23rd Annual
What's Right
With the Region!

Presented by
Focus St. Louis

September 3rd
At Home
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LEADERS ARE EXACTLY WHAT'S RIGHT WITH THE REGION
With almost 30 years in business, Kwame is among the nation’s leaders providing pure construction management services to the St. Louis area. KWAME focuses on providing our clients with detailed, project leadership and service in construction management.

As a lifetime resident of St. Louis, our founder Anthony Thompson has made it part of his mission to help stimulate growth and positive change to the region by partnering with like minded businesses.

We are proud of all of the businesses being recognized during this year's awards celebration.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF THE LEADERS IN ST. LOUIS!

KWAME
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WELCOME!

When reflecting on the past few months, thinking about the resiliency and creativity demonstrated on a daily basis to keep business doors open and to fill-in gaps in community needs, our hearts are filled with hope. This is the very same feeling we get each year at FOCUS’ What’s Right With the Region celebration.

We are all learning that it takes an integrated approach to solve our chronic, complex, social and community issues. These complex challenges require leaders who can flex across a variety of sectors and leadership styles, and create unique solutions in partnership with others.

Our 2020 WRWR honorees are shining examples of individuals and organizations rising up to face these challenges head on. They are reminders to us all that hope and radical optimism is still abundant throughout our community. As leaders, FOCUS knew it was important to find a way for us to gather and celebrate some of the many organizations and individuals working to make our region a place we can all be proud to call home.

Thank you for your ongoing belief in and support of FOCUS St. Louis and for joining us in new ways as we celebrate hope with our 2020 WRWR honorees!

Dr. Yemi S. Akande-Bartsch  
President & CEO, FOCUS St. Louis

Sharon Harvey Davis  
Board Chair, FOCUS St. Louis

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Shelley Seifert
President and CEO, FB Corporation;
Chairman and CEO, First Bank
Shelley.Seifert@fbol.com

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Otis Williams is an active listener and explores solutions to the biggest challenges facing our community. He has a deep understanding of our community issues and drives continuous improvements knowing that our community will be better and stronger when everyone has the opportunity to grow and contribute.
Antoinette Carroll has a skill of impeccably planning for the now and never. There is an urgency for solving problems and tomorrow’s issues, today. She has a tenacity and will power to engage and activate the passion in many that results in action. She is equity in action and provides models and compelling reasons to act now.

Deborah Patterson has demonstrated exceptional leadership in education and service in STEAM. She is all about growth and impact in the biosciences. She actively seeks to uncover blind spots and to include the broadest array of ideas.
We are

here for you

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Science for a better life
CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2020 HONOREES!

FOSTERING CREATIVITY FOR SOCIAL CHANGE
Presented by Regional Arts Commission
Honorees have harnessed the power of the arts and imagination to bring about change in the region.

IMPROVING EQUITY AND INCLUSION
Presented by Edward Jones
Honorees have shown a commitment to promoting diversity, access, inclusion and opportunity for all.

DEMONSTRATING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS
Presented by Kwame Building Group and First Bank
Honorees have demonstrated innovation and vision in making the St. Louis region a better place to live, work or visit.

PROMOTING STRONGER COMMUNITIES
Presented by Wells Fargo
Honorees have worked to address problems, develop initiatives, or make lasting improvements that result in stronger, more stable communities.

EMERGING INITIATIVES
Presented by Bayer
Honorees are new organizations that are developing practical solutions, responding to identified needs and serving as catalysts for change.
The arts have a special ability to touch both the heart and mind—building bridges between people of different faiths, races, cultures, economic condition and geography. Since 2011, Arts and Faith St. Louis has used the power of music to remind our community of our shared spiritual and human values at an annual concert at the Sheldon Concert Hall. This event provides an opportunity to meet people of many faiths, races and backgrounds and is an opportunity to begin healing the divisions in our community.
Circus Harmony gives children throughout the St. Louis region the opportunity to defy gravity, soar with confidence and leap over social barriers, all at the same time. Each year over 1400 young people learn to flip, fly and fling while also learning important life skills like focus, persistence and teamwork. Circus Harmony works to show their participants and their audiences that it does not matter what neighborhood you are from, what your race or religion is, what school you go to, what your parents do or if you even have parents. What matters is what YOU bring to the ring.
During its 43-year history, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis (OTSL) has committed to shaping the future of opera and connecting diverse audiences through its power and beauty. Opera Theatre uses opera as a tool to bring people together, and in 2013, OTSL launched the “New Works, Bold Voices” initiative to commission and produce new opera from outstanding American composers. This series has resulted in five world premiere opera commissions and demonstrated that innovative, new operas will draw new audiences. In 2018, the company reached over 40,000 through its mainstage festival season, community engagement efforts, and arts education. The company is a major provider of arts education and has programs in place at over 100 area schools.

www.opera-stl.org
Prison Performing Arts (PPA) is the only organization in Missouri dedicated to creating and presenting performing arts in both correctional and juvenile institutions. In a world where the justice-involved are often only known for the worst thing they have ever done, PPA provides a paradigm shift. When guests come to the prisons for a performance, their first exposure to the justice-involved cast is at their very best—mastering Shakespeare, full of hope and confidence. After a show, the cast hosts an open discussion with the audience. The public gets an unfiltered look at the humanity of individuals who will one day be their neighbors and bear witness to the power of second chances.

www.prisonartsstl.org
The Regional Arts Commission of St. Louis salutes the 2020 What’s Right with the Region Honorees with special recognition to those who have harnessed the power of the arts to bring about change in the region. Thank you for your leadership and unwavering commitment to St. Louis.

Mid-Year Report

Aligned with our desire to be accountable to the community, check out our mid-year report, which highlights our progress and actions to move art forward in the region: www.racstl.org.
RGA congratulates the 2020 “What’s Right with the Region!” honorees.

Thank you for helping to build a vibrant St. Louis region.

RGA
Reinsurance Group of America, Incorporated®
Too many Black babies in St. Louis are dying before their 1st birthdays—enough to fill 8 kindergarten classrooms. FLOURISH was formed to address the issue holistically instead of just as a healthcare issue by bringing impacted community members together with key sectors, including health care, nonprofits, business and education. Community members are directing the work, based on their own lived experience, to authentically address Black families’ needs. With racial equity at the core of their work, FLOURISH is reducing infant mortality by focusing on highly impactful areas, like prenatal care, transportation, housing and safe sleep.
Grace Strobel had a vision; one that would help to bring about understanding, respect and kindness to anyone feeling different and alone. Grace, an inspirational 23 year old model and speaker with Down syndrome, started speaking in 2017 after being made fun of by school aged children for whom she was working. Since then, Grace has spoken to over 3,000 students in the St. Louis area and volunteers hundreds of hours speaking, advocating and raising awareness about disabilities, bullying and overcoming. It takes courage to change hearts and minds, especially after being made fun of, but that is what Grace is doing—one school, one student at a time.

www.instagram.com/grace_strobel/
Founded in 1990 to serve children and families in East St. Louis, Illinois, Join Hands ESL understands the best way to help children is to also help their parents. In 2004, they launched their Family Mentoring Program. To achieve academic success for children, this program provides whole family mentoring to 34 families in the program. Join Hands staff and volunteers work with mothers and children as they set goals and expectations for themselves. By prioritizing education and working with families, families are provided a pathway out of poverty.
Parents Learning Together at the St. Louis Arc

St. Louis Arc empowers people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families to lead better lives by providing a lifetime of high-quality services, family support and advocacy. Parents with disabilities are at greater risk of referrals to child welfare services and termination of parental rights. Parents Learning Together (PLT) is a family-centered program providing parenting education and resources to individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities who live in St. Louis City. PLT helps families create healthy home environments and fosters positive social-emotional, cognitive, and physical development in their children. The PLT team creates an inclusive community by connecting parents with peers, community resources, and social services to build the skills needed to succeed.
With national accolades, 15 hospitals and more than four thousand physicians, including Washington University specialists, BJC HealthCare gives you access to not only the world’s best medicine, but the medicine that is best for your world.

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The legacy of leadership

Great leaders leave a mark on the communities they serve. They bring people together, create a consensus, and work hard to make positive change. What is accomplished today can last for generations.

We proudly celebrate the great achievements of FOCUS St. Louis.
Covenant Place recognized that older adults are able to remain independent longer when they have accessible health care, socialization, services and support. In 2014, Covenant Place began an $84M redevelopment of its properties that includes a 19,000SF community resource and service center that will be open to all the area’s older adults. Services provided at the center will include Medicare navigators, banking, health and wellness education and programming, lifelong learning classes and opportunities for socialization and engagement to help decrease the debilitating effects of isolation. The center will be a hub for the community where older adults can find the services and resources they need, find their peer group, and have opportunities for purposeful engagement.
HeartLands Conservancy

Founded in 1989, HeartLands Conservancy protects open spaces, farmland, and cultural assets in southwestern Illinois and the surrounding region to support communities with healthy and sustainable air, land, and water resources for current and future generations. As a land trust, HeartLands works to permanently preserve frequently flooded land and important natural areas. Starting in 2014, it began what is arguably its most important work to date—elevating to National Park status Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site, a United Nations-designated UNESCO World Heritage Site, located less than 7 miles as the crow flies from the Arch.

www.heartlandsconservancy.org
Lock It for Love is a project of Women’s Voices Raised for Social Justice, a volunteer-driven organization founded in 2005. The primary objective of “Lock It for Love” is to educate parents and other caregivers about how to keep their children safe from unintentional shootings and suicides when children and teens gain access to unlocked and loaded guns, primarily in homes. “Lock It for Love” is the only volunteer-based program in the St. Louis area providing gun safety education and free gun locks.

Since 2015, the organization has distributed 5,333 free gun locks at 190 events, focusing efforts on the 17 zip codes in the St. Louis area where children are at greatest risk of gun violence.
Urban Harvest STL (UHSTL) strives to create an inclusive and equitable food system that puts control locally and provides sufficient, healthy and culturally-appropriate food for all, regardless of race, socioeconomics or geography. UHSTL maintains 7 agricultural projects in the heart of St Louis; 3 rooftop farms, 2 ground-level sites, a garden on Busch Stadium, and an urban orchard. These urban farms serve individuals and families living in food deserts, which are most common in communities of color, and disproportionately African-American and Hispanic households. In 2019, UHSTL grew 4,740 pounds of produce and provided 2,094 healthy meals to families in low access communities.
CONGRATULATIONS!
WHAT’S RIGHT WITH THE REGION RECIPIENTS

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webster.edu/websterspeaks

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Covenant Place,
Arts & Faith St. Louis,
and all of the recipients
of the What’s Right
with the Region Award!

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CONGRATULATIONS!
Covenant Place,
Arts & Faith St. Louis,
and all of the recipients
of the What’s Right
with the Region Award!

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MAKING MEETINGS MATTER

THANK YOU
For Helping Us Draw
Tomorrow’s Future

26
Improving the quality of life in our communities takes inspiration, perspiration and dedication. We’re proud to support FOCUS St. Louis and share their determination to make a difference.

Working together to create a healthier St. Louis

Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Missouri is proud to support FOCUS St. Louis and the 23rd Annual What’s Right with the Region Awards.

Thank you to the honorees making a positive difference in our region.
The Community and Children’s Resource Board of St. Charles County (CCRB) is the forerunner in the St. Louis region in creating local funding streams for children’s mental health and substance use treatment services. The CCRB is committed to maximizing community resources to build and sustain a comprehensive system of services for children and families in need. Begun in St. Charles County, it has now expanded to nine additional counties. The relationships CCRB has with other child servicing entities are key ingredients in why St. Charles County has consistently ranked either 1st or 2nd by Missouri Kids Count for child well-being.

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Community & Children’s Resource Board

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Greater East St. Louis Early Learning Partnership

Inspiring passion, unflinching leadership, and a bold vision for building a stronger community for children were the seeds that gave life to the Greater East St. Louis Early Learning Partnership (ELP) in 2009. Since its inception, ELP has engaged hundreds of early childhood champions—parents, practitioners, leaders from various sectors—in activities to advance its mission and achieve its vision of every child being ready for kindergarten and beyond. Above all, ELP has elevated the importance of early childhood—particularly the first 1,100 days of a child’s life—and has led the way in helping our community take bold action on behalf of our young children.
Provident Behavioral Health is an authority on behavioral health services in the St. Louis region, dedicated to providing expert care to people of all ages and economic backgrounds throughout the metro area and beyond. They engage with clients in one-on-one or family counseling sessions, through their Afterschool program, in group therapy sessions like Survivors of Suicide, or at the other end of a phone call during moments of deepest crisis on the nation’s oldest suicide prevention lifeline. Provident is building brighter futures through exceptional behavioral health services, especially for those with the greatest need.
Thomas Dunn Learning Center (TDLC) is a community hub for youth and adults, civic engagement, arts and education, personal enrichment, and basic skill development, nestled in Marquette Park in the heart of the Dutchtown Neighborhood—a safe space, a home away from home for teens. Having focused on adult education for nearly 50 years, TDLC pivoted in 2014 to a youth focus, recognizing that what had largely been an aging population around its campus now had one of the highest concentrations of youth in the City with limited access to out of school learning and personal development opportunities. TDLC is a center for lifelong learning; a place where youth can have creative, productive outlets for their unbounded energy, propelling the community forward, and helping youth maintain a healthy path.
We are in the city for good!

We invite you to visit us and join us.

Located at the intersection of Grand and Washington, Third Baptist Church is proud to be a part of the Grand Center Arts District.

For more information, go to third-baptist.org.

Proud to Join FOCUS St. Louis in Celebrating What’s Right with the Region!

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WE SALUTE FOCUS ST. LOUIS ON ITS 23RD ANNUAL WHAT’S RIGHT WITH THE REGION AWARDS

FOCUS and Clayco Building the Region’s Future Leaders TOGETHER!
Leaders for Change

Congratulations to this year’s What’s Right with the Region! honorees

Edward Jones®
People with a visual disability have severely limited or no access to the visual world of print, arts and cultural performances and exhibits, and sports. Since 1973, MindsEye has worked to use technology to provide equitable access regardless of disability. When MindsEye saw the opportunity to bring advocates and artists together the “Arts & Culture Accessibility Cooperative” was born. The ACAC presents an inspiring model of inclusion. It brings together all involved parties to collaborate and transform our region. The overarching goal of ACAC is to create a St. Louis arts and culture scene inclusive of people of all abilities. To date, over 60 theaters, museums, agencies, advocates, and individuals have attended ACAC events.
In January 2019, Prosecutor Bell began implementing reforms to decriminalize mental illness and substance abuse on day one of the job. Through data driven policy and collaboration, the Prosecutor’s Office developed the Bell Plan to make St. Louis County a safer place through the diversion of individuals to a community-based, harm-reduction intervention for law violations driven by unmet behavioral health needs. The Bell Plan expands St. Louis County’s drug and mental health court capacity and increases opportunities for treatment by partnering with local organizations.
Wellston Tenant Association

Formed in 2017, The Wellston Tenant Association’s (WTA) main objective is to represent the public housing tenants in Wellston, Missouri by informing the residents of HUD and housing authority actions that affect them and to serve as the tenants’ voice to HUD and the housing authority. In 2018, HUD announced a plan to demolish 200 public housing units, which were the homes of over 500 people. In the face of this threat, the Wellston public housing tenants led by the WTA came together and negotiated a plan with HUD that offered every Wellston public housing tenant an opportunity to decide whether they want to leave or to remain. Not only has the WTA’s efforts protected the interest of their own members, but they have given the entire community an opportunity for redevelopment and investment and expanded the availability of affordable housing in our region.
Thanks for helping make our event and work possible!

THANK YOU 23RD ANNUAL WRWR CO-CHAIRS...

...AND MEMBERS OF THE SELECTION COMMITTEE!

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For nearly 20 years, FOCUS St. Louis has distinguished itself as the region’s premier leadership organization. FOCUS has done more to advance civic leadership and engagement in St. Louis than any other organization in the metropolitan area, and we continue to do so.

We educate leaders. We connect leaders across sectors. We facilitate the important conversations.

FOCUS St. Louis envisions a region that thrives through diversity, equity, inclusion and cooperation; guided by leaders across sectors who deeply understand our region’s history, strengths, and challenges. Each year more than 10,000 people connect with FOCUS through our six leadership programs, civic engagement initiatives and active alumni network. We are

- Preparing a diverse base of leaders to work cooperatively for a thriving St. Louis region through our experience-based leadership training, civic issue education and public engagement initiatives.

- Educating leaders, connecting them to each other across sectors, and facilitating the important conversations our region requires to move forward because we understand that social and civic responsibility is important.

- Striving toward an educated, engaged community by providing high-caliber programs that educate our region’s leaders and equip them to lead while recognizing differences and inspiring others to greatness.
Leadership St. Louis® (LSL) is one of the most highly-respected leadership development programs in the nation. Graduates of the program include CEOs and other corporate senior level executives, business owners, state legislators, government officials, education leaders, attorneys, community leaders and nonprofit executive directors. LSL builds upon a leader’s existing competencies and develops their understanding of how to create a better St. Louis region.

Emerging Leaders is designed for young professionals ages 22-35 and offers the opportunity to strengthen personal, professional and civic leadership skills, gain a deeper understanding of the inner workings of the St. Louis region and build connections with a diverse network of peers. Like all FOCUS leadership programs, Emerging Leaders welcomes applicants from all backgrounds, industries and sectors.
Women In Leadership (WIL) provides women the opportunity to refine their personal, professional and civic leadership competencies, learn about the St. Louis community, and connect with other women from diverse backgrounds. This program is open to women of all ages who have a desire to strengthen their leadership skills and effectiveness. Ideal candidates include mid-level managers, entrepreneurs and community leaders.

FOCUS Impact Fellows is a “hands-on” Graduate School for experienced leaders who want to make a difference in their community. This program specializes in high-intensity project-based collaboration designed to break through silos and create cross-sector innovation targeting the most pressing issues in the region. In 2020/21 the Fellowship will be an opportunity for St. Louis changemakers to come together to shape the future of our region. Our goal is to make St. Louis stronger by replicating the collaboration that occurred to address the challenges of COVID-19 to address other regional issues.

Youth Leadership St. Louis provides advanced leadership training to high school juniors from public, private, and parochial schools over the course of nine months to learn about themselves, their communities, and each other. Participants then have their senior year of high school to practice and fine tune leadership skills gained, and act as change agents in their schools/communities. The foundation YLSL participants gain prepares them for lifelong civic engagement. Each YLSL cohort leaves the program better prepared to lead and engage with their schools and communities, work across differences, communicate effectively, and maintain interest in a range of issues critical to our region’s success.
FOCUS in Community

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND POLICY FORUMS
Each year, FOCUS plans and presents a significant number of events to promote community connections. FOCUS engages the greater St. Louis region in conversations that promote practical community-based solutions to the challenges that influence our region’s overall prosperity. Through nonpartisan conversations, FOCUS assures information on issues is broadly disseminated, and discussed thoroughly in diverse audiences. During the 2020/2021 program year, our FOCUS on Policy series take a deep-dive into diversity, equity and inclusion topics and how these efforts and discussions are impacting and changing our community.

FOCUS ELEVATE LEADERSHIP
A new leadership continuing education series, the Elevate Leadership series is designed to fulfill our purpose of continuing to inspire and equip leaders – and those on the path to leadership – to Innovate and Execute as skilled change agents. These half-day courses are designed to immerse participants in breakthrough thinking alongside professional peers, in order to grow their confidence, knowledge, and networks.

EXPERIENCE ST. LOUIS
For executives new to the St. Louis community, or those who have recently been promoted to a senior-level leadership position, Experience St. Louis is a great way to get connected quickly and come up to speed on the issues, institutions and individuals shaping our region. The program provides participant an opportunity to meet and talk with leaders and influential decision-makers in the community. During the two-day orientation, FOCUS’ President & CEO and participants visit sites around the region to explore the historical, political, economic, cultural and social landscape of St. Louis.
QUALITY LEADERSHIP
Recognizing that experience is the best teacher, FOCUS uses immersion training to help individuals gain the knowledge, skills and practice they need to become impactful civic leaders.

CIVIC INVOLVEMENT
FOCUS understands that for St. Louis to thrive, it must have informed and engaged residents who champion community well-being and work to resolve issues of regional importance.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION
Through its partnerships, networks and civic engagement initiatives, FOCUS aligns leaders and organizations around effective solutions to complex community challenges.

EQUITY
FOCUS supports fair treatment, access and opportunity for all and partners with others to eliminate disparities that undermine the quality of life in the region.

REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE
FOCUS knows that the bi-state region is made up of mutually dependent communities, so it works across boundaries and jurisdictions to improve civic life and the general welfare.
INVEST IN YOURSELF BY ADDING YOUR NAME TO THE LARGEST LEADERSHIP ROSTER IN THE REGION.

Did you know donors and members provide more than half the funding needed to support FOCUS programs?

As a nonprofit, we rely on you! Your membership enables FOCUS to help leaders build a leadership tool kit that will allow them to inspire others and build hope during these unprecedented times.

Your FOCUS membership also does at least five things for you.

1. It demonstrates your belief that the St. Louis region deserves strong leadership.
2. It’s a great way to continue your engagement with FOCUS if you are a graduate of one of our programs.
3. It connects you with other FOCUS members who are working on issues you care about.
4. It entitles you to some great benefits, including tickets and discounts, access to the Member Directory, and a subscription to our newsletter.
5. It feels great!

JOIN US TODAY AT FOCUS-STL.ORG!