



# Spark Change for a Better Kansas City

TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2026  
UNION STATION KANSAS CITY

PRESENTED BY



**JUNIOR LEAGUE**  
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

# Welcome to C3KC



On behalf of the Junior League of Kansas City, it is my pleasure to welcome you to this year's C3KC! C3KC continues to be more than a conference. It is a vibrant, collaborative space where ideas take shape, partnerships are built, and our community comes together to tackle the issues that matter most. Your presence reflects a shared commitment to strengthening Kansas City, and we are grateful for the energy, insight, and passion you bring to this experience. This event would not be possible without the dedication of our C3KC Steering Committee, Event Advisors, Ambassadors, and Sponsors, whose passion and commitment have shaped an experience centered on relevance, impact, and community connection. We hope today energizes you, fosters authentic connections, and inspires you to continue engaging with and investing in the future of Kansas City. Thank you for being part of C3KC and for the role you play in building a stronger, more connected community.

Stephanie Davis, JLKC President

## OUR MISSION

The Junior League of Kansas City (JLKC) is an organization of women committed to the advancement of women's leadership for meaningful community impact through volunteer action, collaboration, and training.

## OUR VISION


To be a visible group of active volunteers focused on improving the quality of life in our community.

Founded in 1914, the Junior League of Kansas City, Missouri, has been associated with more than 350 community agencies and organizations. Since the League's inception, our members have raised over \$18.5 million for our Mission and given over 2.5 million hours of volunteer time. Currently, our focus area is Women and Children.

## SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

We encourage C3KC attendees to follow up and post on social media today using the following hashtags: #C3KC #JLKC

 [facebook.com/jlkcmo](https://facebook.com/jlkcmo)

 [instagram.com/jlkcmo](https://instagram.com/jlkcmo)

 [linkedin.com/company/jlkcmo](https://linkedin.com/company/jlkcmo)

## C3KC COMMITTEE

Erica Davis Prieto, Co-Chair

Kimberlee Ried, Co-Chair

Phyleia Battle

Bailey Closser

Jennifer Finch

Caroline Fong

Stacia Fosnot

Celeste Greenlee

Jenn Godar

Neera Gupta

Lisa Merrill Hickok

Michelle Innes

Olivia Jacobsen

Alyssa Jones

Raleigh Lang

Mya Lawrence

Mamie Lust

Bayli Martin

Brenda Poor

Cindy Reynolds

Jeanne Sosland

Mel Smith

## JLKC STAFF

Leigh Salinas, Operations Manager

Ocie Baker, Facilities Manager

## Schedule

### 7:45 a.m. REGISTRATION

### 8:30 a.m. WELCOME - GRAND HALL KEYNOTE PRESENTATION BY SHAYLYN ROMNEY GARRETT CO-AUTHOR OF THE UPSWING

### 9:45 a.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS

- AI at Work: How Local Innovation Is Expanding Opportunity, Not Replacing Jobs - Chamber Board Room
- Back to the Basics: The Literacy Imperative - Federal, State and Local Leaders in Conversation - Innovation Center
- Our Region's Health Story: Equity, Access, and the Realities of Systemic Change - Arthur Stilwell Room

### 10:50 a.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS

- Not One Solution: How Kansas City Is Tackling Housing Affordability from Every Angle - Chamber Board Room
- Moving Kansas City Forward: Transportation, Opportunity, and Community Transformation - Innovation Center
- Beyond Food: The Far-reaching Impact of SNAP on Families and Institutions - Arthur Stilwell Room

### 11:35 a.m. LUNCH

- Remarks and Tributes
- Branton/Hall Community Collaborator Award Presentation
- Plenary Session - The Next Renaissance: Culture and Creativity in the Paris of the Plains

### 1:10 p.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS

- Policing with Purpose: Enhancing Public Safety Through Technology and Community Engagement - Chamber Board Room
- Disagreement Without Division: Promoting Conversation Across Divides - Innovation Center
- From Classroom to Career: How KC Prepares Students for Tomorrow's Workforce - Arthur Stilwell Room

### 2:15 p.m. CLOSING - GRAND HALL

Goal! What the 2026 FIFA World Cup Means for Our Community - Grand Hall

### 3:15 p.m. FINAL REMARKS AND NETWORKING - GRAND HALL

## C3KC EVENT ADVISORS

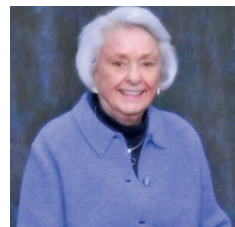
Dan Cranshaw, JD, *KC Health Coalition*  
André Davis,  
*Transformative Impact Strategies*  
Courtney Forkum,  
*The Philanthropy Place*  
Alfredo García, PhD,  
*RG Capital Partners*  
Davin Gordon,  
*Samuel U. Rodgers Health Center*  
Whitney Hosty, *Greater Kansas City  
Community Foundation*  
Dr. Naiomi Jamal, *Swope Health*  
Geoff Jolley, *LISC*  
Dr. Leigh Anne Taylor Knight,  
*The DeBruce Foundation*  
Paula Neth, *Futures First*  
Brent Never, PhD,  
*UMKC Bloch School of Management*  
Adriana Pecina,  
*Health Forward Foundation*  
Merideth Rose, *Cornerstones of Care*  
Susan Wally, *PREP - KC*  
Jamila Weaver, *MVPKC.org*  
Nia Webster, *City of Kansas City, MO*  
Gene Willis, *GEHA*

## JLKC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

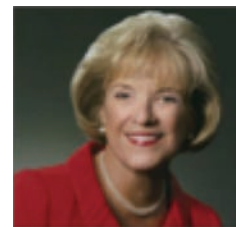
Stephanie Davis, *President*  
Amanda Braun, *President-Elect*  
Beth Fairlie, *Director of Community*  
JoAnn York, *Director of DEIB*  
Emily Bell, *Director of Finance*  
Kristen Patterson, *Director of Fund  
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Elyse Robinson, *Step-Up Director of  
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Pallavi Sriram, *Director of Marketing*  
Danee Greenwald, *Step-Up Director of  
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Laurel Zimmerman, *Director of  
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Lilly Coye, *Director of Planning*  
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Heather Pena, *Bylaws Chair*  
Lauren Cimpl, *Nominating Chair*  
Bethany Hanson, *Board Assistant*

# Branton/Hall Community Collaborator Award

The Branton/Hall Community Collaborator Award was named in memory and honor of two JLKC members – Mary Shaw “Shawsie” Branton and Adele Hall. These women dedicated their lives to making Kansas City a better, more inclusive community.



SHAWSIE BRANTON



ADELE HALL

Shawsie and Adele were model volunteers who worked as catalysts for change, sensing needs in our community and then working diligently to bring the right individuals together to solve some of our city’s most pressing issues.

The Branton/Hall Community Collaborator Award recognizes an individual from the Greater Kansas City area who has played an active role in civic engagement, leadership, fostering a spirit of service to others, and promoting the spirit of collaboration for social good.



## **2026 AWARD RECIPIENT JULIA IRENE DENNIE-KAUFFMAN**

Although Julia Irene Dennie-Kauffman was born and educated in Toronto, Canada, she is known for her leadership and philanthropic efforts in the Kansas City community. Julia is Chairman, President, and CEO of the Muriel McBrien Kauffman Family Foundation, which has played a pivotal role in supporting performing arts organizations.

With her visionary approach, Julia spearheaded construction of the iconic Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. Beyond the Center, she has served on the boards of the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, Kansas City Symphony Foundation, Kansas City Ballet, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Kansas City Royals Baseball Club, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, and the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance. In addition, Julia continues to be a driving force behind the Muriel I. Kauffman Women’s Heart Center, demonstrating her support to advancing women’s heart health.

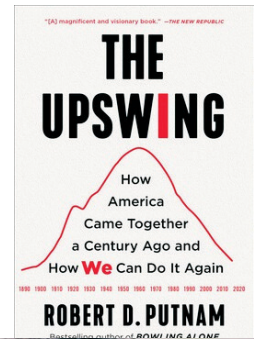
### PREVIOUS AWARD RECIPIENTS

- 2018 – Albert P. Mauro, Sr.
- 2019 – David Oliver
- 2020 – SuEllen Fried
- 2021 – Mamie Hughes
- 2022 – Sandra A. J. Lawrence
- 2023 – Dr. Michael Weaver
- 2024 – Maurice Alvin Watson
- 2025 – Alvin Brooks

# C3KC 2025 Keynote Presentation

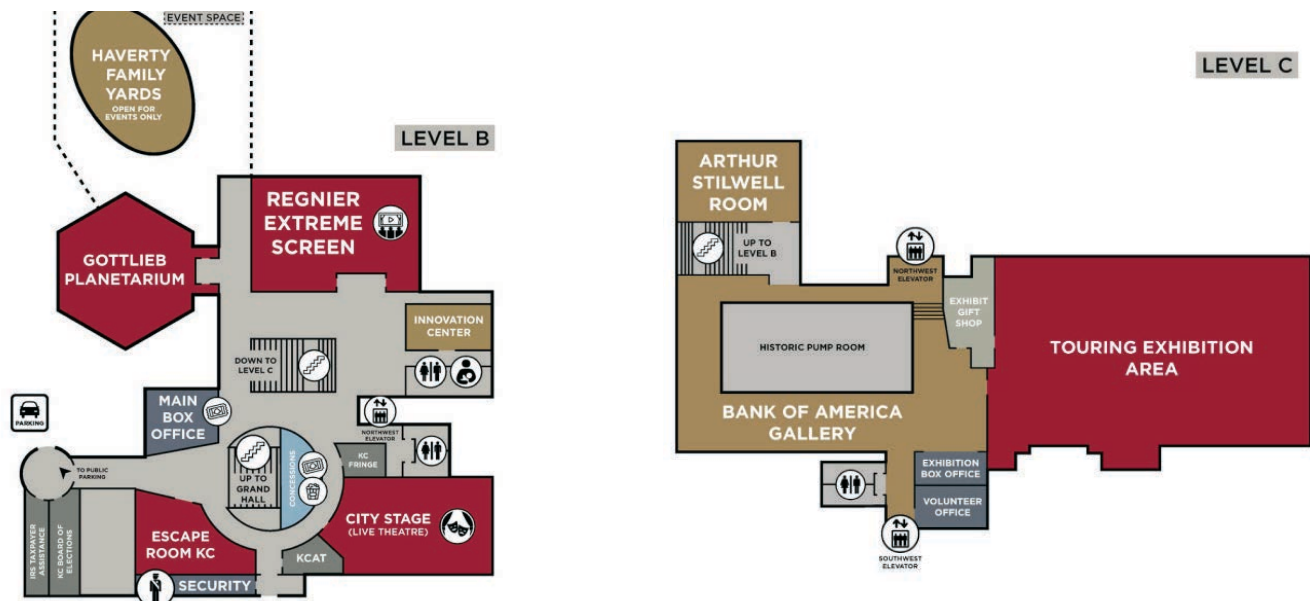
## SHAYLYN ROMNEY GARRETT

Shaylyn Romney Garrett is the co-author of *The Upswing* with Robert D. Putnam which has been acclaimed as “a magnificent and visionary book,” and “a must-read for those who wonder how we can reclaim our nation’s promise.” Shaylyn is an internationally recognized author, lecturer, social entrepreneur, and TEDx speaker. Her work has been featured by *The New York Times*, *TIME*, *NPR*, *BBC*, and *PBS*. She has consulted for groups ranging from businesses such as Facebook, to nonprofits such as the Salvation Army, to current and former elected officials. She is a founding contributor to David Brooks’s Aspen Institute initiative, Weave: The Social Fabric Project, and a member of Citizen University’s Civic Collaboratory, and the Braver Angels Scholars Council.



With her husband, she co-founded Think Unlimited, a nonprofit venture working to catalyze social innovation in the Middle East. Shaylyn is fluent in Arabic and lived in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for six years, during which time she created an original Arabic language curriculum on creativity and critical thinking, and partnered with Queen Rania Al-Abdullah to bring it to Jordanian public schools. Shaylyn is a passionate believer that everyday interactions are where we do the “heart work” required to transform our hyper-individualistic culture and reclaim the power of “We.”

## UNION STATION LAYOUT



# 9:45 a.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS

## **AI AT WORK: HOW LOCAL INNOVATION IS EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY, NOT REPLACING JOBS - CHAMBER BOARD ROOM**

Explore how Artificial Intelligence is being used locally in the workforce. Understand how it supports skills-based hiring, streamlines recruitment, expands opportunity, and dispels the myth of replacing jobs.



**Moderator: Diana Alt, Diana Alt Coaching & Consulting - Career & Executive Coach**

Diana is a career and executive coach who helps leaders find professional success on their own terms. She helps people align their life and their work in a way that feels good - not like a long, slow march to oblivion.



**John Duker, Services Client Director - Service Now**

An accomplished Director at ServiceNow GTM, John brings over a decade of experience transforming organizations through innovative IT solutions. Known for his leadership and strategic vision, he excels in driving operational transformation and enhancing operation efficiency, helping businesses leverage ServiceNow AI products to achieve their business outcomes.



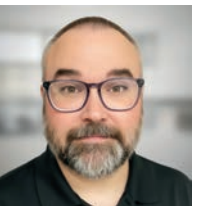
**Kristen Guillaume, Chief Digital and Information Officer - NKC Health**

Kristen leads digital transformation, IT strategy, marketing and community outreach. With 27 years at the intersection of healthcare and technology, Kristen supports strategy development and execution across the health system.



**Kevin Kelley, Director, AI/ML Enablement - American Century Investments**

In his role at American Century Investments, Kevin oversees the Innovation Program and leads the AI and ML Enablement team and Innovation Lab. Prior to joining American Century, Mr. Kelley served as an Information Technology leader at the University of Kansas Health System.



**Anthony Tackett, Global Director, Creative - Hill's Pet Nutrition**

Anthony is the Global Creative Director and AI Ambassador at Hill's Pet Nutrition. Leading Hill's Strategic Creative Services team, he blends design expertise with generative AI and agentic workflows to deliver unique solutions, automate the mundane and inspire others to leverage AI as a force multiplier instead of a novelty.

# 9:45 a.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS

## **BACK TO THE BASICS: THE LITERACY IMPERATIVE - FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL LEADERS IN CONVERSATION - INNOVATION CENTER**

### **Session Sponsor**



When it comes to learning to read and understanding math, educators are returning to the basics of phonics, and mandated teacher training. Learning from the “Mississippi Miracle”, other states are adapting those practices with the hope of achieving the same results.



### **Moderator: Rita Cortés, Executive Director - Menorah Heritage Foundation**

Rita’s role is to guide the Foundation toward achieving its vision through grantmaking and resource stewardship. A long-time resident of Kansas City, Rita serves on the Kansas City Public School Board of Education and believes every child in Kansas City deserves access to a quality pre-K-12 education.



### **Dr. Jennifer Collier, Superintendent - Kansas City Public Schools**

Superintendent Collier has served KCPS for 25 years, championing literacy, culturally responsive teaching, and expanded arts access. Under her leadership, KCPS achieved rising enrollment, an 89% graduation rate, major gains in performance, stronger teacher retention, and a historic \$464M bond to modernize schools and elevate student opportunities.



### **Dr. Laurie Curtis, Literacy/Dyslexia Program Manager - KS Department of Education**

Dr. Curtis serves as the Structured Literacy/ Dyslexia Program Manager at the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE). In this role, she manages the work the KSDE does to implement the recommendations of the Legislative Task for on Dyslexia and other Kansas literacy initiatives. She believes that literacy changes lives.



### **Dr. Angelique Nedved, President & CEO - SchoolSmartKC**

Dr. Nedved leads SchoolSmartKC’s work across Kansas City’s public education system, partnering with schools and community leaders to strengthen classroom instruction and student learning. A former teacher, principal, and superintendent, she focuses on aligning adults, funding, and strategy so every student makes steady academic progress.

# 9:45 CONCURRENT SESSIONS

## OUR REGION'S HEALTH STORY: EQUITY, ACCESS AND THE REALITIES OF SYSTEMIC CHANGE - ARTHUR STILWELL ROOM

### Session Sponsor



This session explores how policy shifts, funding cuts, and systemic inequities are reshaping regional health disparities. We'll examine reduced public, mental, and behavioral health services, their impact on systemically marginalized communities, and how personal and community storytelling reveals lived experiences behind the data and the erosion of access over time.



### **Moderator: Brandi Finocchario, MPP, Chief Strategy Officer - Swope Health**

Brandi serves as the Chief Strategy Officer at Swope Health, bringing more than ten years of experience across the healthcare and nonprofit sectors. She offers expertise in quality improvement, strategic planning, business operations, project management, and data analysis, with a focus on mission-driven impact.



### **Dr. Danielle Binion, Chief Strategy Office - Community Health Commission of MO**

Dr. Binion is a strategist and systems leader advancing equity-centered, trauma-informed approaches to health, education, and community well-being. She leads statewide initiatives to strengthen community engagement, cross-sector partnerships, and organizational infrastructure to achieve zero health disparities.



### **McClain Bryant Macklin, JD, MBA, Chief Policy & Impact Officer - Health Forward**

McClain serves as Chief Policy and Impact Officer at Health Forward Foundation, focusing on access to healthcare, the social determinants of health, and health equity. In this role, she leads Health Forward's funding, external learning opportunities in its six-county service area, and policy and advocacy work.



### **Josette Mitchell, MBS, LCSW, EVP Behavioral Health - Swope Health**

Josette leads all behavioral health functions including outreach, community support, substance abuse treatment, and residential services. Prior to joining the Executive Leadership team, she served as the Deputy Director of Behavioral Health providing clinical leadership for all programs, driving departmental growth and strategic initiatives.



### **Tyler K. Smith, MD, MPH, FAAP, Pediatrician - UMKC School of Medicine**

Tyler is a board-certified general pediatrician. Her scholarly interests include advocacy; diversity, equity, inclusion, justice; healthcare disparities and inequities; mentorship, coaching, and sponsorship; medical education; leadership; and physician wellness.

# 10:50 a.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS

## **NOT ONE SOLUTION: HOW KANSAS CITY IS TACKLING HOUSING AFFORDABILITY FROM EVERY ANGLE - CHAMBER BOARD ROOM**

### **Session Sponsor**



Spotlighting local leadership and innovative strategies, this session will address KC's housing challenges - from workforce and missing-middle gaps to limited inventory and neighborhood fit. Participants will explore systemic barriers and engage in solutions that strengthen the region's full housing spectrum.



### **Moderator: Hannah Mitchell, Regional Housing Program Manager - MARC**

Hannah oversees MARC's key regional initiatives around housing, providing regional coordination, leadership, and innovative solutions to increasing and preserving housing in the Kansas City region through the Greater Kansas City Regional Housing Partnership.



### **Dr. Trinity Davis, President and Founder - Teachers Like Me**

Dr. Davis is an award-winning educator, curriculum expert, and equity advocate. A former teacher, professor, and assistant superintendent, she founded the Urban Suburban Experience minor and leads Teachers Like Me, advancing culturally responsive preparation, support, and pathways for Black teachers and students of color.



### **Christina Fenwick, Director of Real Estate Development - Driven Development**

Christina oversees all real estate development activities for Driven Development, managing underwriting, acquisition, and delivery of new and rehabilitated housing. She also builds partnerships that provide wrap-around resident services. With 11 years of real estate finance experience, she specializes in commercial analysis, LIHTC structures, and community development capital stacks.



### **C. Francene Sutton, Developer/Builder - Fran Sutton Homes**

Fran is the Owner of Gemini II Inc Realtors and Fran Sutton Homes. She is committed to building quality, attainable workforce housing, focused on innovative ways to address the need for infill development and workforce affordable housing utilizing landbank lots.



### **Carlie Turner, Program Officer for Housing and Capacity Building - LISC**

Carlie has served as a Program Officer at LISC for four years. She previously worked in Indianapolis where she supported Quality of Life Neighborhoods and capacity building for community development corporations. And returned to her hometown to support the Kansas City Regional Housing Partnership.

# 10:50 a.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS

## MOVING KANSAS CITY FORWARD: TRANSPORTATION, OPPORTUNITY, AND COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION - INNOVATION CENTER

How will people move through Kansas City in the next 25 years? From expansion of the KC Streetcar and the growth of toll-managed highway lanes to the future of the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority. We explore how long-range planning and funding decisions shape mobility, access, and affordability, and how transportation investments can drive economic growth while avoiding unintended gaps in opportunity.

**Moderator: Jon Stephens, President & CEO - Port KC**



An economic development professional, Jon has spent his career focused on utilizing thoughtful development concepts to improve the community. He is passionate about the City of Fountains and has built a reputation for creativity and collaboration.

**Ron Achelpohl, PE, Director Transportation & Environment - MARC**



Ron directs MARC's transportation and environmental planning and policy work along with related implementation activities such as the Operation Green Light traffic signal coordination system, RideShare program and public education initiatives for air quality, water quality, active transportation and transportation safety.

**Chuck Ferguson, Interim President & CEO - KC Area Transportation Authority**



With over 30 years of transit leadership, Chuck has guided major regional planning initiatives, led high-profile operational events, advanced RideKC's system development, and helped earn KCATA national recognition, including APTA's Outstanding Public Transit System Award.

**Tom Gerend, Executive Director - KC Streetcar Authority**



Tom has been leading the KC Streetcar Authority since 2014. Under his leadership, the streetcar has driven major economic growth, expanded with the Main Street and Riverfront extensions, secured over \$225M in federal funding, and advanced Kansas City's vision for connected, sustainable mobility.

**Julie Lorenz, Principal Consultant - 1898 & Co.**



After leading the Kansas Department of Transportation for four years, Julie joined 1898 & Co., the business and technology consulting arm of Burns & McDonnell, as a principal consultant. With 25+ years of experience, she's known as a national leader in policy development, collaboration and implementing vision initiatives.

# 10:50 a.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS

## **BEYOND FOOD: THE FAR-REACHING IMPACT OF SNAP ON FAMILIES AND INSTITUTIONS - ARTHUR STILWELL ROOM**

**Session Sponsor**



SNAP is a foundational benefit that goes beyond food assistance. It's a gateway to healthcare, energy assistance and support at schools. When SNAP is lost, families and public institutions both feel the impact. Find out how community organizations are coming together to address the needs.



**Moderator: Dan Cranshaw, Executive Director - KC Health Collaborative**

As Executive Director of KC Health Collaborative, Dan brings together diverse partners to drive healthcare innovation, improve population health and promote health equity in the Kansas City region. By fostering collective impact, the Collaborative aims to transform healthcare delivery and create a healthier future for every BODY.



**Angela DeWilde, CEO - Jewish Family Services**

Angela is a nonprofit leader with over 10 years advancing education, family support, food security, housing, economic stability, mental health, and older-adult services. Beginning her career as a teacher and home visitor, she serves as CEO of JFS, providing vital programs and services across the Kansas City metro.



**Elizabeth Keever, Chief Resource Officer - Harvesters**

Elizabeth serves as Chief Resource Officer at Harvesters, where she leads fundraising, communications, and advocacy efforts to support neighbors facing hunger. She is a graduate of Leadership Lawrence and Leadership Kansas, and a recipient of the Don Volker Leadership Award and KU's "Hawk to Watch" recognition.



**Thomas Smith, Chief Business Officer - Kansas City Food Hub**

Thomas is the Chief Business Officer for the Kansas City Food Hub, a co-op of small family farms that aggregate, market, and distribute to institutional clients in the region. KCFH creates reliable and resilient markets for small family farmers while creating better access to healthy food to the community.

# LUNCHEON PLENARY PANEL

## THE NEXT RENAISSANCE: CULTURE AND CREATIVITY IN THE PARIS OF THE PLAINS - GRAND HALL

From murals to music venues and free concerts to high-caliber museums and festivals, Kansas City has been on the cutting edge of culture for decades. Looking beyond 2026, panelists will discuss where we are headed next and what the future may bring for the City of Fountains.



**Moderator: Sidonie Garrett, Executive Artistic Director - Heart of America Shakespeare Festival**

Sidonie has directed 25 Shakespeare productions including *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Julius Caesar*, *The Tempest*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Shakespeare in Love*. Formerly an actor and improv performer, her directing career extends to New York City, where she led the off-Broadway production of *Thanatos*.



**Julie Denesha, Reporter/Journalist - KCUR 89.3**

As KCUR's arts reporter, I use words, sounds and images to take readers on a journey behind the scenes and into the creative process. I want to introduce listeners to the local creators who enrich our thriving arts communities. I hope to strengthen the Kansas City scene and encourage a deeper appreciation for the arts.



**John Renshouse, Actor/President - KC Actors Theatre**

A native of Kansas City, John has toured nationally with the Broadway productions of *The Lion King* and *Noises Off*; currently he serves as the Board President of Kansas City Actors Theatre. His TV and movie credits include *The Edge of Night*, *L.A. Law*, *thirtysomething*, *Who's the Boss* and the original *Candyman*.



**Paula Saunders, Musician/Vocalist - The Freedom Affair**

A dynamic, multi-faceted vocalist Paula is the lead singer for The Freedom Affair, a high-energy nine-piece funk and soul band based in KC. She is actively engaged in Creative City KC, the entity stewarding KC's designation as the first and only UNESCO City of Music in the United States.



**Anna Marie Tutera, Director & CEO - Museum of Kansas City**

Anna Marie brings nearly 30 years of experience in the museum, nonprofit, and public sectors. In 2014, she became Director & CEO of The Museum of Kansas City, where she has led an expansive, ongoing restoration and rehabilitation of the historic property, along with organizational transformation, strategic growth, and innovative cultural programming rooted in community engagement.

# 1:10 p.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS

## **POLICING WITH PURPOSE: ENHANCING PUBLIC SAFETY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - CHAMBER BOARD ROOM**

Tech driven tactics are transforming policing and public safety. This session explores how local law enforcement agencies are using tools such as drones, automated license plate readers, and real-time response centers to enhance emergency response and improve public safety outcomes. The discussion will also address how agencies are pairing technology with strong community partnerships to build trust in the process.



**Moderator: John R. Hamilton Jr., Ph.D., Emeritus Associate Professor - Park University**

John served over 26-years with the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department and holds a degrees in Psychology and Public Administration along with an Interdisciplinary Ph.D. He is the co-author of *Community Justice*, 3rd ed., published by Routledge.



**Jonas Baughman, Captain - Kansas City (MO) Police Department**

A 23-year veteran of the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department, Jonas is currently assigned to the Chief's Office where he manages the agency's data-driven strategies and research projects, among other duties. He is an inductee into George Mason University's Evidence-Based Policing Hall of Fame.



**Marquita Brockman Taylor, CEO - MB Taylor Consulting**

Marquita provides consulting services in the field of fund development and effective leadership. In her community work she serves as president of the Santa Fe Area Council Neighborhood Association, Treasurer for the Community Resource Team, and a KCMO Neighborhood Tourism and Development Commissioner.



**Gary Jones, Jr., I-Team Director - City of Kansas City, Missouri**

Gary serves as I-Team Director leading an Innovation Team in partnership with Johns Hopkins University's Bloomberg Center for Public Innovation. He previously served as Director of KC360, advancing cross-sector violence prevention while strengthening civic participation and public trust.



**Curtis Weber, Captain - Lenexa (KS) Police Department**

Curtis's career is highlighted with roles with the Tactical Team, Bike unit, patrol and investigations prior to promoting to the role of a Watch commander. He has led the implementation of Lenexa's drone as a first responder program.

# 1:10 p.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS

## DISAGREEMENT WITHOUT DIVISION: PROMOTING CONVERSATION ACROSS DIVIDES - INNOVATION CENTER

In today's polarized world, the ability to have constructive, candid, and collaborative conversations is a superpower. This interactive session will provide practical tools to navigate complex issues...and show that difficult conversations can be had.



### **Claire Bishop, Executive Director & CEO - American Public Square**

Claire is an experienced leader who believes in the power of community. Prior to joining APS, Claire spent 15 years in global marketing, serving as SVP Media at MMGY Global and later leading global marketing at Children International.



### **Ryan Bernsten, Brand and Partnerships - American Public Square**

Ryan's work spans Fortune 500 companies, presidential campaigns, and The Trevor Project, where he earned Webby and Telly Awards. He authored *50 States of Mind: A Journey to Rediscover American Democracy* and speaks internationally on dialogue and democracy. He's also the Playwright-in-Residence at Kansas City Public Theatre.



### **Trisha Maxfield, Director of Programs - American Public Square**

A Kansas native and lifelong learner, Tricia taught middle school social studies before leading APS' Civics Education Initiative, promoting critical thinking, civic engagement, and media literacy in Kansas City.



“... if we work together, there is no problem in the world that can stop us.”

– Ewing Marion Kauffman

The Kauffman Foundation provides access to opportunities that help people achieve financial stability, upward mobility, and economic prosperity – regardless of race, gender, or geography.

EWING MARION KAUFFMAN FOUNDATION

# 1:10 p.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS

## FROM CLASSROOM TO CAREER: HOW KC PREPARES STUDENTS FOR TOMORROW'S WORKFORCE - ARTHUR STILWELL ROOM

Explore how schools and agencies across the Kansas City region are preparing students for successful careers through hands-on learning and strong community partnerships, with the result being students with durable skills and credentials leading to good-paying jobs.

### Session Sponsor



**Moderator: Christina Chandler, Community Impact Education Manager - JE Dunn Construction**

Christina spent 12 years in the information technology field before transitioning into education. During her time as a teacher, she developed and led computer science and robotics programs, including teaching Project Lead the Way Computer Science Essentials and Computer Science Principals courses.



**Crystal Everett, Real World Learning Officer - Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation**

As the Program Leader on the Real World Learning, Crystal is committed to advancing opportunities for local communities, with a focus on access and high-quality market value asset opportunities for students. She brings more than 15 years of experience in education and community engagement.



**Andy Mayfield, Director of Career Innovation Center - Blue Springs (MO) School District**

Andy is a 21 year veteran of the Blue Springs School District. Now in his third year leading the CIC, he is dedicated to helping students discover their passion and purpose through innovative programs and real-world learning opportunities across the district and community.



**Candace Villanueva, Director of College and Career Experiences - PREP-KC**

An education leader with PREP-KC, Candace partners with Kansas City schools, industry, and higher education to expand career-connected learning. She leads career exploration beginning in elementary and middle school, strengthening high school outcomes aligned with workforce needs. Her work centers on access, partnerships, and impactful K-12 experiences.



**Elisa Waldman, Vice President of Workforce Development - Johnson County Community College**

Elisa leads non-credit programs serving 16,000 learners annually. She is passionate about delivering innovative solutions to support industry, workforce and community. Elisa also enjoys serving as faculty in the JCCC Legal Studies program.

# CLOSING PLENARY PANEL

## GOAL! WHAT THE 2026 FIFA WORLD CUP MEANS FOR OUR COMMUNITY - GRAND HALL

Kansas City is preparing for its biggest global moment in decades: hosting the 2026 FIFA World Cup. This session will take you behind the scenes of what it means for our city to be a World Cup stadium and basecamp host, how local organizations are getting ready to welcome fans from powerhouse soccer nations like Argentina and the Netherlands, and why this event represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity for Kansas City youth.



**Moderator: Erik Bergrud, Senior Vice President; Public Policy - Greater KC Chamber of Commerce**

Erik brings his voice and energy as broadcast analyst for the Major Arena Soccer League's Kansas City Comets and as host of Ten for Ten, the League's weekly interview series.



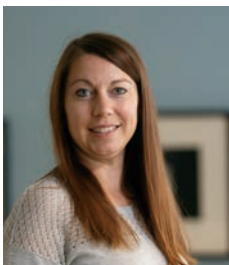
**Josh Gloer, Sports Documentarian & Founder, G10 Creative**

Josh is an Emmy® award-nominated documentarian who focuses on sports and human-interest stories. His work explores themes of resilience, identity, and belonging. He is the director of *Chasing Goals*, a feature documentary following refugee soccer players pursuing college and professional opportunities.



**Pam Kramer, Chief Executive Officer - KC2026**

A proven leader in sports business and communications, Pam's career includes 16 years at Sprint, where she was instrumental in shaping major sponsorships, including the 1994 FIFA World Cup USA. She later held senior leadership roles with the Kansas City Chiefs and the Kansas City Current.



**Melissa Miller, Director - World Trade Center**

Charged with assisting Kansas City regional businesses with their international trade needs, Melissa is responsible for overseeing the organization's various events and programs designed to fulfill this mission. Before joining WTC-KC, Melissa served as an International Trade Specialist for the Missouri Department of Agriculture.



**Daniel Sperry, Journalist - The Kansas City Star**

Daniel is a soccer reporter based in Kansas City and covers the Kansas City Current and Sporting Kansas City for *The Kansas City Star*, and is a member of the North American Soccer Reporters organization. In his 10 years reporting on soccer for various local and national outlets, he has covered all major international competitions in the United States.

## JUNIOR LEAGUE OF KANSAS CITY HISTORY

For over 110 years, the Junior League of Kansas City has been a force creating and sustaining organizations that address critical issues in Kansas City, such as the challenges of women's and children's health, education, domestic violence, mental health, and physical disabilities.

Following are some highlights from our collaborative successes in Kansas City.



### **SOCIAL SERVICE**

**1914** - Worked with Mattie Rhodes Center, providing funding and volunteers for daycare for working mothers and necessities for their families.

**1917-1929** - Helped found Kansas City's Florence Crittenton Home, where unwed mothers could live and learn professional skills.

**1977** - Founding funder for The Children's Place, where the youngest survivors of abuse, neglect, and trauma receive

healing.

**1983-1989** - Early funder and supporter of MOCSA.

**1987** - Founded and funded Rose Brooks Therapeutic Children's Program.

**1992** - Founding funder for Hope House, the first domestic violence shelter in eastern Jackson County.

**2009** - Created the BackSnack program with Harvesters, providing weekend meals for students and families at University Academy.

**2020** - Provided nearly \$45,000 in emergency COVID-19 grants.

### **CHILD & MATERNAL HEALTH**

**1915** - Began working with what would become Children's Mercy Hospital.

**1919** - Established first prenatal clinic in Kansas City.

**1920-1945** - Ran the Junior League Free Health Clinic.

**1987** - Early funder to establish first Ronald McDonald House in Kansas City, Missouri.

**1993** - Collaborated with Mid-America Immunization Coalition on a multi-year campaign.

**2014** - Completed a five-year initiative in Children's Nutrition and Fitness, with one result being a 26% reduction in obesity in program participants at University Academy.

### **CIVIC INVOLVEMENT**

**1934** - Created the docent program at The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, the first program of its kind and model for the Metropolitan Museum of Art's program in New York.

**1975** - Partnered on Folly Theater restoration.

**1990** - Created Jazzoo fundraiser for Kansas City Zoo and established the Zoo Learning Fund.

**1994-1999** - Involved with Union Station restoration and a significant supporter of Science City.

**2014** - Gave \$1 million lead gift to the Penguin Ice Paradise at the Kansas City Zoo in honor of our 100th anniversary.





## SHARED KNOWLEDGE

**1979-1982** - Developed and shared Management and Leadership

Training program with KC nonprofit organizations.

**2013-2020** - Prepared members for nonprofit board service through the Civic Leadership program.

**2014-Present** - Co-founder with UMKC of the Advanced Leadership Certification Series, a model of training for nonprofit leadership.

## EDUCATION & ARTS

**1914** - Established first public kindergarten in Kansas City.

**1932** - Established grade school for children with cerebral palsy.

**1940/1950s** - Produced award-winning children's radio & television programs.

**1947** - Founded Cerebral Palsy Nursery School, now the Mary Shaw Branton Preschool. Operated by Junior League until 1969; became the first desegregated school in Kansas City in 1952.

**1953** - Co-founded Children's Center for the Visually Impaired.

**1959** - Established scholarship at the University of Kansas for students pursuing social work degrees.

**1967-1987** - Developed "30 Miles of Art," a regional art show to fund educational resources at The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

**2000-2010** - Committed a decade to our Children's Literacy Initiative, working with Operation Breakthrough and with the Kansas City Star to establish Hooked on Books.

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

**1922-1939** - Founded Girls' Advisory and Protective Bureau, the first social service agency to provide case management for both White and Black girls.

**1989** - Early funder to establish the nation's first Ailey Camp, using art to educate and empower youth.

**1995** - Early funder to Dramatic AIDS Education Project, a groundbreaking program established in partnership with KU Medical School and The Coterie Theatre to talk to teens about the dangers of unprotected sex.

**1998** - Funded Truman Teen Moms Program, focused on providing prenatal care and family education to help girls avoid teen pregnancy.



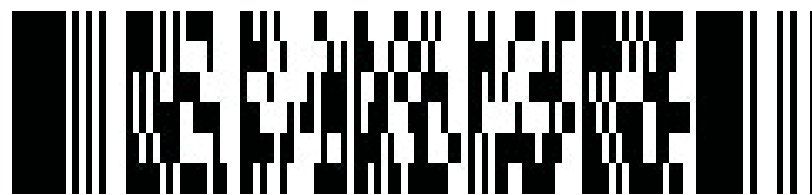
**JUNIOR LEAGUE**  
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

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Hero to All  
Champion of our City



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Thank you for sparking change with us at  
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The image features a solid red background with white, hand-drawn scribbles in the corners. The top-left corner has a wavy, vertical line. The top-right corner has several overlapping, horizontal and diagonal loops. The bottom-left corner has a large, complex scribble with multiple overlapping loops. The bottom-right corner has a similar complex scribble with overlapping loops.

**For corporate, civic, and community stakeholders, C3KC is a collaborative conference to spark change for a better Kansas City.**