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Contact: Vin Ko
Senior Program Manager
St. Louis Mosaic Project
vko@worldtradecenter-stl.com

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Contact: Gary Broome
Director, Communications & Marketing
International Institute of St. Louis
broomeg@iistl.org



International Institute of St. Louis Becomes Fourteenth Mosaic Ambassador Organization

The St. Louis Mosaic Project is proud to announce that the International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis will join 13 St. Louis area companies and organizations as the latest addition to the Mosaic Ambassador program. With its mission to help immigrants and their families become productive Americans and to champion ethnic diversity as a cultural and economic strength, the Institute will continue its commitment as the welcoming center for new Americans in the St. Louis region, while focusing on programs under its three pillars of service: immersion, investment, and inclusion. Joining as a gold level organization, the Institute engages in action items that promote diversity and inclusion in the work place. Other companies at the Gold Level agree to spread awareness of the St. Louis Mosaic Project, encourage associates to become Mosaic Ambassadors, and participate in volunteer opportunities that support international communities. Additionally, as a Gold company the institute has hired and sponsored employees for an H1B visa.

Founded in 1919, the Institute served more than 8,000 foreign born from more than 100 ethnicities in 2016. As the only refugee resettlement agency in the region the Institute has resettled up to 1,200 refugees annually. Anna Crosslin, CEO of the International Institute was a founding member of the Mosaic Project Steering Committee and was instrumental in the creation and launch of the St. Louis Mosaic Project. The Institute partners with the Mosaic Project to help immigrants in the St. Louis community connect to job opportunities. Working with over 1,000 clients annually the Institute provides English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, while the Institute's Workforce Solutions Department helped place nearly 600 clients in jobs in 2016. The Institute's Career Advancement for Immigrant Professionals program partners with the Mosaic Project to match their graduates with professionals in the region through Mosaic's Professional Connector program.

As a Gold Organization, the Institute continues to contribute to the Mosaic Project goals to grow the region's economy through immigrant entrepreneurship. The Institute assists budding foreign born entrepreneurs with technical assistance and helps to develop business plans, build credit and prepare financial projections. Their Community Development Corporation managed 100 loans through their microlending program in 2016.

Inclusion services builds connectivity between the area's immigrant population and the broader St. Louis community. Helping contribute to Mosaic's strategy of building a welcoming community for the foreign born in St. Louis, this includes the Institute presenting the annual Festival of Nations which welcomed over 150,000 attendees in 2017. Institute staff and volunteers also gave hundreds of tours, speeches and presentations reaching more than 10,000 members of the St. Louis community.

About the St. Louis Mosaic Project

The St. Louis Mosaic Project was launched in 2012 in response to an economic impact report that showed St. Louis was lagging in immigrant growth and highlighted the potential economic benefits of increasing its foreign-born population. The Mosaic Project is a regional initiative that is professionally managed by St. Louis Economic Development Partnership, World Trade Center and a 27-member committee. Its goal is to transform St. Louis into the fastest growing major metropolitan area for immigration by 2020 and promote regional prosperity through immigration and innovation. Learn more at www.stlmosaicproject.org.

About International Institute of St. Louis

The International Institute is our region's Welcome Center for New Americans. For nearly 100 years, we have helped ensure that immigrants successfully integrate by offering connecting services and by sharing American culture and values. Last year, we provided English classes, employment services, counseling, and cultural integration services to more than 8,000 immigrants and refugees from 80 countries. Our annual Festival of Nations attracts more than 100,000 visitors. Learn more about us at www.iistl.org.