

CREATING WHOLE COMMUNITIES 2022



END OF YEAR REPORT

UMSL | Social Work
University of Missouri–St. Louis

UMSL | Economic and
Community Development
University of Missouri–St. Louis

 **Extension**
University of Missouri

C W C

CWC is a collaboration between University of Missouri–St. Louis, University of Missouri Extension and Missouri neighborhoods to strengthen communities through...

RESEARCH

Supporting place-based research on community building practice and policy issues, and sharing research for practical application with community leaders.

CIVIC DIALOGUE

Creating space and opportunity for community conversations, exploring what works in creating whole communities.

LEADERSHIP & CAPACITY BUILDING

Providing training opportunities and technical assistance to support leadership development and community building.

RESEARCH

In 2022, CWC awarded one Research and Implementation Grant (\$6,000) that will support UMSL faculty in using a Community-based Participatory Research framework to address issues critical to local neighborhoods and municipalities.

2022 RESEARCH AND IMPLEMENTATION AWARDEES

Dana Klar, UMSL Psychological Sciences (Child Advocacy Studies) and Dr. Amanda Bequette, UMSL Psychological Sciences (Child Advocacy Studies) will continue to work with The School District of University City after successfully undergoing the Relationship Building Grant last year. Their Research and Implementation project, *Student Unity Enhancing Community*, seeks to (1) enhance community connectedness through the implementation of a community art project and (2) build community ownership and pride through incorporating students and community members into each step of this project from creation to evaluation and dissemination of the results.



CWC awarded one **Relationship-Building Grant (\$1,000)**, which will serve to support University-Community partnerships in exploring interests, developing mutual expectations and identifying research goals.

2022 RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING AWARDEE

Michael Behle, UMSL Department of Art and Design, is partnering with St. Louis Against Sexual Assault on a month-long exhibition of artwork from sexual assault survivors in Gallery210 @FAB. The partnership aims to raise awareness and offer support for the community of sexual assault survivors. Through the resources of Gallery 210@FAB, an exhibition is being planned for the fall of 2023. This gallery show will serve as a keystone to broader concurrent programming ranging from workshops to informational events to expand community awareness of these resources.

UMSL | Art and Design
University of Missouri–St. Louis



EXTENSION FACULTY INNOVATION FUND (EFIF)

CWC launched a new research and innovation opportunity, The Extension Faculty Innovation Fund (EFIF). The goal of EFIF is to enable MU Extension Community Development (CD) faculty to innovate and strengthen their work through small dollar capacity-building grants and facilitated partnerships with MU System academic resources. The EFIF will support new research-based pilot projects, evidence-based improvements on existing programs, engaging partners/stakeholders/researchers for community development field-building, or other innovative community development-focused initiatives. CWC looks forward to receiving applications for this fund in 2023.

CIVIC DIALOGUE

In 2022, CWC focused dialogue efforts in strengthening community connections and partnerships with program alumni as well as those in the UMSL community.

Neighborhood Leadership Fellows Think Tank

To activate our NLF Alumni, CWC supported the establishment of an alumni-led NLF Think Tank, a group specifically for NLF Alumni to:

- Meet/think/talk/collaborate
- Work on challenging issues/come up with solutions together
- Keep projects and concepts going that were started in NLF
- Develop good policies and legislation that benefits the Promise Zone
- Collaborate on research and advocacy
- Support one another

In 2022,
NLF Think Tank held:

3

BOOK CLUB
SESSIONS

1

BRAINSTORMING
VIRTUAL SESSION

1

SOCIAL EVENT



NLF Think Tank Book Club

JANUARY, APRIL, SEPTEMBER 2022

The NLF Book Club was created as a branch of the NLF Think Tank for neighborhood leadership alumni to discuss critical topics offered in social justice and community-focused books. Participants engage in collaborative thinking and robust discussions with the aim to work together on addressing challenges offered in these books. The book club provides an opportunity for neighborhood leaders to connect, network and share knowledge with each other. There were 19 attendees over 3 virtual book club sessions, and CWC sponsored 20-30 additional books per club for alumni who could not attend but still wanted to engage with the book.

19
ATTENDEES

3
VIRTUAL CLUBS

NLF Think Tank: Good Ideas Edition!

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 2022

For alumni working on an important Promise Zone issue that could use the brainpower of their NLF Fellows, or alumni looking to build a coalition to address a North City or County challenge, this virtual session focused on workshopping ideas to spark solutions.

24
ATTENDEES

NLF Think Tank: Connect and Collaborate BBQ

FRIDAY, JUNE 3, 2022

NLF Think Tank convened at Rustic Roots Sanctuary, a community farm in Spanish Lake created by NLA/NLF alum Janett Lewis, with the goal of seeding collaborations through connections. Food provided by Mi Hungry Food Truck, a black-owned Promise Zone-located small business.

89
REGISTRANTS



Community-Based Participatory Research Series

FEBRUARY – APRIL 2022

CWC partnered again with UMSL's Public Policy, Nursing and Economic & Community Development departments to hold a five-part Community-based Participatory Research Training Series with a goal of building the capacity of researchers and community stakeholders and to develop long-term, collaborative community partnerships in the St. Louis region.

52
RESEARCHERS AND
COMMUNITY PARTNERS

5
SESSIONS

SESSION TOPICS

- 1. Academic Research in the Context of Race and Community**
Focuses on the influence of racism on the performance of academic research and how this effects the work done in the community.
- 2. Basics of CBPR**
Provides an in-depth understanding of CBPR and how to increase engagement.
- 3. Trust Building**
Covers research-based practices that build authentic partnerships between university and community for long-term relationships.
- 4. Partnership Connections**
Explores four guiding principles for university-community collaborations.
- 5. Funding Opportunities**
Covers community-engaged research grants offered across campus and other entities.

LEADERSHIP & CAPACITY BUILDING



Neighborhood Leadership Academy

SEPTEMBER – NOVEMBER 2022

In Fall 2022, Neighborhood Leadership Academy hosted two cohorts, one in-person and one virtual, in order to accommodate different learning styles and allow for higher volume of participants. With both cohorts combined, there were 55 participants from the counties of St. Louis City, St. Louis, Greene, Phelps, Camden, Boone, Jackson County, Johnson, Texas County, Maries, Franklin, Jefferson, Dent, Worth, Osage and St. Clair (IL). Additionally, NLA awarded 39 scholarships, allowing individuals to participate in NLA at no cost and increasing access to individuals across the state looking to acquire skills and knowledge needed to bring positive change in their communities.

2

COHORTS

55

PARTICIPANTS

39

SCHOLARSHIPS
AWARDED

2022 NLA graduates shared the following feedback:

“The overall knowledge that I have gained through this course has been amazing. From how to engage stakeholders in the community, to planning events and hosting meetings, these are all tools that I will fully utilize going forward. The clifton strengths evaluation is an invaluable tool I will use in my neighborhood planning efforts, but also my personal life, namely in being more aware of my particular strengths in my workplace and how those strengths can serve me well there.”

“Everyone and everything was so amazing. You guys were so phenomenal, fantastic, kind and sincere. Everything learned can be utilized going forward for other community projects/engagement.”

“I will share that the program might be one of the best kept secrets when it comes to individuals such as myself who may be wanting to engage but don't know how or where to start.”

Neighborhood Leadership Academy Mini Grants

NOVEMBER 2022

NLA awarded mini-grants to a selection of 2022 NLA participants with a goal of ensuring that project ideas become reality and create positive change at the grassroots, neighborhood level. Participants had an opportunity to apply for a maximum of \$2,500. CWC received 31 applications and funded 20 projects across the state through a grant review committee made up of neighborhood leadership alumni. The total amount awarded was \$46,805.

31

APPLICANTS

20

PROJECTS FUNDED

\$46,805

TOTAL AMOUNT AWARDED

A sample of the funded projects can be found below:

Salem Farmers' Market
Dent County, MO

Jeff-Vander-Lou Youth Empower Hour
St. Louis, MO

Elder Care Pilot Program
Johnson County, MO

School Tower Garden
St. Louis, MO

Seniors and Youth for Community Beautification
St. Louis, MO

Community Fitness Classes
Franklin County, MO

Hillsdale Demolition Project
St. Louis, MO

Northwest Independence Block Party
Jackson County, MO

Staff Care Emergency Fund
St. Louis, MO

HIV Resource Fair
St. Louis, MO

Stitched Together Crochet Club
Belleville, IL

The Musaeum Library
St. Louis, MO

Independence PAL Program
Jackson County, MO

Community Gardening
St. Louis, MO

Good Neighbor Day
Texas County, MO

Wellston History Podcast
St. Louis, MO

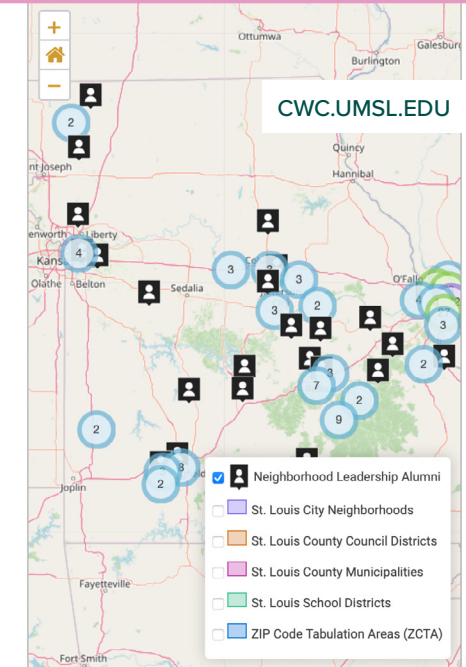
Floodplain Management Plan
Jefferson County, MO

532+

NLA ALUMNI

100+

NLF ALUMNI



New Alumni Interactive Map Tool

With over 532 NLA alumni and over 100 NLF alumni, there is a deep and burgeoning network of leaders around the state. In order to facilitate leaders connecting with each other as well as having the ability for the public to identify and connect with alumni in their communities, we worked with the MU Center for Applied Research and Engagement Systems to develop an interactive NLA/NLF alumni map. Now posted on our CWC website at cwc.umsl.edu, users can filter and sort by location, cohort and topical interest area and connect directly with leaders through an email function.

Neighborhood Leadership Fellows

JANUARY – SEPTEMBER 2022

Neighborhood Leadership Fellows, an advanced leadership program focused on systems change, hosted 18 sessions over 9 months in 2022 and graduated 26 St. Louis Promise Zone resident Fellows. These Fellows learned advocacy skills and strategies needed to gain access to civic leadership tables and halls of power.

NLF program outputs:

- Each Fellow created a 10-year Individualized Personal Leadership Plan.
- Fellows worked in groups to develop a policy-focused project aimed at addressing more equitable regional policies for neighborhoods. Groups were tasked with developing or enhancing a policy model/framework based on lived experiences, strengths and networks in addition to performing data research, advocacy and community engagement in order to work towards systematic change that would address an inequity in the Promise Zone.

18

SESSIONS
OVER
9 MONTHS

26

GRADUATING
ST. LOUIS PROMISE ZONE
RESIDENT FELLOWS

The groups presented their final projects at the 2022 Graduation Ceremony in September:

- **Wealth Warriors Team (Financial Empowerment)**
Increase wealth in the Promise Zone by mandating the Family Self-Sufficiency Program for those seeking housing assistance.
- **Youth First (Youth at the Center)**
Target needs and services of every child in Pre-K-12 through Full-Service Schools.
- **Double Justice Team (Health & Safety)**
Lift barriers to housing for those with past convictions by implementing “Ban the Box–Housing”.
- **Neighborhood Crusaders Team (Neighborhoods)**
Strengthen Fair Housing Rights for Renters by creating a non-governmental agency as a centralized source for tenants’ rights and services.

“This program gives you the tools to be a change agent in the community.”



Fellows also completed a qualitative evaluation. Excerpts from NLF Fellows are included below:

“NLF introduced me to a group of like-minded individuals who want to see this city move to a higher rung on the ladder. I’ve gained friends and folks with whom I can consult and work with to help me improve my city, one person and one section at a time. Finding someone with your vision is difficult, but NLF put us all together in one room, making that aspect of the search one less thing to deal with.”

“It consistently helped people in our cohort identify their skills and strengths, claim their power, and decide where they wanted to direct it. That is exceptional. 10 on a scale of 1 to 5.”

“The content of the classes is phenomenal. The interaction and conversation between classmates and presenters are priceless. To have real-life individuals to relate to and then offer advice based on real-life experiences was what made the most impact on me.”

PARTICIPANT EVALUATION

NLF conducts a final evaluation and participants gave the program an average overall rating of

4.9/5

Missouri Community LAB (Learn. Act. Build.)

JANUARY – DECEMBER 2022

Missouri Community LAB pulls together community development trainings onto a single, organized platform that aims to increase participation in the community-building process by educating and supporting all in the quest to build strong, whole communities. There were a total of 175 courses featured on LAB from 48 local and national organizations.

This year, CWC developed an independent website to reflect branding of all partners involved that will include features and functions to optimize user experience.

48

COLLABORATIONS
WITH LOCAL & NATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS

175

COURSES FEATURED
ON LAB FROM THOSE
ORGANIZATIONS

MISSOURI COMMUNITY LAB IS A COLLABORATIVE
OF THE FOLLOWING PARTNERS:



MOCOMMUNITYLAB.COM



Grant and Scholarship Committee Opportunities

Graduates of the neighborhood leadership programs continue to engage with CWC through leadership opportunities. These opportunities include sitting on decision-making committees to allocate funds or select participants.

The following committees all incorporated community resident voice in the leadership, deliberation and decision-making:

- NLA Scholarship Committee – **39 APPLICATIONS**
- NLA Alumni Mini-Grant Committee – **31 APPLICATIONS**
- NLF Application Review – **87 APPLICATIONS**
Interview Committee – **52 INTERVIEWS**
- Relationship-building and Research and Implementation Grant Allocation Committee – **2 APPLICATIONS**

Creating Whole Communities Leadership Advisory Team

The CWC Leadership Advisory team strives to be a model for collaborative university-community decision-making.

CWC ADVISORY TEAM MEMBERS

Roslyn Brown
Tonnie Glispie-Smith
Karl Guenther
Sarah Hultine-Massengale
Ronald Jones
Pamela McLucas
Riisa Rawlins
Carla Reid
Richard Reilly
Florian Sichling
Todd Swanstrom
Adriano Udani
Patricia Zahn

CWC SUPPORTING STAFF

Renisha Davis
Tasnim Haq
Claire Rippel
Tivoli Majors
Rebecca Taylor
Anna Russell Ziegler


CWC ACADEMIC HOME

UMSL School of Social Work

CWC ADMINISTRATIVE HOME

UMSL Economic and
Community Development





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