



JAMES H. BUFORD, PRESIDENT & CEO

James H. Buford, a native St. Louisan, has served as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis since 1985.

Upon becoming the sixth president of the Urban League, Mr. Buford helped reorganize the League to meet challenges and opportunities of a changing social and economic climate. In 1986, the Urban League received its charter to establish the Urban League Guild, and in 1987, the agency's Board of Directors accepted the first youth auxiliary, the Progressive Young Adults (ProYA). In 1998, Buford led the Urban League in redefining its service areas as service regions, becoming St. Louis

County Region, St. Louis City Region and St. Clair County Region. Then in 2001, Mr. Buford piloted a partnership between the Urban League and the YWCA to run the national Head Start program in St. Louis City.

As an advocate for social and economic parity, Buford is often a vocal spokesperson on behalf of Urban League constituents. In this role he speaks to diverse audiences, which embody grassroots to corporate representatives. Mr. Buford also helps to advance the St. Louis community through his service on several boards, including:

- Chairman of the St. Louis Community College Building Corporation
- Chairman of St. Louis Connectcare
- Chair-Emeritus of Harris Stowe State University
- Vice-Chairman of Heat Up St. Louis and Cool Down St. Louis.
- Executive Board Member of St. Louis Council of the Boy Scouts of America
- Board Member of Downtown St. Louis Partnership
- Board Member of Fair St. Louis
- Board Member of St. Louis Science Center
- Board Member of Chancellor's Council of the University of Missouri-St. Louis
- Board Member of US Bank
- Board Member of Forest Park Hospital
- Board Member of St. Louis Muni Opera
- Board Member of Jobs for America's Graduates
- Board Member of Metropolitan Sewer District

On the state level, Missouri Governor Mel Carnahan appointed Buford as secretary of the St. Louis County Board of Elections in 1993 and in 2005, Mayor Francis Slay appointed Buford to the St. Louis Public School Board.

Mr. Buford has received numerous awards and honors which include:

- 2005 Mentor St. Louis Award
- 1999 Whitney M. Young Award from the Boy Scouts
- 1997 St. Louis Gateway Classic Lifetime Achievement Award
- 1995 St. Louis Community College Distinguished Alumni Award

- 1993 Lamplighter Award presented by the Public Relations Society of America-St. Louis Chapter
- Brotherhood-Sisterhood Award presented by the National Conference for Community & Justice

Buford holds a B.A. in Human Services Administration from Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, PA. He also holds honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters degrees from: Harris-Stowe State College in 1993; University of Missouri of St. Louis in 1995; Webster University in 2000 and Eden Theological Seminary in 2006.