standpoint. Matt was the president of the Boys and Girls Club for a while, I’m going to be the president of the REDI board over the next year, one of our executive vice presidents, Nikki McGruder, has headed up United Way for the last 12 months or so, and I can go right on down the list. I think that when our employees see that our leadership team is involved, they want to get involved. In the communities where they’re living, they see the need and they want to do what they can. We encourage that and try to support as much of that as we can as well.

We’ve got groups in our home office that go out and look for ways they can volunteer and help out.

What does being nominated for this award mean to Shelter Insurance?

Means: We’re not too far away from being 75 years old, and for that 75 years our home office has been right here in Columbia. We want to do what we can to support the community because the community supports us. That’s very important to us. The people in this community have treated us well and hopefully as both individuals and a corporation we treat the community well, too. We’ve never thought of moving out of this community and probably never will because it’s such a great place to live.

From the nomination: Here is an excerpt from one of the nomination letters for Shelter Insurance

Shelter Insurance has a long history of providing support for educational efforts throughout the area. Scholarships have provided significant funding for college-bound students for more than 34 years. Shelter partners with West Middle School through Partners in Education. The company understands how important volunteering is in the community and encourages employees to participate. Shelter continues its commitment to protecting the environment, including the installation of solar panels and using LED lights. Shelter has been committed to supporting education, making a positive impact in the community through volunteer and diversity efforts, and protecting the environment when it can — and that commitment will not waiver.

ALSO NOMINATED

Kilgore’s Pharmacy

20 :: Progress Awards :: Columbia Missourian :: December 5, 2018
COLUMBIA'S DOWNTOWN DESTINATION

for happy hour, brunch, lunch, dinner & all season patio dining.

38 N. 8TH ST. | 573.449.3838 | ROOM-38.COM
Tojan Rahhal, bringing STEM to young students

As an assistant dean in the MU College of Engineering, Rahhal founded STEM Cubs

BY ASHLEY SKOKAN
news@columbiamissourian.com

In her 2½ years living in Columbia, it’s clear that Tojan Rahhal has made her mark in the community and in MU’s School of Engineering.

In October, Rahhal was promoted to assistant dean for inclusive excellence and strategic initiatives in the College of Engineering. Prior to that, she was the college’s director of diversity and outreach initiatives.

During her time at MU, Rahhal has developed diversity and inclusive workshop series for the school’s faculty, staff and students. She has also spearheaded the STEM Cubs program that was launched in 2017 — a collaboration among the College of Engineering, College of Education and Division of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity. The program offers a free engineering day camp with an emphasis on serving underserved students and minorities in grades K-5 and was recently recognized with an award by INSIGHT Into Diversity Magazine.

We talked to Rahhal about her work and her nomination. This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

What is your role within MU’s College of Engineering?

I wear a lot of hats, but my primary goal is to make sure that we’re serving our entire community, so that includes our students, faculty and staff as well as other colleges, collaborating with them. What I focus on doing is trying to make sure that our college is as inclusive as possible and also breaking down the stereotypes associated with the term “diversity and inclusion.”

As you can imagine, engineers, we build buildings, right? We do different things, and part of it is, when we build a building, do we think to include an accessibility ramp or do we not? Do we make sure that things are not just made for people who are typically right-handed, but do people who are left-handed have that ability to use our stuff as well?

So considering that and tying it all together is the big thing I do at the college. I’ve also taken the initiative to do an outreach camp for little kids because we have a wonderful college of engineering, and we have a lot of amazing STEM programs in the university. Columbia isn’t that huge, so it provides access to these little kids to do science and do engineering.

Tell us about the STEM Cubs program.

It’s a Saturday camp, K-5, and the first time we did it there was no budget line for it so we kind of tried to solicit donations from different companies and things like that to get it to accommodate about 60 kids, and we had over 200 applications for that camp. We could only accommodate 60, so I took those numbers to more donors, and I spoke to our dean and I said, “Look, I need more money to support this camp. I just need the bare minimum to even make it happen” and that’s what we did. And so now we’ve grown it, we’re hitting almost 180 attendees. It’s truly been wonderful and successful in the community.

What inspired you to help create the STEM Cubs program?

When I was in school and pursuing my PhD — and also in undergrad — I was always involved in outreach events in the community through conveying science to little kids because a lot of time we focus on high schoolers, but really by the time they get to high school they’re so independent and they’ve already made up their minds on what they love and what they hate. Research shows as young as third grade, girls can say, “I hate math.” By getting to kids from K-5, this is where it can be the most impactful. Showing them that this is what friction is by sliding things on different surfaces or showing them what chemistry is by making slime. We’re relating these concepts to something very easy and something hands on can be life changing for these kids. A lot of them have never even been to a STEM camp before. So that’s always been a good motivation, knowing that we’re providing access to STEM early on.

Why do you think education is so important?

I feel like a lot of times we’re afraid of what we don’t know. And so education is that one way to really start to understanding more things so that we’re less afraid. When we’re less afraid, that’s when we can really foster that creativity that’s within all of us. So I think education plays a vital role in that because without it, how are we going to move past what we don’t know?

What does it mean to you to be recognized for Progress in Education?

Based on who I am and the short time I’ve been here, to be able to be recognized for this is truly, it’s really flattering, and I’m really excited about it because I think it shows how all the work we’ve done in the college is important to the community and that it’s moving things in the right direction.

ALSO NOMINATED

Rochelle Birk
Mikkel Christensen
Kathryn Chval
Centro Latino
Caitlin Cunningham
Ethan Froese
David and Kerri Graham
Caritas Habimana
Nawassa Logan
Stephens College of Enrollment Management
Rep. Cheri Toalson Reisch
Helen Washburn
Rose Wibbenmeyer
I nominate Tojan Rahhal for the Progress in Education award in our community based on her innovative work with the STEM Cub education program. Tojan Rahhal is the assistant dean for inclusive excellence and strategic initiatives at MU’s College of Engineering. As a woman business owner in a STEM related industry, I have had the opportunity to work with Dr. Rahhal on community projects. I find her to be a dynamic and innovative individual and we are fortunate to have her in our Columbia community.”

“It is with great pleasure that I write to support the nomination of Tojan Rahhal for the Missourian Progress Award in Education. Under Tojan’s leadership, the College of Engineering at the University of Missouri has fostered our commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive environment while working toward ensuring access for all. Having successfully established these programs and collaborations with participation surpassing expectations, I strongly recommend Tojan for this award.”

From the nomination: Here is an excerpt from one of the nomination letters for Tojan Rahhal

VISION
To be the best school district in the state

MISSION
To provide an excellent education for all students

VALUES
Trust
Integrity
Collaboration
Transparency
Empathy
Grace

ALL students graduate college-or career-ready
EVERY teacher becomes the best
OUR operations make our mission possible

December 5, 2018 :: Columbia Missourian :: PROGRESS AWARDS :: 23
#1 VA Workplace
2 Years in a Row

573.814.6400 vacareers.va.gov