

Shillelagh

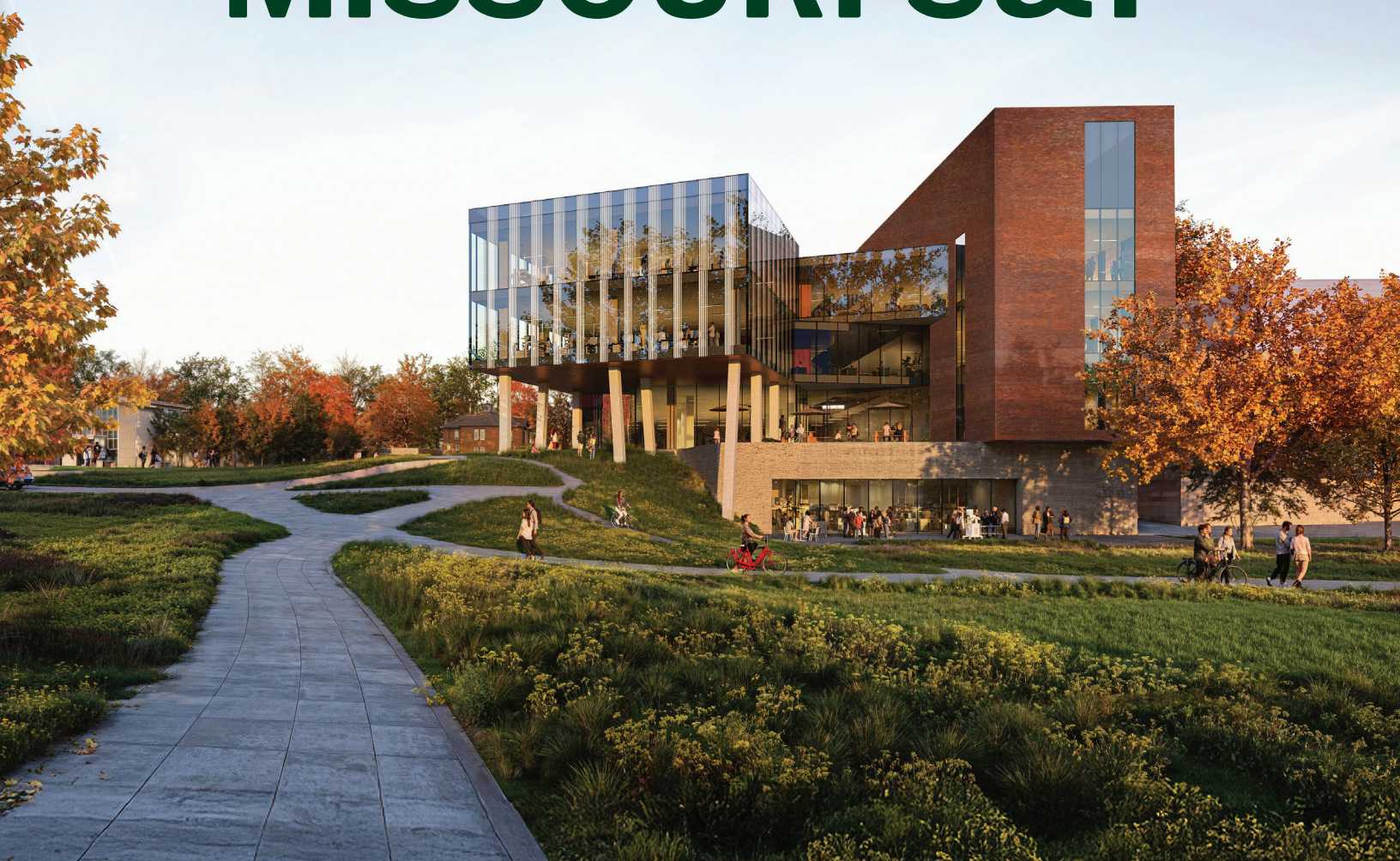
Fall 2025



For members of the Missouri S&T Order of the Golden Shillelagh

newsletter

MONUMENTAL EXTENSIONS *of* MISSOURI S&T



OGS WEEKEND *in Dallas*



Save the Date

Jun. 4–6, 2026

Join us for a weekend
of Texas-sized good times.

Order of the Golden Shillelagh Weekend 2026

Let's go big with a Texas-sized celebration of the Shillelagh spirit! We're planning an unforgettable weekend in the DFW Metroplex you won't want to miss.

Plan to arrive Thursday, June 4, to soak up the camaraderie of the OGS family at the elegant and iconic Hotel Crescent Court in Uptown Dallas. Connect with new OGS members and university leaders, celebrate during our recognition ceremony and create lasting Miner memories as we explore some of the most intriguing attractions in Dallas and Fort Worth, including the legendary stockyards. Formal invitation and event registration to follow.

Questions?

Contact Sarah Jones, director of donor relations, at jonesarah@mst.edu or 573-341-6359.



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the fall 2025 edition of the *Shillelagh* newsletter. I am thrilled to introduce you to three remarkable members of the Order of the Golden Shillelagh, each with their own unique story and connection to Missouri S&T. This edition also offers a look at the signature events that shaped the spring semester and brought OGS members back home to Rolla. I hope to see many of you on campus in early October for our upcoming Minerfest Homecoming events.

Gene Gowins, MST Phys'62, MS Phys'64, established a \$2.1 million permanent endowment to support S&T students majoring

in physics. After a distinguished career with Boeing and the U.S. Army Missile Command, he retired to Florida, where he now focuses on his philanthropy.

A staunch long-time supporter of Missouri S&T's mining and explosives engineering program, OGS member **William "Bill" Kennedy** is a familiar face to many of us. Bill supported S&T again last year with a generous gift to establish the Kennedy Professorship of Practice in mining and engineering.

Kim Curry, CE'86, explains how answers to seemingly simple questions can have long-term impact. One such question came from legendary S&T civil engineering professor **Jerry Bayless**. She says she's proud to support a professorship named in his honor that positions S&T for success in the fierce competition to attract great faculty.

In April, Missouri S&T celebrated the Bioplex groundbreaking. You will see the Bioplex pictured on the cover of this edition. OGS members holding shovels and wearing hard hats included S&T Chancellor **Mo Dehghani**, Kummer Missouri S&T Foundation Board Chair **Kathy Walker**, MS EMgt'82, Missouri S&T Board of Trustees President **Steven Wunning**, MetE'73, and benefactor **Bipin Doshi**, ChE'62,

MS ChE'63. Immediately following the groundbreaking, Chancellor Dehghani hosted a dinner in the Innovation Lab, where a roster of speakers detailed the cutting-edge teaching and research that will be undertaken at the Bioplex, which is expected to be completed in 2028.

This edition also includes the news of our community's impressive support of the Missouri S&T Giving Days campaign, where more than 500 donors made a gift to a campus cause in just 1,870 minutes, and our magical evening with Joshua Bell, who performed to a packed Leach Theatre as part of the Remmers Special Artist/Lecturer Series.

Welcome again to the fall 2025 edition of the *Shillelagh* newsletter. The stories that follow are a testament to the ongoing commitment of our OGS family members, who continue to make a meaningful impact at Missouri S&T.

With gratitude,

Tory Verkamp
Vice Chancellor for
University Advancement



On the cover

Artist rendering — by Christner Architects and ZGF Architects — of the West side of the Bioplex, the 127,000-square-foot home for Missouri S&T's bioinnovation initiative.



BREAKING GROUND ON THE FUTURE

Alumni, including many OGS members, elected and appointed officials, faculty, staff, and students gathered on campus in April to celebrate Missouri S&T's expansion of education and research into the increasingly critical world of human health. →

← The Bioplex is Missouri S&T's most ambitious capital project to date. Construction begins officially in October and is expected to be completed in 2028.

↓ From left, Kathy Walker, Bipin Doshi and Steven Wunning were among the OGS members on campus for the Bioplex groundbreaking.



Armed with shovels and hard hats, Missouri S&T Chancellor **Mo Dehghani**, Kummer Missouri S&T Foundation Board Chair **Kathy Walker**, MS EMgt'82, Missouri S&T Board of Trustees President **Steven Wunning**, MetE'73, and benefactor **Bipin Doshi**, ChE'62, MS ChE'63, were among the many OGS members on campus in April to officially break ground on the 127,000-square-foot Bioplex. This marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter for S&T.

"We are expanding our education and our research into the world of human health," Dehghani told the S&T alumni, elected and appointed officials, faculty, staff and students gathered to mark the historic occasion. "The bioinnovation initiative and the Bioplex itself represent monumental extensions of Missouri S&T."

Launched thanks to a significant contribution from the Kummer

Missouri S&T Foundation Board, which oversees the transformational \$300 million gift from OGS founding members **Fred**, CE'55, and **June Kummer**, the Bioplex is Missouri S&T's most ambitious capital project to date. The facility will house Missouri S&T's Center for Biomedical Research and provide space for more than 20 research teams, teaching labs and classrooms. Construction officially begins in October and is expected to be completed in 2028.

Continued on next page

"We are expanding our education and our research into the world of human health."

OGS member and Missouri S&T Chancellor Mo Dehghani welcomes guests to the Bioplex groundbreaking in April.





“Bioinnovation isn’t just treating disease after it happens, it’s engineering health at the source of the problem [...] That’s exactly what the Bioplex is being built to support.”

- 1. The bioinnovation dinner was held in the Forum Room at the Innovation Lab. Chancellor Mo Deghani kicked off the evening, which explored S&T’s bioinnovation legacy, projects currently underway and future possibilities.
- 2. S&T student Hossein Libre and Shelley Minter each spoke at the dinner that followed the Bioplex groundbreaking.
- 3. Richard Brow shared the legacy of bioinnovation at Missouri S&T with an emphasis on OGS member Delbert Day.
- 4. OGS members and benefactors Linda and Bipin Doshi at the bioinnovation dinner.



Continued from previous page

Attendees also enjoyed a look back at S&T’s tradition of excellence in bioinnovation, current projects and a glimpse of the future from a student’s perspective during a dinner Deghani hosted in the Innovation Lab after the groundbreaking.

Richard Brow, Curators’ Distinguished Professor of materials science and engineering and executive director of the Kummer Institute, shared the legacy of bioinnovation at Missouri S&T, with an emphasis on OGS member and prolific inventor **Delbert Day**, CerE’58. Day’s work with specialty glasses led to groundbreaking treatments for cancer, bone tissue regeneration and wound care.

Next, **Shelley Minter**, director of the Kummer Institute Center for Resource Sustainability and the Dr. Ken Robertson Memorial Professor in Chemistry, and **James Sterling**, OGS member and vice provost and dean of the Kummer College for Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Economic

Development, shared details and insights into a range of bioinnovation projects currently underway.

The evening concluded with a look to the future, presented by **Hossein Libre**, a Kummer Vanguard Scholar double majoring in ceramic engineering and chemistry. Libre, the son of two S&T faculty members, acquired a taste for engineering at an early age. Today, in addition to a full courseload, he’s a member of Minter’s research group, working on a project that explores the possibility of digital printing human organs for transplant purposes.

“Bioinnovation isn’t just treating disease after it happens, it’s engineering health at the source of the problem,” he told attendees. “And the innovation we need to get there doesn’t happen in isolation. It happens in spaces created for collaboration, inspiration and, most importantly, curiosity. That’s exactly what the Bioplex is being built to support.”

S&T’S COLLECTIVE GENEROSITY SHINES THROUGH FOR GIVING DAYS



The leadership and generosity of OGS members helped make Missouri S&T’s Giving Days campaign a huge success.

Missouri S&T’s Giving Days campaign April 10–11 was a resounding success, engaging with 555 donors. “1870 Minutes for Miners” honored the year of the university’s founding and mobilized the Miner community in support of critical programs and strategic initiatives. The campaign’s grand finale was a perfect ending to Philanthropy Week.

We give special thanks to our OGS members, whose leadership and generosity were key to the success of Giving Days. Forty-five OGS members participated this year, and their generosity amplified our campaign’s reach.

“Our OGS Family led the way in our Giving Days campaign,” says **Tory Verkamp**, OGS member and vice chancellor for University Advancement. “Their vote of confidence in this effort speaks volumes to our university community, and their impact is clear: more than 500 donors made a gift in support of S&T over the course of two days.”

S&T GIVING DAYS BY THE NUMBERS

555
DONORS

203
FACULTY AND
STAFF MEMBERS
contributed more than
\$25,000.

24
CHALLENGE GIFTS
totaling
\$38,187
motivated additional
participation.

4 SHILLELAGH FALL 2025 5

GENE GOWINS

Supporting Missouri S&T for the win

Gene Gowins, MST Phys’62, MS Phys’64, established a \$2.1 million permanent endowment to help physics students succeed, a gift he says was inspired by the values he learned growing up during the Great Depression. Born in 1934, Gowins was raised on a hillside farm in the southeast corner of Missouri, where the family gardened and raised hogs, used an outhouse and got by with no electricity. In nearby Scott City, Missouri, he became the first member of his large family to graduate from high school, and that’s where he discovered a passion for numbers.

“I love physics,” Gowins says. “To me, physics is man’s effort to create a mathematic model that identifies some of nature’s secrets.”

Gowins took all the math and physics courses offered at what is now Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau and earned a degree that qualified him to teach at his high school alma mater.

After learning about a program for high school math or physics teachers to study at universities with strong graduate programs, he headed to Missouri S&T, where he earned two master’s degrees in physics, one specifically for teachers. His thesis was on the piezoelectric properties of thallium nitrate.

He says the encouragement of two S&T professors moved him to give back.

Dr. Harold Q. Fuller was a physics professor who served as chair from 1948 to 1970, when he became founding dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. He was also on the board of education in Rolla and helped Gowins obtain a position teaching advanced math and physics at the high school. The job made it possible for him to pursue his master’s degrees.

“... I’m pleased to be able to make it possible for students to worry less about expenses and focus more on physics.”

Dr. Franklin Pauls breathed life into the subject as the primary teacher of Physics I. He also became the first director of Missouri S&T’s nuclear reactor, the first operational nuclear reactor in the state of Missouri.

“I’ll never have the kind of impact they had on me, but I’m pleased to be able to make it possible for students to worry less about expenses and focus more on physics,” Gowins says.

After teaching physics for a year at Southeast Missouri State, Gowins returned to Rolla to teach math at Missouri S&T and begin work toward a Ph.D. Those plans changed when the medical bills for Gowins’ son, Mark, who was born in 1960 with an inoperable heart defect and deemed uninsurable, surpassed his income.

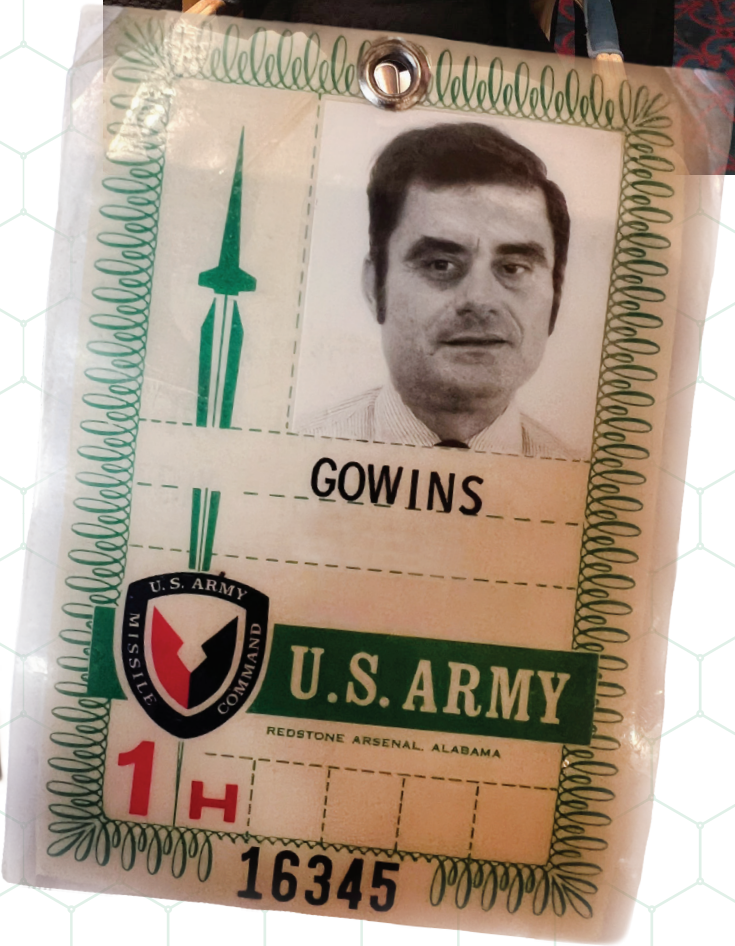
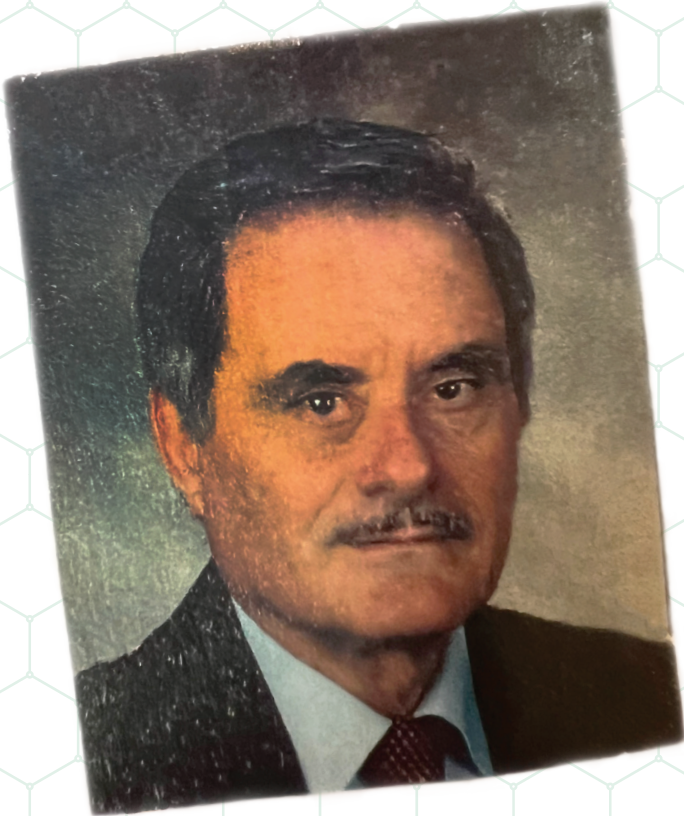
In 1965, the family moved to Huntsville, Alabama, where Boeing offered more comprehensive insurance coverage. He worked on the Nuclear Engine for Rocket Vehicle Application (NERVA) program and simulations for the Saturn V rocket. When Boeing left Alabama, Gowins stayed in Huntsville. His experience with the Navy during the Korean War helped him obtain a position with the U.S. Army Missile Command working on advanced sensors, specifically laser and infrared-guided missiles.

After retiring, he moved to Florida in 1994. Gowins financed his undergraduate education in part by joining the naval reserves and by working for a dance studio, so he became a dance instructor, working with Rose Marie Giosa, who became his dance partner and his life partner. The two taught dance for numerous cruise lines, sailing on 39 ships. Rose Marie died in 2022.

Post-retirement, Gowins continues to follow the example set by Warren Buffet. He lives modestly in a 1,300-square-foot manufactured home and drives a 2014 Toyota. He’s careful with his investments and sees his good fortune in the market as a signal that it’s time, in his words, to pay it back.

“I want to invest where I think it will do the most good,” Gowins says. “For me, supporting Missouri S&T is a win-win for the students, the university and our country.”

→ Gene Gowins, pictured with Rose Marie Giosa, who became his dance partner and his life partner. The two taught dance on numerous cruise lines, sailing on 39 ships prior to her death in 2022.



WILLIAM KENNEDY

ANOTHER VOTE OF CONFIDENCE FOR MINING ENGINEERING EDUCATION

When you hear the name Bill Kennedy, you may think, “He’s done it all,” and you wouldn’t be wrong.

A staunch longtime supporter of Missouri S&T’s mining and explosives engineering program, Kennedy is president and CEO of an international company, the author of the perennially popular textbook *Practical Mine Ventilation* and an in-demand guest lecturer. He’s also the named inventor on 91 U.S. and foreign patents, with more pending, and a 2005 recipient of S&T’s Award of Professional Distinction in mining engineering. In 2016, the Miner Alumni Association recognized his leadership and service with its Honorary Life Member Award, and in 2025, he was awarded the Doctor of Engineering, Honoris Causa.

Late last year, Kennedy once again put his belief in the power of education into action by making a generous stock gift to support the Kennedy Professorship of Practice in Mining and Engineering. “I’m proud to support Missouri S&T’s mining engineering program, which is widely known as one of the best,” says Kennedy, whose generosity has guided the growth of mining engineering at S&T for nearly a quarter century. “It has consistently produced the best people for the industry over the past few decades.” A bold statement, certainly, but one Kennedy is uniquely qualified to make. With more than 57 years of experience in mine ventilation and manufacturing of related equipment, he’s president and CEO of Jack Kennedy Metal Products and Buildings based in Taylorville, Illinois, which is the world’s largest mining ventilation firm. His expertise has advanced mining practices around the world, and his innovations have safeguarded thousands of lives.

William Kennedy’s generosity has guided the growth of mining engineering at Missouri S&T for nearly a quarter century. He recently once again put his belief in education into action with a stock gift to support the Kennedy Professorship of Practice in Mining and Engineering.

Kennedy gave the lead gift to support construction of the Kennedy Experimental Mine Building, which was dedicated in 2016. The 15,000-square-foot, two-story learning center houses classrooms, laboratories, mine rescue and mucking stations, offices, and equipment space. He also generously supported scholarships annually for many years. Missouri S&T’s founding as the Missouri School of Mines and Metallurgy gives Kennedy’s gift particular significance. The Experimental Mine itself is considered an extraordinary teaching and training asset. It provides learning and training opportunities to S&T students and researchers, first responders, and high school students attending the always popular explosives camps. It’s also a source of groundbreaking research that industry partners can apply to real-world problems. Kennedy connects with mining both as an industry and an academic discipline as a frequent guest lecturer to undergraduate students, mining engineers and

mining company officials. He also speaks at colleges and universities and at major mining company facilities. Last year, Kennedy’s itinerary brought him to S&T, where he addressed December graduates as a commencement speaker, offering advice curated from his career and life experiences, including practical insight into how compound interest can turn a small investment into a large return. “I never had a steady income, because I worked for myself mostly, but I tried to take a percentage of my income and put that in safe investments I thought would yield funds,” he told the about-to-be Miner alumni packed into Gale Bullman to receive their diplomas. Clearly, the strategy worked. “Honestly, now I’m just trying to figure out the best way to put this money to good use,” he said with a smile.



KIM CURRY

HONORING A PROFESSOR WHOSE SIMPLE QUESTION CHANGED HER LIFE



From left, Jerry Bayless, Jill Hawkins-Brennan, CE'85, Kim Curry and Jack Emanuel, Curry's advisor.

From her first visit to Missouri S&T for a high school event long before the term “STEM” even existed to making a gift in honor of a beloved professor, **Kim Curry**, CE'86, sees a clear theme when she looks back: a single question can change everything. “Can one question change your trajectory? Let me tell you how,” says Curry, who recently retired from the employee-owned engineering company Burns & McDonnell, which she joined in 1986. Curry stayed there throughout her career, because she loved the company, the technical challenges and the long-term clients she worked with to improve our transportation systems. She lives in the Kansas City suburb of Blue Springs, Missouri.

It all began when she passed **Jerry Bayless** in a hallway in the spring of her senior year. Bayless, CE'59, MS CE'52, who was an associate professor of civil engineering, is credited with teaching thousands of students in a career that spanned seven decades. Known as Mr. Miner, Bayless died in 2019 at age 81. Since campus interviews and career opportunities were limited at the time, Curry was considering graduate school. “Then Professor Bayless asked me if I was interested in consulting,” she recalls. “When I said sure, he pointed me in the direction of a recruitment pizza party hosted by Burns & McDonnell.”

After two other candidates withdrew, Burns & McDonnell reached Curry, who lived in an apartment with no phone, through her parents and the university. At Burns & McDonnell, Curry progressed from assistant civil engineer to transportation engineer, managing and designing highly visible regional highway projects, including two-lane rural highways, expressways and freeways. Curry learned about the Jerry Bayless Endowed Professorship after induction into the Missouri S&T Academy of Civil Engineers in 2022. “I was thrilled to find a giving opportunity that I had such a personal connection to,” she says. Last year Curry gave \$100,000 to the Jerry Bayless Endowed Professorship, which will support programs that promote student success; she gave a second \$100,000 gift to the initiative earlier this year. “There’s no way to repay how Professor Bayless’ question impacted me, but this is a start,” she says. “The competition to attract and retain great faculty is fierce. They play such a significant role in providing the high-quality engineering education that attracts top-notch students. Hopefully this gift will help make that easier.” A simple question also marked the start of Curry’s involvement with WTS, which advances women in

transportation. A colleague asked her to attend a planning meeting in her stead. Curry agreed, took notes at the meeting and went on to serve on the organization’s board for a decade, starting and leading a committee to provide STEM outreach that exposes girls in middle and high school to transportation-related careers, including engineering. In fact, Curry says a simple question is what guided her to Missouri S&T. “During high school my chemistry teacher asked me if I wanted to visit Rolla for a women-in-engineering event,” says Curry, who does not recall ever considering engineering as a career option. That led her to sign up for Jackling Introduction to Engineering Camp, where Curry stayed in a dorm, did engineering activities and played Pac Man with future S&T students. She also discovered civil engineering. “I’m a visual person,” she says. “For me civil engineering is earthwork, bridges, drainage and very three dimensional. I can reach out and touch it and visualize how all the pieces fit together.” Curry says civil engineering seemed like a good fit. Over the years, she and the profession have become even more compatible. “It’s been perfect,” she says.



THE REMMERS LEGACY

Bringing the world to Rolla

Joshua Bell and pianist Peter Dugan's performance at Leach Theatre in February launched Missouri S&T's initiative to integrate music, theater and the visual arts into the university's technological mission.

When Grammy Award-winning violinist **Joshua Bell** took the stage at Missouri S&T's Leach Theatre in February, he continued a tradition launched nearly half a century ago by two visionary benefactors and founding OGS members, **Walter Remmers**, MetE'1923, MS MetE'1924, and his wife, **Miriam**.

Bell's campus appearance also launched a new S&T initiative to integrate music, theater and the visual arts into the university's technological mission. Sixty guests gathered that evening for a pre-performance dinner and post-concert VIP reception with Bell and pianist **Peter Dugan**. Among many OGS members attending were **John Remmers**, MetE'84, the grandson of Walter and Miriam, and his wife, **Catherine McCain**, EE'85.

"For decades, the Remmers Special Artist/Lecturer Series has brought world-class performers and speakers to our campus," says S&T Chancellor **Mo Deghani**. "While these visiting luminaries continue to enrich our community immeasurably, we must weave the arts into the fabric of the student experience."

In the decades since the first Remmers Lecture brought former U.S. President Gerald Ford to campus in 1979, an impressive roster of visitors has followed: musicians Yo-Yo Ma, Itzhak Perlman and Wynton Marsalis; former South African President F.W. de Klerk, and former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher; former U.S. Secretaries of State Henry Kissinger, Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice; and journalists Charles Kuralt, David Brooks, Mark Shields, and Cokie and Steve Roberts.

Throughout their lifetimes, the Remmerses remained closely involved with the series. Walter, a metallurgist, retired as vice president of Union Carbide Corp. Miriam, a musician, studied at Mount Holyoke and Wellesley. In a 1993 *UMR Magazine* article, they reminisced about hatching the idea for the Remmers series on a road trip from Tucson, Arizona, to Rolla in the late 1970s. After a conversation about how to enrich the university's technical excellence with cultural opportunities, they created an endowment that has given generations of students a front row seat to history, headlines and creative genius.

This year, S&T students returned the favor with a keepsake Walter and Miriam could not have imaged a half-century ago. Digital designers in the Innovation Lab's Makers Studio created 3D printed replicas of Joshua Bell's Stradivarius violin for donors and special guests.

↓ From left, Joshua Bell, John Remmers, Peter Dugan and Catherine McCain enjoying the post-concert VIP reception.



ST. PAT'S HONOREES



Kelvin Erickson, Curators' Distinguished Teaching Professor of electrical and computer engineering, kneels before the Blarney Stone to be knighted by St. Patrick.

The Honorary Knights of St. Patrick is a group made up of influential alumni, state and local dignitaries, and S&T faculty and staff. The knights are considered the greatest patrons and allies of and to the St. Pat's celebration, and we were thrilled this year that two of the knights honored by St. Patrick were OGS members.

Honorary Knights



Kelvin Erickson, EE'78, MS EE'79, of Rolla, is a Curators' Distinguished Teaching Professor of electrical and computer engineering. He earned a Ph.D. in electrical engineering from Iowa State University in 1983 and has authored or co-authored several textbooks, including *Plantwide Process Control* and four editions of *Programmable Logic Controllers: An Emphasis on Design and Application*. Erickson and his wife, Fran, have two children, Esther and David.

← **Kelvin Erickson**, Curators' Distinguished Teaching Professor of electrical and computer engineering, and his wife, **Fran**, during the Honorary Knights of St. Patrick Dinner.



Victoria Verkamp, of St. James, is vice chancellor for University Advancement at Missouri S&T. A certified fundraising executive, Verkamp joined Missouri S&T in 2014 as a senior development officer and was promoted to executive director of development in 2015 and assistant vice chancellor for University Advancement in 2017. Before joining Missouri S&T, Verkamp led fundraising efforts at Kappa Alpha Theta Foundation in Indianapolis. She earned a bachelor's degree in journalism and Spanish and a master's degree in public affairs from the University of Missouri-Columbia. Verkamp and her husband, Ben, have one child, Vivienne.

← **Victoria Verkamp** (left), vice chancellor for University Advancement, and **Rachel Jung**, MBA'09 and vice president of the Miner Alumni Association, during the Honorary Knights of St. Patrick Dinner.



Missouri University of Science and Technology
1100 N. Pine St.
Rolla, MO 65409

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 170
ROLLA MO

MINERFEST HOMECOMING

OCT. 3-4

Homecoming 2025 is right around the corner. You're invited to come back to Rolla Oct. 3-4 for a festive weekend of fun, friends, food and football.

MinerFest Homecoming is the perfect time to return to campus to reconnect with former classmates and soak up some Miner spirit. Join the Miner Alumni Association for a memorable weekend with friends, both old and new. To register, please visit mineralumni.com/minerfest25.

Questions?

If you have questions regarding Homecoming Weekend, please email alumni@mst.edu or call 800-JOMINER (800-566-4637).

