



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

JUNIOR LEAGUE OF KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI ANNOUNCES
2024 BRANTON/HALL COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR AWARD RECIPIENT,
MAURICE ALVIN WATSON



Maurice Alvin Watson, co-founder and principal of **Credo Philanthropy Advisors, LLP**, has more than 30 years of experience in law, social and public policy and board governance as a lawyer, advisor and board member. He has been a partner and chairman of the law firm of Husch Blackwell, which is among the 100 largest law firms in America, representing public and private schools and school systems and colleges and universities, education advocacy groups, education associations at the state and national levels.

Recognized as one of the most influential leaders in the Kansas City community and in the nation, he is a frequent speaker before groups across the country and has been named among the 100 most influential leaders in Kansas City, among the 500 leading lawyers in America, and among the most influential Black lawyers in America.

Maurice was born in Kansas City and grew up in a modest, working-class neighborhood in the urban core. He attended the City's public schools until he won a scholarship, in high school, to attend Barstow School, a college preparatory school where he was its first Black graduate in its history.

As an undergraduate at Harvard College, he concentrated in Social Studies, a selective interdisciplinary honors program, and received a baccalaureate degree, *cum laude*. He subsequently received his law degree at Harvard Law School.

After law school, Maurice served as legislative aide to the Honorable John Danforth in the United States Senate in Washington, D.C., where he advised on education, welfare, health care and judiciary legislation.

Maurice returned to his hometown and joined the Blackwell Sanders Matheny Weary and Lombardi law firm and continued as partner and was eventually elected firm chair of its successor firm, Husch Blackwell. When elected chairman, he was the only African American to lead an AmLaw 100 law firm in the country.



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In 2018, Maurice stepped down as Husch Blackwell chair and founded, with Tracy McFerrin, Credo Philanthropy Advisors, to help individuals, families, private foundations, and other donors sharpen their philanthropic focus and realize their vision to change lives and communities through effective grantmaking.

Maurice has served in numerous leadership roles, including as board chair, of large, national nonprofit organizations and foundations in the fields of education and youth development, biomedical research, health care, higher education, arts and culture, public policy and government.

Education and Youth Development

- Kansas City Public Schools, chief outside legal counsel to the board of directors
- Higher Achievement Program, board—Washington, DC
- Education, Inc., board—Kansas City
- The Learning Exchange, board—Kansas City
- The Barstow School, board and board chair—Kansas City
- National School Boards Association, Council of School Attorneys, board—Washington, DC
- National Association of Independent Schools, board—Washington, DC
- Kauffman School, board—Kansas City
- U.S. Senator John Danforth, legislative aide and counsel—Washington, DC

Health Care

- Children's Mercy Hospital, board and board chair—Kansas City
- Heart of America Community AIDS Partnership, board—Kansas City
- National Association of Children's Hospitals, board—Washington DC
- AIDS Service Foundation, board—Kansas City
- Kansas City CARE Clinic/KC Free Health Clinic, board—Kansas City
- Saint Luke's Health System, board—Kansas City
- Stowers Institute for Medical Research, board—Kansas City

Diverse and Inclusive Talent Development

- Leadership Council on Legal Diversity—Washington, DC

Higher Education

- Kansas City Art Institute, board—Kansas City
- University of Missouri at Kansas City, board—Kansas City
- Lincoln University, legal counsel—Jefferson City
- Metropolitan Community Colleges, legal counsel—Kansas City

Arts & Culture

- Kansas City Ballet, board—Kansas City
- Ford's Theatre, board—Washington, DC



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- Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, board—Kansas City Foundations
- Children's Mercy Foundation, board and board vice chair—Kansas City
- Metropolitan Community College Foundation, board—Kansas City
- Truman Library Institute, board secretary—Kansas City

Civic Leadership

- Chamber of Commerce of Greater Kansas City, board
- Civic Council of Greater Kansas City, board