

For Immediate Release
December 20, 2017

Contact: Claire Wolff, *Community Development Specialist*
University of Missouri Extension – St. Louis
1-314-516-6392 | wolffca@missouri.edu



Announcing the 2018 Neighborhood Leadership Fellows Cohort Class
Advanced Leadership Training Aims to Increase St. Louis Promise Zone Civic Engagement

St. Louis, MO: Creating Whole Communities and St. Louis Promise Zone - St. Louis Economic Development Partnership is proud to announce the 2018 Neighborhood Leadership Fellows Cohort Class. The 2018 Cohort consists of 23 leaders from North St. Louis City and St. Louis County:

Annessa Blackmun	St. Louis City - 3rd Ward
Adam Brown	St. Louis County - University City
Roslyn Brown	St. Louis County - Pine Lawn
Deborah Rice Carter	St. Louis County - Ferguson
Kimberly Ann Collins	St. Louis City - 21st Ward
Rezhe Connelly	St. Louis County - University City
Teyuna Darris	St. Louis County - Ferguson
Umeme Houston	St. Louis City - 3rd Ward
Justin Idleburg	St. Louis City - 26th Ward
Ronald Jones	St. Louis City - 4th Ward
Kimberly Knox	St. Louis County - Normandy
Edward McFowland	St. Louis City - 4th Ward
Marie Oberkirsch	St. Louis City - 5th Ward
T. Christopher Peoples	St. Louis County - Bridgeton
Octavia Pittman	St. Louis County - Berkeley
Carla Reid	St. Louis City - 1st Ward
Lucendia Smith	St. Louis City - 5th Ward
Luther Tyus	St. Louis County - Bellerive Acres
Deborah J Vincent	St. Louis County - Pagedale
Elwyn Walls	St. Louis County - Pine Lawn
Mary Wheeler-Jones	St. Louis City - 21st Ward
JoAnn Williams	St. Louis City - 21st Ward
Kevin Windham	St. Louis County - Northwoods

The mission of Neighborhood Leadership Fellows is to increase the voices of North St. Louis City and North County residents at the civic decision-making tables in order to produce more equitable regional policies for neighborhoods. The primary geographic focus for the program is the federally designated St. Louis Promise Zone.

University of Missouri Extension improves people's lives through relevant, responsive and reliable research-based education from University of Missouri. With courses ranging from Robotics to Gardening, we improve people's lives. Visit us at <http://extension.missouri.edu/stlouis>, follow us on [Twitter](#), and like us on [Facebook](#).

“Through this program, participants will gain skills and knowledge to become strong civic leaders in their communities, and strong advocates for an inclusive St. Louis,” said St. Louis Promise Zone Director Erica Henderson. “We’re proud to partner with Creating Whole Communities and anticipate great things from this inaugural Cohort.”

The inaugural year of this advanced leadership-training program drew a large amount of interest. “It was tough to select just 23 fellows from the more than 100 applications received from individuals doing amazing work in their communities,” said Dwayne T. James, NLF Co-Facilitator and County Program Director for MU Extension - St. Louis County. “I look forward to working with and learning from the fellows selected to create a better, more inclusive St. Louis region,” added James.

Neighborhood Leadership Fellows is a nine-month leadership training. The program, set to convene on January 12, will meet one weekend a month from January through September 2018. During the Friday and Saturday sessions, participants will engage in shared collaborative learning experiences through dialogue, and presentations among fellows and respective community and state leaders. Educational workshops will cover policies, new research, and innovations that promote equitable neighborhood development in areas of housing, education, economic development, public health and safety. Positional power trainings will give participants the foundational knowledge to lead their communities and to serve effectively on boards, commissions, committees, and in elected office. All participants who are accepted receive a \$2,000 stipend and a UMSL Chancellor’s Certificate upon completion.

To learn more about the program, please visit cwc.umsl.edu/nlf/

About Creating Whole Communities: Creating Whole Communities (CWC), formed in 2014, brings together the University of Missouri–St. Louis (School of Social Work, Des Lee Collaborative Vision, and the Public Policy Research Center), University of Missouri Extension (MU Extension), and the St. Louis region's neighborhoods to focus on strengthening our communities. CWC looks to link the resources of the university's local efforts throughout the region to create whole communities.