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ST. LOUIS MOSAIC PROJECT

The St. Louis Mosaic Project Celebrates Impactful Leaders in St. Louis Community

The St. Louis Mosaic Project is proud to announce the 2017 Mosaic Award recipients. These individuals and organizations make the St. Louis region a more vibrant and inclusive community. Nominated by peers and selected by a group of business leaders, each were chosen for their leadership and contributions in St. Louis.

Immigrant Entrepreneur

Alaa Alderie

Originally from Syria, Al came to the St. Louis region with a background in private banking. Together with his family, he started Cham Bakery making pita bread using a family recipe. The pita is sold at locally at Dierbergs, Schnucks, United Provisions, and Whole Foods.

Cuong Dang

Originally from Vietnam, Cuong is a serial entrepreneur who has two business ventures: Enliven, a digital technology firm in St. Louis and Lac Brewing Company, a craft brewery in Vietnam. Cuong also serves as Vice President of the Asian American Chamber of Commerce St. Louis and has helped organize successful trade missions to encourage partnerships and trade between St. Louis and Vietnam.

Susanne Evens

Susanne Evens has a continued commitment to improving the St. Louis region. She has been active at the University of Missouri-St. Louis as a guest lecturer, a panelist at the annual International Business Career Conference and as a mentor for the Women's Leadership Council. She is frequently asked to provide lectures and workshops on international business issues, German history in St. Louis, and the Sister City relationships. She has built a global company, AAA Translation that is headquartered in St. Louis and helps many local companies do business abroad.

Amit Kothari

Amit Kothari and his partner, Pravina Pindoria moved to the St. Louis region from the UK with their company Tallyfy to participate in Arch Grants. Though there have been many offers from the Silicon Valley to relocate Tallyfy there, Amit and Pravina chose to stay in St. Louis, while actively encouraging other entrepreneurs to do the same. An active member of the St. Louis community, Amit volunteers at various events and at a local homeless shelter, while providing job and internship opportunities for local students through Tallyfy.

Immigrant Professional

Akif Cogo

As the creator of the site, StIBosnians.com and the company, St. Louis Bosnians, Inc., Akif Cogo works to foster better relationship, understanding and development of the Bosnian community in St. Louis. Akif shines a spotlight on the Bosnian refugee/immigrant community and its positive impact on the St. Louis area.

Ed Macias

Ed is Provost Emeritus of Washington University. After serving in that position for 25 years, he continues to serve as a professor. He has always been a big supporter of student, faculty and staff of color - many of whom are immigrants - with recruitment, hiring and retention as major goals. He also created a Vice Provost position which has a major focus on diversity. Ed joined the board of Casa de Salud as Vice Chair in 2012, and became the Chair of the Board in 2015. His work at Casa de Salud, as a founding member of the Steering Committee of the St. Louis Mosaic Project, Washington University's Rodriguez Scholars program and on the board of MICDS ensures that Ed is busy making the St. Louis region a better place for all.

Chamber Leadership

Karlos Ramirez

Karlos is the chair of St. Louis Economic Development Partnership's board of directors. He has increased staff at the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of St. Louis from 3 to 5 full time employees in the last year. Since Karlos became President of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan St. Louis in 2011, membership has grown 81 percent and corporate sponsorships are up 477 percent, according to the Chamber. The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Greater St. Louis has partnered with ServSafe to develop an all Spanish training and test for restaurant employees. The Hispanic Chamber developed the high school Hispanic Leaders Institute to further develop and train Hispanic students. This is a companion to the existing Hispanic Leaders Institute. The HCC has also worked closely on disparity studies to ensure Hispanic businesses are considered for contracts.

International Student

Raj Mehta

Raj has been elected to two terms on the Student Government Association as a Graduate Senator and as the President of the International Students Association at Webster University. He takes great pride in promoting and sharing his culture with the student body and was instrumental in the forming council of SANGAM, an Indian Student Organization. His creativity shown through in the role as Social Media Specialist, when the club finished the year with the campus wide award of Best Student Organization Award for Cultural Awareness.

Juan Pablo

Juan has served our community far beyond his role as a graduate student at Washington University. He is a founder and past President of the Latin American Business Association at the Olin Business School, which promotes Hispanic heritage and helps develop academic and cultural connections with Central

and South America. As a Doctoral Fellow with the Center for Experiential Learning at Olin, Juan Pablo helped develop real academic and business relationships between St. Louis and South America. As an Academic Advisor for the Olin Business School, Juan Pablo mentors students who participate in international projects in South America. Juan Pablo has developed and managed a number of academic and business delegations from Ecuador to St. Louis.

Mosaic Ambassador

Bob Fox

Bob is the founder and prior Chair of the Board of Casa de Salud, a not-for-profit health and wellness center that welcomes new immigrants out of isolation and into the embrace of the community. It opened its doors in January of 2010 and today serves more than 12,000 patient visits annually. Bob is the Founding Chair of the Board of inspireSTL a not-for-profit educational initiative started in 2011. He also serves on the external advisory board of the St. Louis Public Schools Collegiate High School for Medicine and Bio-Science. Bob serves on the Chicago Council on Global Affairs Taskforce on Immigration for the Midwest. In 2012 he was instrumental in establishing and still serves on the steering committee of the St. Louis Regional Taskforce on Immigration and Innovation which launched The St. Louis Mosaic Project in 2013. He also serves as an advisor to the board of Welcoming America, a national organization based in Atlanta that helps hundreds of communities all over America develop and maintain robust immigrant welcoming programs.

Susan Gobbo

In the last 3 to 4 years Susan has helped many international newcomers to St Louis. She helped Brazilian women to join the job market as teachers in the Portuguese Classes she coordinates under Viva Brasil STL. She co-founded the International Spouses Meetup with over 100 members. She founded the ABRAÇÃO recently with a group of other Brazilian newcomer women. She helps those women to integrate into the St Louis community even if they are unable to work because of visa restrictions. Susan has a clear mission to help international women newcomers through their acculturation process and to integrate in the St Louis community. She runs the St Louis Portuguese Meetup Group with 250+ and she promotes Brazilian culture into the St Louis through Viva Brasil St Louis events. She volunteers for Heaven House, and at health events in the St. Louis region.

Sorin Vaduva

Sorin's entrepreneurial spirit coupled with his experiences as an educator inspired him to use his role and expertise to help people solve problems in the community. Aside from serving as a board member at Missouri Venture Forum, and acting as the Chief Technology Officer at his own company, he works with a variety of individuals and companies in the St. Louis region, to enhance the community of entrepreneurs. As a Mosaic Fellow with the St. Louis Mosaic Project for six months in 2015, Sorin used his experience and expertise to assist other foreign-born people in the region. On an ongoing basis, he works with startup companies owned by foreign-born people as well as with people who are coming out of university programs who are interested to start a business, and want to stay in St. Louis.

Mosaic Ambassador Company

Commerce Bank

Commerce Bank, through the William T. Kemper Foundation supported research that led to the Mosaic Project. Commerce has also been an ongoing supporter of Mosaic programs for international STEM students, events at the International Institute and Casa de Salud, engagement of high-skilled talent and entrepreneurship. In addition, Molly Hyland, Senior Vice President and Director of Community Relations and Foundation Advisory Services is a member of the St. Louis Mosaic Project Steering Committee. Commerce Bank was the first Mosaic Platinum Ambassador Company and has made above and beyond contributions to Mosaic partners with sponsorships and provided outstanding dedication to support international communities.

TAO + LEE Associates, LLC

Based in St. Louis and founded in 1995, The founders and principals and longtime Mosaic Ambassadors, Peter Tao and Helen Lee, have been tremendously involved in the St. Louis community. TAO + LEE Associates, LLC was the first Mosaic Ambassador Architecture Company providing architectural, planning, interiors and creative design services. In partnership with the construction industry in St. Louis, TAO + LEE envisioned, then co-lead a tremendous project to create a new soccer field and social gathering space, at Nahed Chapman New American Academy as a means to build bridges for the students through sports. Peter Tao is an active member of the St. Louis Mosaic Project Steering Committee and Helen Lee works with the International Spouse Meetup Group as well as being involved with Laumeier Sculpture Park's diversity initiative. Both Peter and Helen are active Mosaic Ambassadors and members of OCA.

Mosaic Ambassador School

Affton High School

Affton High School is the 33rd Mosaic Ambassador School with a long list of ways to engage and highlight their diverse community. Affton High School's Bosnian American Studies students have shown their outstanding dedication to the community by collecting donations for the International Institute of St. Louis with tremendous success. Affton High School also supports local initiatives including the Fontbonne University's Bosnia Memory Project, Run for Bosnia and Bosnian Heritage Day in collaboration with the St. Louis Bosnians Inc. Brian Jennings, teacher at Affton plans to create a mentorship program at Affton High School with Saint Louis University's Bosnian Herzegovina Student Association to continue welcoming students in the future.

St. Louis Sister City Award

St. Louis – Stuttgart Sister City

Established in 1960, St. Louis – Stuttgart Sister City is the oldest sister cities partnership in St. Louis. Susanne Evens has been President of St. Louis – Stuttgart Sister City for ten years. Throughout her presidency, Susanne has organized major events and fundraisers while maintaining exchange programs between three local high schools and three high schools in Stuttgart. Similarly, she has also headed an exchange program with three local universities and the University of Stuttgart, Germany. As part of her role, Susanne has also facilitated trade delegations between Sister Cities. St. Louis – Stuttgart Sister City hosts an annual major fundraising event, Winterball Karneval, bringing together dignitaries, members, patrons and corporate sponsors in the spirit of Mardi Gras Season.

About the St. Louis Mosaic Project

The St. Louis Mosaic Project was launched in 2012 in response to an economic impact report, outlining St. Louis to be lagging in immigrant growth as well as highlighting the 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 St. Louis 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.