



# 8<sup>th</sup> annual

## Stepping Up for Kids

### 10.20.2023



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# Stepping Up for Kids 2023

## Program:

**Prelude Music** ..... Katarra Parson

**Call to Order and Welcome (12:00 PM)** ..... Sanaria Sulaiman  
Vision for Children at Risk, CEO

**Lunch**

**Recognition of Sponsors & Special Guests** ..... Yolanda West  
PACT-STL Director

**Musical Interlude** ..... Katarra Parson

**Guest Speaker** ..... Judge Darrell Missey  
Director of the Children's Division, State of Missouri

**Presentation of Stepping Up for Kids Awards** ..... Yolanda West

**Closing Comments** ..... Yolanda West

**Recessional Music** ..... Katarra Parson

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St. Louis County Children's Services Fund

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**CONGRATULATIONS**  
to our colleague and friend

**MARIA CHILDRESS, LCSW**

on receiving the St. Louis Child  
Abuse & Neglect Network's

**2023 STEPPING UP FOR KIDS  
AWARD**

*and our gratitude for a career of selfless  
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Enjoy your retirement!!*



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**Congratulations  
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Contact: 866-326-LFCS (5327) · help@lfcs.org · lfcsmo.org

**Congrats to all of the nominees!**



Child Protection Department  
Twenty-Second Judicial Circuit of Missouri  
Family Court-Juvenile Division



## GUEST SPEAKER

### Darrell Missey

*Director of the Children's Division, State of Missouri*



Darrell Missey is the Director of Children's Division. He graduated from Truman State University, in Kirksville, MO in 1989 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science. He then attended St. Louis University School of Law, graduating in 1992. After law school, Darrell Missey practiced law at the Wegmann Law Firm in Hillsboro, MO, where he engaged in general civil practice, which included a large number of juvenile delinquency and dependency cases. He was elected associate circuit judge in 2002 and was assigned the juvenile docket at that time. He was elected Circuit Judge in 2014 and served as Presiding Judge of Jefferson County from 2016 – 2020, during which time he also served as Administrative Judge of the Family Court. During his time as judge, he served on Missouri's Family Court Committee, the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative Replication Team, the Detention Standards Review Committee, and the Children's Services Commission. He left the bench to assume the duties of Director of Children's Division in January 2022.

Darrell has been married to his wife, Andrea, for 33 years, and they have three adult daughters.

**Thank you, for**  
*going the extra mile*  
**for children & families!**

# Congratulations to the Stepping Up For Kids honorees!

Thank you for  
all you do for  
kids and  
families in  
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## HONOREES

### Resource Families

#### Rebecca and Tom Kadlez

*Resource Family, Nominated by Laura Storm*

Rebecca and Tom have been fostering for 6 years and have welcomed 42 children and teens into their home during that time. They have taken in kids from 2 days old to young adults and they will change plans, rearrange their home, and do whatever it takes to say yes to kids in need at a moments notice. Rebecca and Tom have hearts for vulnerable children not only because they see the huge need in our community but also because they both spent time in foster care when they were growing up. They have seen the effects of addiction and trauma in the lives of their family members and want to make a lasting difference for kids in care today.



Recently, after welcoming twin infants with medical special needs, with one twin requiring 6 surgeries in the first year of life, Rebecca quit her job so that she could care for the babies and their other 5 children around the clock. She volunteers as an Ambassador with Missouri Children's Division, mentoring new foster parents and providing the support they need to provide the best possible care. She also serves on the board of directors and as an active volunteer at Foster Together.

Rebecca and Tom frequently take in emergency placements at all hours of the day and night. They see it as a chance to really get to know the child, their preferences, behaviors, and needs, and then communicate those to the caseworker so that the best possible long-term placement can be found. Rebecca says this is so important because if she can figure out a few key things about the child and the case worker can consider those before placing him, the risk of disruption and re-traumatization is far less. In this way, the Kadlez family is making such a positive difference, even in the lives of children who are only in their home for a few days.

As Rebecca shared recently with a teen they took in for a short transitional time before they aged out of foster care, "We are your family now. When you need somewhere to come for the holidays or people to share the big moments in your life, you come to us."

**"We are your family now. When you need somewhere to come for the holidays or people to share the big moments in your life, you come to us."**



FOSTER & ADOPTIVE CARE COALITION  
FOR EVERY CHILD... A PLACE TO CALL HOME

# The Coalition CareLine Is Here for You!



With just one call to the Coalition CareLine, foster and adoptive families are connected to educational, mental, physical, and behavioral health resources!



Do you know a family that needs help? Call the Coalition CareLine!

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📍 1750 S Brentwood Blvd., Suite 210  
St. Louis, MO

🌐 [foster-adopt.org/coalitioncareline/](https://foster-adopt.org/coalitioncareline/)

## We Help Families With:



### Advocacy

Navigating the Children's Division, Family Court, and education systems.



### Mental Healthcare

Locating therapy and other mental health services.



### Help Finding Resources

Finding community services to help with placement stability.

Scan Me





## HONOREES

### Resource Families

#### Courtney and Alicia Wren

*Resource Family, Nominated by Jenny Jones*

This couple is exceptional because of the love, commitment, and dedication they have shown every child that enters their home. They have worked so diligently to meet the needs of kids while also working hard to build relationships with birth parents. Courtney and Alicia always speak with and about birth parents with the gentleness and love so many of them need, while also speaking truthfully. Some of these situations really took some navigation and advocacy on behalf of Courtney and Alicia and they sailed through it all with ease. This couple has such an open mind and an open heart when it comes to children who have experienced trauma. They ensure that every child that comes through their doors receives the constant love, support, advocacy, and respect that all our kids deserve.



My favorite example of this, is the work the Wren's have done with bio parents. As resource providers, they have helped bio parents realize there is still hope. With one particular bio mom to help her reunify with her daughter. Alicia, in particular, would have many conversations with mom and would restore hope with every word. Eventually, the bio mom and daughter were able to reunify, but that wasn't the end of Wren's work with the bio mom. They continued to support her and her daughter and during a recent STARS graduation, both Alicia and the bio mom sat on the panel and told their story.



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families!



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Brown School



Washington University in St. Louis




**LEGACY**

*Rev. Anthony Charles Shelton Sr.*  
 "Tony"  
 Husband  
 Father & Daddy  
 Son  
 Raiden's Papa  
 My Twin  
 Uncle  
 Brother  
 Father Figure  
 Cousin  
 Friend

Heaven & Earth  
 will pass away  
 God's word is forever.

Final Sermon:  
**TOMORROW IS  
 NOT PROMISED TO YOU!**

Scripture: Psalms 118:24  
 This is the day that the Lord has made  
 we will rejoice and be glad in it.



**TEENS OF TOMORROW PRESENTS**

**Heir to the Throne PROGRAM FOR YOUNG MEN**

**BACK 2 BASICS CURRICULUM**

**RESTORATION**  
 teach students emotional intelligence and self-awareness, healthy coping skills and positive thinking. Building trust.

**READINESS**  
 teach students about financial awareness, career readiness

**RELATIONSHIPS**  
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# Charles

"One year he held an Easter event. While the event was happening, I noticed Mr. Charles talking to a teenager standing across the street. I remember that the teenager looked hungry and was unkept. After speaking with the teenager, Mr. Charles left and returned with some bags of food, clothes, and shoes that he gathered for the teenager. About a month later, we met for lunch and the same teenager and his parents were there. Mr. Charles presented them with a check for three months rent, more groceries and a voucher for clothing." -Kaci Harrington

"When his foster kids aged out of the system- he allowed them to stay rent free. When he found out there was a group of kids who wanted to stay together because it made them feel safe- he took all three of them in. There were numerous times I would call and tell him about a friend of mine who needed some quick money and he'd make it his business to find odd jobs for them to do. His kindness didn't stop at "What can they do for me in return?" He often helped people who had nothing to offer in return and found a way to show them that everybody has something. And as his daughter, I find that to be an exceptional way to go the extra mile. Great leaders inspire greatness in others. Around him, we all felt like royalty because he treated us as such." -Charmein Shelton

"During a bad storm, Charles and the boys went out in the community and helped the seniors in the area by picking up the large tree limbs and disposing of them. On that day there was a homeless young man in the area and was caught in the storm. Charles took him in, got him clothes, fed him and provided him with a place to stay. This is what a pillar of the community looks like. He put aside what he did not have and made sure the boys and strangers had what they needed to survive. I have the pleasure of continuing to assist his boys by employing them and helping them learn new skills as well." -Calvin Shaw

"Charles founded a non-for-profit group named Teens of Tomorrow. Through this group, he helped young men who were at risk by going into the schools and mentoring them. Several times when he would come across young men that were homeless and/or in dangerous situations. He would assist them by taking them off the streets and providing them food, clothes, and shelter. He incorporated others in his mission. He had someone assist with cooking for the young men." -Marsha Shaw



## HONOREES

### Resource Families

#### In Memory Of **Charles A. Shelton**

*Resource Family, Nominated by Kaci Harrington, Calvin Shaw, Marsha Shaw, Charmein Shelton, & Kelleum Pankey*

What made Charles special was his dedication and compassion to helping any community in the St. Louis area in any capacity. From volunteering and donating to food drives, back to school programs, community give backs, and even sponsoring families during the holidays, Charles Shelton was the definition of a pillar in the community. His compassion to help families went beyond the scope of just volunteering or being employed with various programs/organizations. He would go to communities daily with the mission to do the ground work for mentorship. He even founded his own nonprofit organization, Teens of Tomorrow, to help and mentor young black teenagers in the community.



In addition to founding his own nonprofit, Charles registered as a foster parent and took in over 250 kids into his own home through the foster care system as well as off the street of his own community, usually using his own funds and resources. Charles Shelton has partnered as well as worked for organizations like Better Family Life, Urban League, and other organizations throughout the St. Louis area in the efforts to address the poverty and elevate the mentality of communities that have been denied access to resources and opportunities. Not only did Charles attempt to feed the souls of the community both physically and mentally, but he also fed them spiritually. As a minister, he would preach the word of God, believing that Jesus had the power to change them from the inside out. Charles not only believed in a higher calling for his community and his family, he demonstrated it as well.

Even with seven kids of his own, Charles registered as a foster parent to take in kids from the foster care system and off the street of the community to provide housing, food, finances, mentorship, and resources to help. He sponsored several schools in the community and would be a mentor for troubled youth. Helping not only the child but the families as well. He attended extracurricular activities for the kids he took in, helped with expenses, took them to church, checked in on their schooling progress weekly, got them jobs, and got their families involved in their community to assist with issues within the community. This was part of his own mission to help the youth and families in the community, but in addition to that he would volunteer time, skills, and resources for events and programs that took place around the community.

# Thank you!!!

**We extend our heartfelt thanks to the foster, kinship, guardian and relative families for their tireless supply of love and nurturing to vulnerable children.**

CPP congratulates and is proud of the hard work of all Stepping Up for Kids award recipients. Thanks also for the diligent and extremely hard work being done by all of the CPP staff to ensure the health and safety of children and youth entrusted to their care.

## Children's Permanency Partnership

Epworth Children & Family Services  
FamilyForward  
Youth In Need  
Together we make a difference!

CPP is a consortium of social services agencies working together to provide foster care case management, adoption, guardianship, therapeutic foster care, wrap around wellness and resource development services in St. Louis City, St. Louis County, St. Charles County, Jefferson County, and Washington County.

### **Member Agencies:**

- Epworth Children and Family Services
- FamilyForward
- Youth In Need



## HONOREES

### Frontline Staff

#### Jennifer Deaton

Frontline Staff, Nominated by Mary Mogg

Jenn has always been a passionate advocate for young people in foster care. She first began her work in 2001 with the Independent Living Program, where she taught life skills, cooked for the youth, and drove them to life skills groups. However, according to the young people under her care, Jenn was more than just a caretaker. They described her as a guiding light and a listening ear in their lives. As the Independent Living Specialist at the time, I had the pleasure of working alongside Jenn as my trusted assistant. I witnessed firsthand as she helped young people navigate the complexities of the foster care system and grow into confident, independent adults. Jenn's own experience as a youth in foster care has driven her to advocate for others in similar situations. She witnessed firsthand the struggles and poor choices made by other youth, but she never gave up on them. Despite her work with the Independent Living Program not being lucrative, her dedication to the youth under her care was unwavering.

Since 2008, she has worked at Epworth in various programs such as Chafee, homeless, and street outreach. Her knowledge and skills in social work have even surpassed those of master's level social workers. Despite facing uncertainty about her work due to a lack of a degree, she continued to work nights and weekends at the homeless outreach program. Jenn is known to give up her personal time to take youth to camps, board meetings, and conferences. She also advocates for the needs of LGBTQ+ youth and speaks to the community about the challenges faced by youth in foster care. Whenever a youth called needing a ride to work or was in trouble, even in the middle of the night, she would leave her house to help without expecting payment. In 2011, when her brother passed away, Jenn took on the responsibility of raising her infant niece. Despite the sacrifices she had to make, she remains positive and dedicated to caring for her niece day after day. Jenn's unwavering commitment to both her work and family is truly admirable and serves as a testament to her character.



#### About the St. Louis Child Abuse & Neglect Network

The St. Louis Child Abuse & Neglect Network (STLCANN) promotes advocacy, education and networking to improve the lives of children and families who have been impacted by abuse or neglect and to strengthen families to prevent child abuse or neglect.



#### We are working to:

- Provide educational and networking opportunities for professionals and community organizations to improve the lives of children and families who are at risk of, or who have been impacted by abuse or neglect;
- Promote awareness of public, private, and community organizations that provide resources to families at risk of abuse/neglect; and
- Affirm and celebrate individuals who go the extra mile for children who have been abused or neglected.

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## HONOREES

### Frontline Staff

#### Qwannie Spears

Frontline Staff, Nominated by Tamara Yoffie

Qwannie is the YIN team's cheerleader, spokesperson, counselor, friend, role model, and a natural leader. She is always smiling, outgoing, and welcoming to all. Qwannie has several older youth on her team and has a good connection with them all. For a long period of time, Qwannie had almost double the amount of cases of her colleagues but did not want to transfer out any of her cases as she is connected with them and does not want them to have to switch around to anyone else.

Qwannie has been a mentor for several new Case Managers on the team and is always available to offer advice and support. Qwannie is not afraid to speak up and is a great advocate for her teammates and her clients. She is always thinking about others first.



When she is not focusing on making sure clients are taken care of, she is focusing on the other employees in the office. She plans parties, makes sure the employees cubicles are decorated for their birthdays, and advocates for employee appreciation. She is very dependable and volunteers to handle her cases after hours, and volunteers to help with other's cases after hours when needed. Qwannie is always available to be a support for others. She brings a positive energy that allows her to be a pillar for her team, keeping the morale up during hard times, while celebrating the successes during the best times.

Qwannie is an amazing example to others as she shows true passion for the kids and families she serves. She builds rapport easily with families, team members and placement providers. Qwannie loves to advocate for the children and their families to ensure that when they are reunified that all supports are in the home so there is a successful transition. Qwannie recognizes that it is traumatic for our kids to be removed from their families, so she puts in countless hours to ensure that she builds rapport and does not leave the youth until they are comfortable and have all needs met to the best of her ability. Qwannie then does as much research as she can to ensure that she knows everything there is to know about the youth now in her care. Qwannie has a caseload of many high needs teenagers who are difficult to find placement for. Even with the uptick of the lack of placements leading to kids being stuck in the hospital and in office buildings, Qwannie has done an amazing job of doing everything in her power to keep from resorting to her kids ending up without a placement. This is done through the rapport she has been able to build with family members and with the youth themselves. Qwannie also puts in the time to research alternative options, problem solve, and explore all avenues so that no stone is left unturned in the search for placement. When Qwannie has a runaway youth on her caseload, she has gone out in her car to help look for the individual, answered the phone calls from the parents and caretakers, and tried other avenues such as social media to try to find and connect with the youth to ensure safety and encourage them to return to placement.

Qwannie receives many high accolades from the community members, judges, DJOs, GALs and placement providers. Qwannie received an email from a DJO stating "I really like Qwannie, you can tell she has a real passion for the job and wants what is best for the kids." A St. Louis City Judge stated "Ms. [Spears] comes highly recommended and we are happy to have her on our team, she speaks with passion and authority. She is able to fully and knowledgeably communicate her cases in Adjudications and TPR trials."

## Thank You Honorees!

You are making a difference in the lives of children and families. We are forever grateful for you!

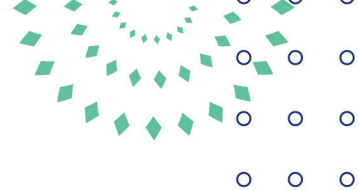


**VCR promotes the well-being of children, youth, and their families, with a primary focus on those impacted by socioeconomic risk and racial inequity.**

### **We do this by:**

- **Informing** the community with data and research,
- Promoting **collaborative** action,
- **Engaging** and supporting families, and
- **Advocating** for child well-being through policy and community investment.





## HONOREES

### Frontline Staff

#### **Tonya Williams**

Frontline Staff, Nominated by Teresa McKenzie

Ms. Williams works with resource families and is responsible for recruiting foster, adoptive, and respite providers. She completes the inquiry process, conducts home visits, writes home studies, as well as locates, schedules, and attends recruitment events in the community. Ms. Williams also collaborates with the contract agencies in order to get the recruited resource providers in the necessary training classes.

She makes sure prospective resource providers understand the fostering and licensing process, the next steps, the expectations of resource providers, and what to expect from the assigned resource worker. She monitors the training and assessment funds and she is resourceful and able to identify low to no cost resources to assist families. Ms. Williams coordinates the dates and times for the First Aid/CPR trainings and make sure these dates and times are shared with the resource providers and resource workers. She completes her overall work goals in a timely manner and within the agency's policy and timeframes.

Ms. Williams is graciously available to lend a helping hand whenever she is asked to assist with no hesitation. She will accept extra duties at the spare of the moment. She is a hard worker, has strong work habits, and interacts well with her co-workers. During the Christmas season, she coordinates and pick up Christmas toys from the Toys for Tot program and other agencies to ensure that children in foster care can have a wonderful Christmas. Ms. Williams also provided donated gift cards to resource families for the Thanksgiving holiday. Ms. Williams does a wonderful job of maintaining her time and her caseload even with the extra duties she takes on.



# Thank you!

**2023 Stepping Up for Kids  
Planning Committee**

**Jennifer Humphrey**

**Katrina Orlet**

**Mary Mogg-Postle**

**Yolanda West**





### Mental Health Services

Individual, Family & Couples Counseling  
1360 S. 5th St. STE 306, St. Charles, MO 63301  
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Homes and Services<sup>SM</sup>**

**pchas.org**



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# Congratulations

Stepping Up for Kids Honorees!





## HONOREES

### Community Partners

#### Maria Childress

Nominated by Katrina Orlet & Abby Cedano Jimenez

Maria is famous among New American families in St. Louis. No matter how long they have been here, they know that Maria will be there to help them navigate the school system. "Mama Maria" works throughout the district, not just at one or two schools. She does home visits. She stays in touch with high risk families. She is the safety net for immigrant families long after other organizations have ended their services (many services for immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers are time limited). Maria has dedicated her entire career to helping immigrant children and their families.



The thing that stands out about Maria is that she does not let you forget that a student is still in need of support. She always advocated for families to improve communication and watched for any members that may have been overlooked. Many of the families who are known by the ESOL program are very difficult to engage and have multiple types of problems. Maria might be the only person that families feel really understands their situation. She maintains trust with families and incorporates and respects different cultural approaches to parenting while ensuring the children and family members are safe.

With a couple of families [Katrina] dealt with at the Children's Division, they were reassured with the knowledge that Maria was aware of them and would always be available to check on the kids, long after we were gone. She has been an invaluable ally with family after family as we try to help people transition to SLPS from different systems all over the world. One mother whose child is severely disabled feels judged by almost everyone, but accepts help and guidance from Maria. When kids are shifting from the Nahed Chapman New Americans Academy to neighborhood or magnet schools, Maria is there to help parents understand the system and advocate for a positive placement. She is an invaluable resource to families.

Maria recently retired from therapy, stating that she wanted to continue to bring more joy into the world in addition to healing for the families she worked with over the years. I'm not sure she understands though, just how much healing she did-both for her clients and the clients of people like me [Abby] who benefited so much from her supervision.



Mercy Professional Services, Inc.  
Counseling for Children & Families  
1015 S. Compton Ave. St. Louis, 63104  
[michelsal@mercyprofessional.org](mailto:michelsal@mercyprofessional.org)



# Stepping Up for Kids

## Previous Honorees

### 2022

#### **Rich Patton Champion for Children Awardees**

Ruth Ehresman  
Branda Maly

#### **Community Partners**

Champale Anderson-Greene  
Laura Storm

#### **Resource Families**

Willie and Lawreene Hall  
Dorrie and Reggie Harris  
Kelly Leonhardt and Eric Cotton

#### **Casework Staff**

Barb Johnson  
Margaret Autrey  
Dawn Blunda

---

### 2019

#### **Resource Families**

Gloria and Fred Jones  
Rene Murph  
Jennifer and Tom Rawe

#### **Casework Staff**

Mecha Brown  
Katie Corrigan  
Amy Ehrhardt  
Kathy Tharp

### 2018

#### **Resource Families**

Maria Holmes  
Wanda Noel  
Shirley and Jimmie Walker

#### **Casework Staff**

Valerie Njiiri  
Meaghan Westhus  
Mockia "Nikki" Shelton  
Jennifer Thomas

### 2017

#### **Resource Families**

Janice Smith  
Robyne Wilson-Cima

#### **Casework Staff**

Stephanie Littlejohn  
Kelly Sullivan  
Bridget Virdue  
Kenya Willis

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### 2016

#### **Resource Families**

Adella Coleman  
Jennifer and Shane Tripp  
Jan and Paul Wilkin

#### **Casework Staff**

Karen Jones  
Denise Kelley  
Gail Knipshild

### 2015

#### **Resource Families**

Ramona Brooks  
Tiffany and Robert Slouffmann

#### **Casework Staff**

Abigail Bell  
Edna Green  
Jennifer LaVelle  
Edward Vazquez  
Lynn Zollicofer

### 2014

#### **Resource Families**

Barbara Bocklage  
Sara Glasscock  
Evelyn Holder  
Yvonne Peoples

#### **Casework Staff**

Hisako O'Rourke  
Bev Shaefer





## HONOREES

### Community Partners

#### Michael Daugherty, Sr.

Nominated by Mia Daugherty

*"It's not how smart you are, but your ability to receive information, accept criticism, and work in a diverse situation".* Those are the words that Michael Daugherty teaches his students at Jennings Junior High School.



Michael, is the oldest of 4 children; His mother was a single mom that was tough on him. They lived on a scarce income on the west side of St. Louis. He is amazed on how his mother was able to afford to send her 4 kids to a private school. After graduating high school, he went on to become an apprenticed carpenter. He was a part of the minorities that broke color barriers in St. Louis. He graduated as number 2 in his class, even though he feels it should've been number one. He said because of the racism he experienced back then; he knew his teacher was not giving him the mark that he worked so hard for. It was only a handful of black apprenticed carpenters at that time. Through the rain, sleet, snow and, sunshine (and earning the nickname "Mad Dog") Michael Daugherty retired after 47 years as a Union Carpenter. He stated that being one of the first black Superintendents in the area was a highlight of his career.

Michael Daugherty went on to accept a job as a Construction Coordinator, for the MET Center in Wellston, MO. The MET Training facility opened in response to the "highway 70 shut down" in 1999. The demonstrators shut down the highway due to minorities not being hired to work on the multi-million-dollar highway projects. He was a training coordinator for adults of all ages, that also included re-entry community members as well. Quite a few of his students have taken his hard life lessons and real-life experiences of the work force to open their own, successful businesses in the field of trade.

In addition to his work career, Mr. Daugherty is also known to many as, Coach Mike. He has been an influential coach and mentor to the youth for over 30 years. He has coached baseball, basketball, and football, for the Boys and Girls Club and has played a key role in being a positive role model to the children of the community. He knows what it is like to be labeled by where you live, which is why he prefers to coach the children that live in a less desirable area. He has had the opportunity to coach more advanced athletes, but he is passionate about teaching kids the fundamentals of the sport. He wants to make sure when the kids do get to the next level, they are well equipped with the basics of the sport as well as helping the kids develop their character and teaching them to make good choices on and off the field or court. Coach Mike walks the walk. For any one of his athletes that may have had trouble at school, Coach Mike had no problem going to the school personally to show that kid, there is someone that cares. Many of the children that he has coached for over 3 decades, have either gone off to college, trade school, some have played professionally, and a few have come back to help him as an assistant coach. Coach Mike never gave up on any of his athletes, he always found a way to connect. This year he had the opportunity to coach his granddaughter, as a Red Bird Rookies Coach. He has received quite a few awards for his volunteer work at the Boys and Girls Club of America over the years.

He has also served on the Policy Council as a parent at Annie Malone in many different impactful positions. Currently, he sits on the Parent Advisory Council for PACT-STL at VCR.

In all of his roles, one that he is most proud of is his role as, Dad. He is the father of 11 children, and 9 grandchildren. He is the best dad that a kid could ask for! He has created a generational blueprint for his family. He makes the time to connect with his children and grandchildren and provides spiritual guidance.

Currently, Michael Daugherty works as a Construction teacher at Jennings Junior High School. The school awarded him "Culture Teacher of the Year", award. Mr. Daugherty and his students were featured in the newspaper for building a beautiful pavilion for the school as a project.



## HONOREE

### Rich Patton Champion for Children Award

#### Annette House



Annette House is a retired Regional Director from the Missouri Dept. of Social Services, Children's Division. She worked in the field of child welfare for 36 years. As a native St. Louisan, her early formal education was through the St. Louis Public Schools system. Having earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio, she went on to successfully complete and receive a master's degree in social work from the Univ. of Missouri, St. Louis. Additionally, Ms. House is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with certification in Non-Profit Business.

Throughout her career in Social work, there have been countless collaborations with diverse individuals, faith-based groups and other community organizations and national foundations. Notably, Annette was one of the first forensic interviewers with the opening of the first St. Louis Child Advocacy Center. Her expertise in sharing beneficial resources to clients was through active involvement with numerous public community organizations. Among them were the St. Louis Family and Community Partnership Council, domestic violence organization, serving on the Mayor's Commission for the City of St. Louis, the St. Louis Regional Disproportionality and Disparity Workgroup, Local Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity. As a member of the Advisory Board for the Regional Dept. of Mental Health, Ms. House part orchestrating collaborations between child welfare, juvenile justice, and mental health professions.

She has been the recipient of the Georgetown University Center for Juvenile Justice Reform, Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities Certificate Program. Becoming a CJJR fellow (2018); She received the Community Impact Player Award from Annie Malone Children and Family Services (St. Louis, MO) (2019); Ms. House was the recipient of the Missouri House of Representatives Resolution for work in the field of child welfare (2019). She has been a long-standing Advisory Board member of National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (sponsored by the Federal Children's Bureau) an organization focused on building leadership and workforce development capacity of child welfare professionals and improving organizations' ability to recruit, select, train, supervise, manage, and retain staff. Her strong focus has been on racial equity and its impact on child protection. This organization also makes recommendations for improving child abuse prevention, foster care, and adoption (2008 - present).

Ms. House is currently providing consulting to local social service organizations. She has recently been invited to work with New York City's Training and Workforce Development Institute for Leadership Development as an Executive Coach. In this position, she would support senior leaders by preparing them for their day-to-day management responsibilities, as well as their role in leading organizational transformation.

Her work has truly focused on protecting Missouri's children, families, and the child welfare workforce through, promoting efforts conducive to bringing these agencies, families, and the community together.



## HONOREE

### Rich Patton Champion for Children Award

#### Tim Decker

Tim Decker is a Senior Policy Fellow with the Annie E. Casey Foundation responsible for development of prevention and child and family well-being strategies within the Family Wellbeing Strategy Group (FWSG) focused on sharing power and co-creating solutions with lived experts and communities, eliminating racial disparities, and ending unnecessary child protection referrals, investigations, and family separations by child welfare systems.



Tim previously served as a senior leader of child welfare and juvenile justice agencies from 2007 – 2018. This included nearly 7 years as Director of Missouri DYS Division and 5 years as Director of the Children's Division. Tim retired from state government in 2018 after 34 years in with the Missouri Department of Social Services and the Greater Kansas City LINC, one of the nation's most innovative public and private community and neighborhood partnerships focused on citizen engagement and leadership, educational achievement, safety, economic security, and youth transitions to adulthood.

As Missouri's Child Welfare Director Tim Decker led a major system transformation in agency practice, policy, leadership, and culture. The Missouri Practice Model created through significant engagement of young people, families, and front-line child welfare practitioners served as a national exemplar for a developmental and trauma-informed approach to child safety and wellbeing. In 2018 Tim was selected a "Reunification Hero" by the American Bar Association and Missouri's transformation has been featured in numerous publications and through national and international conferences.

During his tenure as Director of the Missouri Division of Youth Services, the agency won the 2008 Harvard Innovations in American Government Award for Child and Family System Reform and Missouri hosted site visits from over 30 states. The agency increased educational completion rates by over 87%, reduced recidivism and increased productive involvement rates, and safely reduced the number of youths in custody. Lessons learned from Missouri's work strengthened and accelerated juvenile justice reform efforts on a national scale.

Tim Decker is one of the co-founders of a Youth in Custody Certificate Program launched at Georgetown University in 2013. Tim serves as a leadership and culture change instructor for the CJJR Youth in Custody and Multi-System Integration Certificate Programs and has written for numerous publications and served as the author of a visionary 2019 publication entitled "A Roadmap to the Ideal Juvenile Justice System."

*Thank you.*

*Stepping Up for Kids 2023*

