



St. Mark Center ▪ Metro Center ▪ North Center

Making Our Mark | A Connection to Friends, Families and Supporters of UICS

Fall 2021

Back(pack) at it again!

UICS welcomes students and families to 2021-22 school year.

UICS welcomed 239 students and their families to the 2021-22 school year on Monday, August 16. It was a day of reuniting with old friends and making new ones!

Our three locations, UICS-St. Mark Center, UICS-Metro Center, and UICS-North Center, were abuzz with first-day-of-school jitters and the joy of reconnection.

"The first day of school is always a day filled with promise and anticipation," says CEO Deidre Anderson.

"Our team's commitment to excellence in early learning is at the heart of our UICS culture," says Deidre. "Our educators have been preparing for this school year all summer long, designing curriculum and engaging in professional learning opportunities."

As we open wide our doors of welcoming to students and families, we invite you, too, to be a part of our UICS community. As we look to a healthy and hopeful year ahead, we are grateful for your support and advocacy.



UICS-Metro Center student Royalty is welcomed on the first day of school by her mom, Kaprisha, who just happens to be one of the dedicated members of the UICS teaching staff.

We've got the world on a string.

Mesner Puppet Theater's residency will enrich students' social and emotional development.

UICS is always finding new ways to inspire our little learners' creativity. This September, **Mesner Puppet Theater (MPT)** begins a year-long residency at each of the three UICS centers to enrich social and emotional development.

"We're taking art at UICS to the next level," said Training and Curriculum Coordinator Merrill Hunt.



Led by Alex Espy, an experienced puppeteer with a decade of early education experience - including four years on staff at UICS - the residency uses theater to create new connections with students through innovative storytelling that inspires imagination.

"We want to use all of our theater knowledge to equip teachers for integrating theater into the classrooms while also enriching family experiences at home," says Alex. When students experience new means of self expression, their caregivers will also learn new ways to interact with them and deepen these relationships.

Left: Mesner Puppets' Alex Espy is coordinating the year-long theater residency at all three UICS centers. Right: Puppetry works of art created by students.





On the Mark



Deidre Anderson
Chief Executive Officer, UICS

Dear Friends,

The first day of school is traditionally about creating routines and reestablishing the classroom community, but there is little that is routine or established about this year's start. If the pandemic has taught us anything, it is that flexibility is key for everyone involved.

No one knows this better than our students and families, and especially our educators - all of whom have demonstrated amazing ingenuity, patience, and grace during the most trying of circumstances.

We continue to ask a great deal of our teachers as they explore new frontiers in both in-person and virtual classrooms. We must listen to educators - champions on the front lines - and what they tell us about what is or is not working as schools reopen, and adjust accordingly.

There is no doubt that COVID-19 presents a significant challenge for all sectors of education. However, as we have seen time and time again, our teachers are resilient. They are capable, qualified, and doing one of the most crucial jobs in the world: preparing the littlest of learners for life in an everchanging and evolving society.

If you are a teacher, please know that your community supports you! And if you know a teacher, please make sure they know how much they are appreciated.

Finally, thank YOU for all you do to ensure our mission is alive and well. We are in this together - and that's the perfect place to be!

Sincerely,

Deidre Anderson, CEO
United Inner City Services

We can't do what we do without you!
Please share a gift at UICSKC.org

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OUR VISION

UICS envisions an empowered community where children and families flourish.

OUR MISSION

Building bridges.
Inspiring minds.
Impacting futures.

ADVOCATE

Support Missouri state legislation efforts to boost early childhood education funding. Reach out to your local representative or share your support on social media!

GIVE

Your support makes a difference.
Donate online at UICSKC.org/invest

CONNECT

UICS
2008 E. 12th Street
Kansas City, MO 64127
Phone: 816.994.5400



UICSKC.org

[LittleLearnersKC](https://www.instagram.com/LittleLearnersKC)

Little Learners Luncheon

Joy, Curated!

10.28.21

Arrowhead Stadium
Tower Club East ■ 11:30 a.m.



Experience a magical morning of *Joy, Curated!* with United Inner City Services (UICS) at the annual Little Learners Luncheon on Thursday, October 28th, at Arrowhead Stadium's Tower Club East.

Enjoy a gourmet lunch, special performance, student art display, and an opportunity to build bridges, inspire minds, and impact futures. The event benefits UICS and supports the belief all children deserve a great education right from the start and will make the world better because of it!

The Little Learners Luncheon, hosted by Honorary Chairs Jon and Sarah Baum, and generously sponsored by Presenting Champions Jan and Tom Kreamer, is an opportunity to learn more about Kansas City's leader in quality early learning for more than 50 years.



"We are delighted and honored to lend our support and advocacy to UICS," says Sarah. "Jon and I believe with all our hearts that there is no more worthwhile investment than in the littlest learners in our community."

Though the Little Learners Luncheon is complimentary, guests will have an opportunity to share a gift if they desire.

To learn about sponsorship opportunities and our measures for guest safety, please visit uicskc.org/LittleLearnersLuncheon or contact Development Director [Mariah Roady](mailto:Mariah.Roady@uicskc.org) 816-994-5432.

Learning for a lifetime

Professional development days unite teaching staff in UICS' commitment to lifelong learning.



UICS staff on site and via Zoom at the all-day professional development training hosted at GEHA Field at Arrowhead Stadium.

Don't blink! Like technology, the field of education evolves quickly. That is why lifelong learning plays an important role in the educational process. It helps educators incorporate new tools and strategies into the learning process to boost their students' learning development.

A recent professional development day at Arrowhead Stadium provided many opportunities for UICS faculty and staff to foster growth mindsets in an ever-changing world. Topics at the all-day training included wellness, family engagement, Conscious Discipline, Team Building, CPR/First Aid, Diversity/Equity/Inclusion, family engagement, Arts Integration, and Social Emotional Development.

Bring on the new school year!



Left: During professional development, Ms. Chelsea and Ms. Jordae' take a break overlooking GEHA Field at Arrowhead Stadium. Right: Rev. Sam Mann, first executive director of United Inner City Services when founded in 1967, shares the organization's history with the staff via Zoom.

About the Bobbye Jean Fuller Early Education Fund at UICS



Bobbye Jean Fuller was a caring teacher, family proponent, and early education trailblazer for UICS-St. Mark Center and the Kansas City community. This scholarship, named in her honor, serves as a source of boundless hope, learning, and opportunity for families experiencing financial hardships that too often stand in the way of quality early learning.

On any given day, up to 32% of UICS families benefit from early childhood education fee assistance. Proceeds from the Little Learners Luncheon benefit the **Bobbye Jean Fuller Early Education Fund** that benefits students and families at UICS-St. Mark Center, UICS-Metro Center, and UICS-North Center! To share a gift, please visit uicskc.org/fuller-early-education-fund.

To live is to create!

UICS students discover the arts in every corner of life.

What do aerial artists, safaris, the [Kansas City Zoo](#), gardening, and puppets have in common?

They all were part of UICS' summer programming. Together, our teachers and arts coordinators developed activities for little learners to discover art in all things such as crafting, cooking, dancing, and more. At UICS, there is no limit to creativity. Every student is an artist, and everyone can find a new medium to express themselves.

Our little learners enjoyed performances by [KC Aerial Arts](#) as well as interactive activities from [Hallmark](#) and [Drum Safari](#).

"I love how our students can take a pinecone, a sock - maybe some googly eyes - and create something unique," says Training and Curriculum Coordinator, Merrill Hunt. "I've always thought that's a little bit magical."

"Our community partner artists bring new knowledge and expertise to our students and staff," said Area Early Learning and Inclusion Director, Raina Davis. "The arts are truly a distinctive benefit of a UICS education."



Left: Our friend Christian builds a bejeweled castle with various recycled materials from Scraps KC. Right: Toddler students get creative in the outdoor studio at UICS-Metro Center. Right: Kylie creates a masterpiece in the outdoor art studio at UICS-Metro Center.

circle time AT UICS

Did you know? Circle time is a wonderful way to share short and meaningful learning experiences with preschoolers and promote many key areas of development including: social-emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development. It is an opportunity for children to share their thoughts and ideas while practicing turn taking, learning respect for others' opinions, and understanding the need for rules. It helps children to prepare for kindergarten.



All around UICS

Clockwise from top left:

Play ball! UICS families and staff attended a [Kansas City Royals](#) game on August 14 when the team took on the St. Louis Cardinals.

UICS families and staff marched in this year's [Juneteenth](#) parade.

Students are captivated by a high-flying performance by [KC Aerial Arts](#) at UICS-St. Mark Center.

Volunteers from the [Kansas City Community Gardens](#) build garden beds at UICS-St. Mark Center during a rain shower.

Artist-in-residence Melissa Donoho and student Za'niya share in the joy of painting with natural elements such as flowers and leaves.

Our friend Carlos at UICS-North Center poses with Spartan, who was brought to the center by the horse's owner, Erin Katy Delaney Slater.

Zahir beats to the rhythm of the [Drum Safari](#) during an artist visit.

Stay in-the-know on all things UICS!



UICS COMMUNITY STARS

Sunderland Foundation



Our greater community is infinitely more vibrant and more livable because of the [Sunderland Foundation's](#) caring and generosity. Their generous investment at UICS has sustained and expanded our early education programs despite the profound impact of COVID-19 on operations.

Sunderland Foundation not only ensures our essential services can extend to an additional 200 children and their families, but also helps to offset the loss of operating revenue due to the pandemic. Additionally, this funding supports expansion to our third location in the Northland. Hats off to Sunderland Foundation for being by our side!

Prime Health Foundation

[Prime Health Foundation](#) is on the pulse of improving the quality, availability and accessibility of health care services in Kansas City. Gratefully, UICS students and families are the beneficiaries of mental health programs generously funded by this kind and generous foundation.

This funding ensures UICS teachers are specially trained to use the Mental Health Intervention Program (MHIP) and Conscious Discipline (CD) Model in their day-to-day work with students and families. CD is a research-based self-regulation program combining social and emotional learning with affirming discipline and guidance.

Additionally, UICS provides parent/caregiver workshops in CD so that families can adopt and implement practices at home. We salute Prime Health Foundation for funding these vital programs for our students and families.



Clay County Children's Services Fund



Thanks to [Clay County Children's Services Fund](#), UICS will soon have a Student Success Coordinator on our team at UICS-North Center. The Coordinator will conduct classroom observations, offer teacher coaching, and develop interventions to resolve social and emotional concerns.

The Student Success Coordinator will bring practical solutions to help parents and teachers reach and teach every child. When a child feels calm and safe, they can understand the impact of their behavior and find alternative solutions. Many thanks to Clay County Children's Services Fund for making these mental health resources available to our students, families, and teachers!

“ Find out where joy resides and give it a voice far beyond singing. ”

- ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON



Little Learners Luncheon

Joy, Curated!



Hosted by Rae Daniel, KSHB 41

Jon and Sara Baum, Honorary Chairs



Fund a Future ▪ Support a Little Learner!

You're Invited! Arrowhead Stadium
Tower Club East
10.28.21 11:30 a.m.



UICS is supported by these generous community partners:



UICS Arts Wish List

- Acrylic paints & paint brushes
- Aluminum foil
- Colored cellophane
- Contact paper
- Fabric
- Fake flowers
- Foam core and poster board
- Magnet strips
- Packing peanuts
- Paper bags
- Pinecones
- Pipe cleaners
- Scrapbook paper
- Stickers and MORE!

View the full list at UICSKC.org!



Ways to Give

- Share a monthly gift.
- Round up your spare change with the RoundUp app.
- Donate in-kind goods.
- Purchase items on our Amazon Wish List.

Give at UICSKC.org



Thanks to donors like you, many classroom projects have been fully funded, creating new opportunities for little learners to thrive in learning

DonorsChoose is an online platform where teachers create classroom project requests, and you may give any amount to the project that inspires you.

We are grateful for our givers who continue to support our classroom learning experiences through DonorsChoose!