



Missouri Governor — Michael L. Parson
Office of Communications

2022 STATE OF THE STATE SPECIAL GUESTS

During the 2022 State of the State Address, Governor Mike Parson recognized a group of special guests for their achievements and commitment to the people of Missouri. Photos of special guests can be found on [Flickr](#).

Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis

Governor Parson recognized the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis for its contribution to Missouri's COVID-19 Vaccine distribution efforts, particularly among the most vulnerable populations. In partnership with the Missouri National Guard, the Urban League worked to administer COVID-19 vaccinations in senior living facilities in the African American community, to school educators and staff, and other disproportionately impacted areas.

The Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis, Inc., (ULSTL) is a nonprofit organization that has been providing social services to the Metropolitan St. Louis community since 1918. The Urban League's mission is "to assist African Americans and others throughout the region in securing economic self-reliance, social equality and civil rights." Each year, the Urban League serves residents through programming supporting economic opportunity, educational excellence, community empowerment, civil rights, and advocacy.

Michael McMillan – President and CEO of Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis

Mr. McMillan has served as the 7th President and CEO on July 17, 2013 officially assuming the role on August 5, 2013. President McMillan has received hundreds of awards and commendations from various organizations and was recently inducted into the International Civil Rights Walk of Fame as its youngest member. He was also named one of the Ebony Power 100 Most Influential African Americans in the United States. Additionally, he is the recipient of the 2013 International Trumpet Award for Community Service; the Whitney M. Young and the John Mack Leadership Awards from the National Urban League; the Chairman's Award presented by the St. Louis Minority Supplier Development Council and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Montford Point Marines. He was recently named the 2020 Person of the Year by The St. Louis American Newspaper.

President McMillan is a graduate of Saint Louis University with a Bachelor of Arts in African American Studies and a minor in Political Science with an emphasis in Finance. Additionally, McMillan is an Eisenhower Fellow, an American Council of Young Political Leaders Alumnus and member of Eta Boulè Chapter of Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity, Inc., 100 Black Men of Metropolitan St. Louis and St. Alphonsus "Rock" Catholic Church.

James Clark – Vice President of the Division of Public Safety and Community Response of Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis

Mr. James R. Clark has served St. Louis as a thought leader for over 20 years. Mr. Clark currently serves as VP, of Public Safety and Community Response, for the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis. He is



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responsible for the design and implementation of several of the region's most innovative programs including Serving Our Streets (SOS), which provides direct resource delivery into four of St. Louis' more challenged neighborhoods, where crime continues to trend down. Mr. Clark also developed the Pulpit to Porches Initiative which works to empower neighborhoods by delivering resources to residents through churches located in the neighborhood. Over 112 Churches have registered, with 75 churches being trained and are currently doing neighborhood engagement and outreach. Operation: Clean Sweep has grown exponentially over its six-year existence and is now implemented in 12 neighborhoods, including areas of St. Louis City, County, and East St. Louis. To date, over 175 vacant lots have been cleaned and cleared of overgrowth and debris and over 210 vacant and abandoned properties have been demolished.

Mr. Clark is also responsible for the development and implementation of the St. Louis Metropolitan Area Amnesty Project. In 2017, Clark launched the St. Louis Metropolitan Area Gun Violence De-Escalation Network. The resource serves 3rd party individuals, or community members who have information on conflicts that may result in gun violence. Trained De-Escalators then engage the adversaries to generate a truce. In 2021, Clark and his team have successfully de-escalated conflicts that either had an episode of or had the trajectory towards gun violence. The De-escalation Center concept is being requested for replication in Wilmington, DE, Selma and Birmingham, AL, Lexington, KY, and Kansas City, MO

Mr. Clark is regarded as a leading voice in America on the issue of neighborhood stabilization, gun violence, and community organizing. Clark was born and raised in North St. Louis. He attended the St. Louis Public Schools and served in the United States Army. After his military service he attended Colorado State University. Clark served in the Mayor's Office under Mayor Freeman Bosley, Jr. and participated in the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in 1994. Mr. Clark has been featured on CNN, MSNBC, and the cover of TIME magazine.

Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church – LINC COVID-19 Vaccine Partnership

Governor Parson recognized the partnership of Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church and Local Investment Commission (LINC) to vaccinate the most vulnerable Missourians in the heart of Kansas City. In collaboration with the Missouri National Guard, this partnership was able to maintain a long-running vaccination clinic for the local community.

LINC is large-scale social services organization involved in workforce development, employment, and family engagement and provides important services to children and families through its Caring Communities initiative. LINC's services are provided in Jackson, Cass, Clay, Platte, and Ray counties but also include a virtual online statewide school for court-involved young people.

Pastor John Modest Miles – Pastor of Morning Star Baptist Church

John Modest Miles was born in Magnolia, Arkansas. He received his education from the following schools: New Hope High School, Mt. Holly, AR; Los Angeles Trade School, Los Angeles, CA; Highland Park College,



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Detroit, MI; Arkansas Baptist College (B.S. Degree), Little Rock, AR; Philander Smith College, Little Rock, AR; Quachita Baptist College, M. ED. Degree, Arkadelphia, AR; Central Mississippi College (D.D. Degree), Kosciusko, MS; Midwestern Theological Seminary, Kansas City, MO; and Western Baptist Bible College (Honorary D.D. Degree), Kansas City, MO.

John Modest was licensed as a Minister in 1963, at the age of 18, at Paradise Baptist Church in Los Angeles, CA. He was ordained at Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Detroit, MI. He was the pastor of True Faith Baptist Church, Detroit MI for four years; Liberty Hill Baptist Church and Mount Sinai Baptist Church – both in Little Rock, AR for 16 years. He is currently serving as pastor of Morning Star Baptist Church, Kansas City, MO where he has served since April 5, 1987.

John Modest was a teacher in the Little Rock Public School system, and an instructor at Arkansas Baptist College. For 12 years, he served as the Moderator of the New Era District Association, Kansas City, MO, which includes 43 local churches. He is a long-time friend of President Bill Clinton.

He is married to Jeanette Richard Miles, and they have three children: Gerald (Janet) Miles, Janet (Conrad) Bartee, and Dr. Derrick Miles. He is the grandfather of six and great-grandfather of five.

Janet Miles-Bartee - Executive Vice President of Local Investment Commission (LINC)

Ms. Miles-Bartee has worked for LINC since 2000, initially as a LINC Caring Communities site coordinator — a school/community-based position that serves not only children attending the schools but also their families and neighborhood.

Since 2016, Miles-Bartee has been the Caring Communities Administrator responsible for 52 Caring Communities sites in six school districts — Kansas City, Hickman Mills, Center, Grandview, Fort Osage and North Kansas City — and two charter schools. The LINC partner school districts have a combined enrollment of 52,000. Over percent of LINC students qualify for free and reduced lunch, a measure of family need.

Missouri National Guard

Governor Parson recognized the efforts of the Missouri National Guard in aiding local communities with vaccination efforts across the State of Missouri through both mass and targeted vaccination sites. Governor Parson recognized Colonel Russell Kohl, who helped lead the Guard's vaccine operations. Colonel Kohl and Missouri National Guard members worked around the clock with local partners to get vaccines to Missourians as quickly as possible.

Colonel (Dr.) Russell Kohl - Commander of the 131st Medical Group for the Missouri National Guard

Colonel Russell Kohl is the Commander of the 131st Medical Group, Missouri Air National Guard, Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri. He is responsible for the medical readiness of the nearly 1,100 personnel that make up the National Guard's only B-2 Spirit unit, as well as for providing the Governor of Missouri and Combatant



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Commanders with contingency medical forces capable of projecting Critical Care Aeromedical Evacuation and en-route patient staging capabilities around the globe. The 131st Bomb Wing, a classic associate unit with the 509th Bomb Wing, is responsible for the employment of the B-2's combat capacity as part of the Air Force's Global Strike Task Force. The 131st Medical Group also supports four separated units: the Missouri Joint Forces Headquarters at Jefferson City, Missouri, and the 157th Air Operations Group, 239th Combat Communications Squadron, and 231st Civil Engineer Flight at Jefferson Barracks, the oldest operating US military medical facility west of the Mississippi river.

Colonel Kohl was directly commissioned into the Oklahoma Air National Guard, 137th Medical Group, as a Medical Services Corps officer under the ANG Early Accession Program in 2000. As a medical student, Colonel Kohl completed the Aerospace Medicine Primary course at the USAF School of Aerospace Medicine at Brooks AFB in San Antonio, TX. Upon graduation from the University Of Oklahoma College Of Medicine in 2002, he was recommissioned a Captain in the Medical Corps and was awarded his Flight Surgeon wings.

Colonel Kohl has served as a drill-status guardsman in numerous roles, including Squadron Medical Element Lead, Chief of Aerospace Medicine, and Additional Duty Deputy Medical Group Commander. He flew combat and combat support missions in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. He additionally deployed in support of the humanitarian missions Joint Task Forces Hurricane Katrina and Bam Earthquake. During the COVID-19 epidemic, Colonel Kohl was mobilized as a Medical Liaison Officer to the Office of the Governor of Missouri, where he assisted civil authorities in the development, deployment, and management of Missouri's statewide COVID-19 vaccination program.

Fast Track Workforce Incentive Grant Recipients

Governor Parson highlighted Missouri's Fast Track program, a financial aid program for adults returning to school, by showcasing two students from Bolivar Technical College who are pursuing degrees in nursing. The Fast Track grant addresses workforce needs by helping adults pursue a certificate, degree, or industry-recognized credential in an area designated as high need.

Shanisha Alexander – Bolivar Technical College

Ms. Shanisha Alexander was inspired to become a nurse from her experience with the nursing staff who took care of her mom when she was sick in 2014. In 2019, she began pursuing her dream and graduated as a Licensed Practical Nurse. Throughout the pandemic, she continued her general education, and, in the summer of 2021, she advanced another step toward my goal of becoming a Nurse Practitioner and bridged into the RN program at Bolivar Technical College. The Fast Track Grant enabled Shanisha to juggle going back to school, working, and raising three children.



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Bryan Webb – Bolivar Technical College

Mr. Bryan Webb is a 45 year old student in the Professional Nursing (RN) program at Bolivar Technical College. Bryan started his career in nursing as an activities assistant before becoming a Certified Nursing Assistant, a Certified Medical Assistant, and a Certified Medication Technician. After becoming a RN, he hopes to work in the emergency/trauma field and possibly teach one day at Bolivar Technical College. Bryan has a 16 year old son and has been married to his spouse for 20 years.

2022 National Principal of the Year

Beth Houf – Principal of Fulton Middle School

Ms. Beth Houf was named the 2022 National Principal of the Year by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. She is the first principal from Missouri to win the NASSP's award. She leads Fulton Middle School, a 550-student school in the Fulton 58 district, about 24 miles north of Jefferson City, the state's capital. She also served as principal of the district's McIntire Elementary School, before moving to Fulton Middle School in 2015.

She is the Co-Author of *Lead Like a PIRATE: Make School Amazing for Your Students and Staff*. Beth also serves as a facilitator for the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Leadership Academy, providing monthly training to state educational leaders. Beth is an international presenter and consultant. She is also active in her local, state and national principal associations. Beth is an adjunct professor at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri. Fulton Middle School was recognized as a Missouri Exemplary Professional Learning Community and Solution Tree Model Professional Learning Community in 2019. Beth was named a Missouri Exemplary New Principal in 2011, the Missouri National Distinguished Principal for 2016 the 2019 National Association of Secondary School Principals Digital Principal of the Year, the EducationDive 2019 Principal of the Year, the 2021-2022 Missouri Secondary School Principal of the Year. Beth also serves as a principal advisor for Future Ready Schools. Beth's proudest accomplishments are her two sons, Paul and Dawson. She has been honored to help lead schools that both have attended.

Career Technical Education

Governor Parson recognized several students in career and technical education programs from schools across the state to highlight the importance of these programs to prepare students for the jobs of the future.

Northland Career Center

- Audrey Strobe – Law Enforcement/Crime Scene Investigation Student
- Nate Wassam – Law Enforcement/Crime Scene Investigation Student



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Cape Girardeau Career and Technology Center

- Nicholas Hodges – Computer Networking and Security Student
- Lydia Strickland – Graphic Design Student
- Anwyn Suhr – Digital Media Student

Carthage Technical Center

- Olivia Bourgault – Health Sciences Student
- Danny Darland – Health Sciences Student
- Carly Simpson – Health Sciences Student

Nichols Career Center

- Cody Elliot – Welding Student

Pike-Lincoln Technical Center

- Destyni Gabel – Building Trades and Construction Student
- Haley Dowell – Auto Collision Student
- Joel Mound – Diesel Technology Student

2021 FFA National Model of Excellence

Paris FFA Chapter

The Paris FFA Chapter of Missouri was named the 2021 Model of Excellence during the third general session of the 94th National FFA Convention & Expo in Indianapolis. Chapter members attending on behalf of the Paris FFA included:

- Chris Ebbesmeyer
- Carlee Long
- Kendall Mason
- Miranda Billings
- Katrina Thomas
- Maggie Cummins
- Baylee Wade
- Morghan Crane



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Paris FFA held weekly Zoom meetings during the pandemic, creating lessons that focused on the five quality standards of the growing leaders section of the Program of Activities (POA). The chapter also held an event to cull the number of coyotes, which are predators in the area, and awarded prizes to participating community members. In another show of community support, the chapter visited each home in town, providing them with smoke detectors and batteries as needed. The FFA members worked with the local fire department to help install the fire detectors to ensure the safety of their community.

The National Chapter Award program recognizes outstanding FFA chapters that actively implement the organization's mission and strategies. These chapters improve chapter operations using the National Quality FFA Chapter Standards and a POA that emphasizes growing leaders, building communities, and strengthening agriculture. Chapters are rewarded for providing educational experiences for the entire membership. National FFA recognizes the top chapters with innovative activities in each of the three divisions: growing leaders, building communities, and strengthening agriculture. Chapters that receive three-star ratings during judging are eligible to compete for the premier chapter awards. Ten FFA chapters competed for the honor. Paris FFA was recognized as the winner during the third general session on Thursday, October 28, 2021.

Missouri State Highway Patrol Trooper Colton Beck

Trooper Colton Beck was injured in the line of duty in 2021 and was honored by Governor Parson for being a proud example of all law enforcement officers who serve Missourians honorably. Trooper Beck graduated from the Missouri State Highway Patrol's 101st academy class on December 18, 2015. Once graduated, he was assigned to Troop D, Zone 1 which serves the citizens of Greene County. Trooper Beck is a member of the Troop D SWAT team as well as the Troop D Honor Guard. He currently resides in the Springfield area with his wife, Jessica, and their two children.