

# Urban Connection

URBAN LEAGUE OF METROPOLITAN ST. LOUIS, INC.  
Empowering Communities. Changing Lives  
www.ulstl.org



## Urban League Donors, Volunteers Help with Rams Schnucks Turkey Giveaway



*UL Board Chair Debra Denham, UL Board Member Bryan T. Scott of Boeing presents a \$35,000 check to UL Vice President Victoria Reaves and UL CEO James H. Buford for St. Louis County Community Outreach Center during the Turkey Giveaway.*

On Tuesday, November 22, 2011, the Urban League hosted the Annual Rams Schnucks Turkey Giveaway at its community outreach centers in St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and St. Clair County, IL.

In addition to the dinners, Urban League clients were offered free flu shots courtesy of BJC and the Urban League Community Health Mobile at the St. Louis City location.

*St. Louis RAMS Cheerleader Jessica, Right Tackle Adam Goldberg, and Guard Harvey Dahl take a break during the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Rams / Schnucks Thanksgiving Dinner Giveaway at the Urban League.*

Approximately 1,950 turkey dinners were given out to area families thanks to the generosity of the St. Louis Rams and Schnucks Markets. Volunteers from the **Urban League Young Professionals, Federation of Block Units, Monsanto Company, Enterprise Holdings, Inc., BJC and United Parcel Service** were present to hand out baskets to clients.



## Missouri Contracts with Urban League to Administer Energy Assistance Program in Metropolitan St. Louis

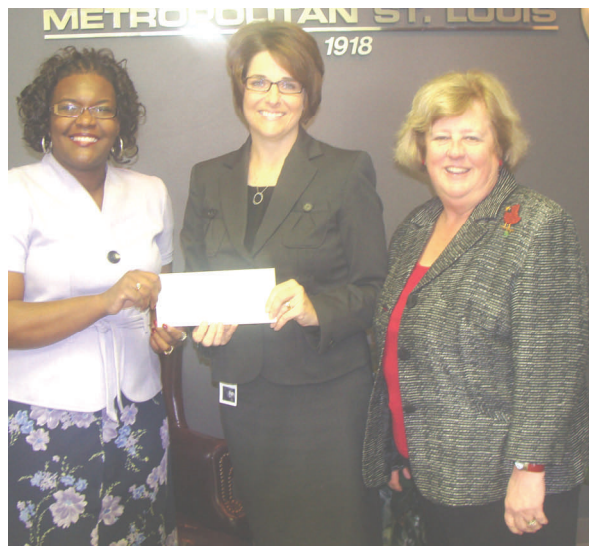
The Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis has recently received a contract for \$3,826,778 from the State of Missouri to serve as vendor of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) program for the City of St. Louis. The LIHEAP program provides energy assistance to low-income households, which pay a high proportion of household income for home energy.

“I am pleased that the state has chosen the Urban League to provide services to its LIHEAP constituents. We looking forward to expediting the process in order to better serve the St. Louis and Wellston communities,” said James H. Buford, president and CEO of the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis, Inc. The Urban League has over 20 years of experience of providing utility assistance to disadvantaged residents with Ameren Dollar More, Missouri Emer-

gency Shelter Grant, Affordable Housing Trust Fund, Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program, Heat-Up St. Louis and Cool Down St. Louis funds. For the past 15 years, the agency has had no financial findings or questioned costs on its A133 audits of which 77% of its funds are received from the federal government.

The Urban League began accepting LIHEAP applications on Nov. 1 at its headquar-

ters on 3701 Grandel Square, St. Louis, MO 63108 so that citizens in St. Louis and Wellston have access to LIHEAP services heading into the winter months.



*UL Vice President of Communications Angelia D. Bills accepts a \$75,000 donation for emergency client services on behalf of the Kemper Foundation from Loura M. Gilbert, Vice President of Community Development for Commerce Bank and Jenny L. Hoelzer, Assistant Vice President, Grants Manager for Commerce Bank.*

## Urban League, Fannie Mae Mortgage Help Center Debuts in Clayton



*UL CEO James H. Buford, St. Louis County Executive Charlie Dooley, St. Louis City Mayor Francis Slay, UL Board Chair Debra Denham, and Fannie Mae Senior Vice President Jeff Hayward at the grand opening of the Fannie Mae Mortgage Help Center.*

Fannie Mae announced the opening of the St. Louis Mortgage Help Center to provide free education and counseling services to struggling homeowners. The St. Louis Center is the eleventh Mortgage Help Center to open across the country, and is part of Fannie Mae's ongoing effort to ensure that homeowners facing foreclosure understand their options, have access to assistance and receive timely resolutions. The Center was developed in partnership with the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis, local community and elected officials, and area mortgage servicers.

The Mortgage Help Center will offer one-on-one consultations in person or over the phone with experienced housing counselors to review mortgage loans and financing options, explain the range of options available, and help borrowers apply for loan workouts and other alternatives to foreclosure. Services are offered in both English and Spanish, and will be available to residents in the entire St. Louis region.

"The housing crisis has hit neighborhoods in St. Louis hard, and we know that many homeowners need assistance," said Jeff Hayward, Senior Vice President, National Servicing Organization, Fannie Mae. "Any homeowner with a Fannie Mae loan who is having difficulty paying their mortgage

should reach out for help, and they should reach out as soon as possible. The Help Center counselors will look at each loan individually with the goal of finding a solution that will help the homeowner avoid foreclosure."

The free services offered by the Mortgage Help Center are available for families who have a mortgage owned by Fannie Mae. Homeowners can determine if Fannie Mae owns their loan by visiting [www.fanniemae.com/loanlookup](http://www.fanniemae.com/loanlookup) or by contacting Fannie Mae at 1-800-7FANNIE. The Mortgage Help Center is available by appointment only and homeowners wishing to schedule a visit or a phone appointment should call the toll-free number 1-866-442-9375.



UL CEO James H. Buford (left) and Barbra Bowman (right) accept a \$25,000 donation from UL Board member Tony Moise of Enterprise Holdings Inc. for employment services.

## Federation of Block Units Welcomes New Member



In the Summer of 2011 Arneicatrice Myers, of the 4400 block of Greer looked outside her door and noticed things were not good for her and her neighbors. Instead of giving up on her community and moving out of the neighborhood, she decided that she needed to make a difference.

As she and her husband walked down the block they were disheartened by the abandoned buildings and crime. She decided that the people on her street were in need of a change. Her plan was to reach out to the Federation and revitalize the block in which she grew up on, in the

neighborhood that she loved. She knew that doing this would not be easy and that in order for her to be successful she would have to change the culture of indifference that had existed on her block for so long.

Slowly, she started to speak to her neighbors re-opening the channels of communication that have laid dormant for so long. After hosting a few block unit meetings at the local library, Mrs. Myers was on the road to retaking her neighborhood and encouraging the residents on her street to participate.

On October 15, 2011, Block Unit 186 B

hosted its first clean up project. On that cool sunny day Mrs. Myers watched as her plans came into fruition. She watch neighbors young and old come out their homes with trash bags and rakes picking up trash on the streets and communicating with one another in a civil manner. To quote Mrs. Myers, "it was a blessed day."

**By Darrick Hibbler**

## Urban League Young Professionals, Guild Celebrate National Day of Empowerment



*ULYP President Kira Van Niel and Guild President Vanessa Elliott.*

The Urban League Young Professionals of Metropolitan St. Louis and the Urban League Guild will host the *National Day of Empowerment: Jobs!Jobs!Jobs!* to bring awareness to the employment crisis here in the St Louis Community and assist with the movement to support the Urban Jobs Act of 2011.

A professional attire clothing was held from November 3<sup>rd</sup> – November 10<sup>th</sup>. The Urban League Young Professionals and the Urban League Guild collected donations on November 9, 2011 from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm at the Urban League Jennings Division located at 8960 Jennings Station Road, St. Louis, MO 63136. Additionally, professional clothing donations can be dropped off Monday – Friday between the hours of 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the Urban League Jennings office.

All clothing donated supports the Urban League's Community Clothes Closet, a service that provides individuals in need of professional business attire and families with gently used clothing of their choice.

For more information about the Urban League Young Professionals or Guild, please contact Barbara Bowman at (314) 615-3635 or Angelia D. Bills at (314) 615-3604.

For further information regarding Employment Services and other programs provided by the Urban League, please visit our website at [www.ulstl.org](http://www.ulstl.org) or call your local St. Louis Urban League division.

Urban League of Metropolitan  
St. Louis, Inc.

### CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

2012 AWARDS OF MERIT  
Presented at the 94<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Dinner Meeting  
March 12, 2012

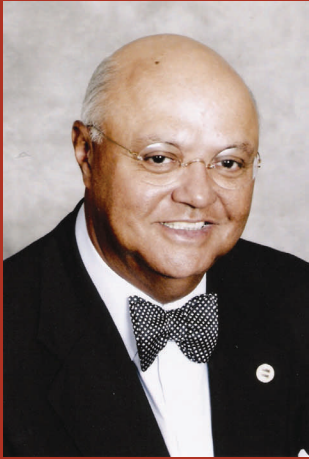
**Deadline: Nominations must be received  
by Thursday, January 5, 2012**

#### ELIGIBILITY

Once again the Urban League is accepting nominations for its prestigious Awards of Merit. These Awards are presented annually to an individual, corporation, organization and/or program. All residents of the metropolitan community, except employees of the Urban League and members of its Board of Directors, are eligible. The recipients of this award are judged by the Annual Dinner and Awards Committee and approved by the Urban League Board of Directors. The nominee should demonstrate the following:

- Commitment above and beyond the call of duty.
- Have made outstanding contributions toward improving communication and understanding among people of different races and cultures.
- An ambassador of goodwill for all people, consistently puts the betterment of the community first.
- Collaborates with others, and promotes diversity in their service to the community.
- Supports and motivates others to give of their time and financial support to improving social and economic equality. Please send nominations to [specialevents@urbanleague-stl.org](mailto:specialevents@urbanleague-stl.org).

## Entrepreneurship A Viable Option for Success



*James H. Buford  
President / CEO*

In this season of economic doom and gloom, it is encouraging to see that black-owned businesses have become one of the fastest growing segments of the U.S. economy. A recent study by the National Urban League highlighted the fact that the number of African American businesses grew at a faster rate than any other group in the U.S. In 2007, there were over 1.9 million black businesses, representing a 60.5 percent increase compared to a 17.9% increase in total U.S. businesses. Additionally, black-owned firms increased their hiring by 20.6% employing over 900,000 people with revenues totaling \$137.5 billion in 2007. In 2007, the average salary of an employee at a black-owned company was \$33,000, compared to the average salary of \$21,239 for African Americans.

There were many key characteristics of the emerging African American businesses in 2007: new minority business owners tended to be younger than their white contemporaries with a higher rate of post-secondary education without a bachelor's degree. Nearly 89% of African American firms tended to be healthcare and social assistance-related or administrative and support services making up the clear majority. In 2007, retail trade and healthcare and social assistance firms were the most lucrative fields for African American businesses.

According to the Kauffman Firm Survey 2004-2008, black retail businesses tended to decline during the Great Recession while technology firms retained the highest five-year survival rate amongst black businesses. Other surviving black businesses included professional, scientific and technical services and other services. Another characteristic of successful black firms was their ability to increase business-to-business sales and government contracts. The largest revenue increase for African American businesses

came from sales to government, which increased to 12% from 4% in 2008. This illustrates the importance of access to government contracts for black-owned businesses.

St. Louis was recently recognized as the fifth best city for African-American owned businesses in the United States according to the 2011 State of Urban Business report released by the National Urban League. At 9.1%, the St. Louis metro area ranked #1 in terms of share of black-owned employer firms and #2 in average revenue with just over \$100,000 per black-owned firm. Among the factors contributing to St. Louis' African American business success have been the City of St. Louis' MBE and WBE program goals and Lambert-St. Louis International Airport's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program which provides certification, marketing exposure, training and technical assistance.

While there have been many successes for black-owned businesses in the St. Louis community, there is still much room for growth. African American firms often face challenges which come from economic inequality such as the inability to obtain

credit and low minority participation or procurement goals for government / quasi-governmental agencies. In addition to these factors, many black businesses receive technical assistance training from lower-cost providers such as the SBA or non-profit associations. It is imperative to black firms to seek out assistance from for-profit firms and area colleges and universities with successful business incubators such as the Washington University Olin School of Business Skandalaris Center and the University of Missouri Extension [MU Extension Community Economic and Entrepreneurial Development](#) Community Economic and Entrepreneurial Development. Protecting the minority participation and procurement goals of public agencies is another key to ensuring equitable economic success for black businesses. With adherence to these goals and renewed banking partnerships we can secure the growth of African American firms and economic security into the near future and beyond.

## Philander Smith College President to Keynote Annual Dinner



*Dr. Walter S. Kimbrough*

**The Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis will host its 94<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner on Monday, March 12, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the Millennium Hotel Ballroom. Dr. Walter M. Kimbrough, President of Philander Smith College, is slated to deliver the keynote address at the dinner.**

Dr. Walter M. Kimbrough is the 12th president of Philander Smith College in Little Rock, Arkansas. Known as the Hip Hop president, he is one of the youngest college presidents in the nation. Prior to Philander Smith College, he served in administrative capacities at Albany State University, Old Dominion University, Georgia State University and Emory University.

Kimbrough has been recognized for his research and writings on HBCUs and African American men in college, including the creation of the Black Male Initiative at Philander Smith College that has been a model for similar programs. Kimbrough also has been noted for his active use of social media to engage students in articles by *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *CASE Currents*, and *Arkansas Life*. He was cited in 2010 by Bachelors Degree.com as one of 25 college presidents you should follow on Twit-

Dr. Kimbrough was named the 1994 New Professional of the Year for the Association of Fraternity Advisors, and the 1998 National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Dissertation of the Year award runner-up. He was selected as a 2001 Nissan-ETS HBCU Fellow, and a 2002 participant in the Millennium Leadership Initiative sponsored by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. In 2009, he was named by *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* as one of 25 To Watch. Finally, in 2010, he made the coveted *Ebony Magazine* Power list of the 100 doers and influencers in the African American community.

“I am pleased to have Dr. Kimbrough keynote our Annual Dinner. His informative and inspirational speaking style combined with his strong record of accomplishments perfectly matches with the goals and mission of the Urban League,” said James H. Buford, president and C.E.O. of the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis, Inc.

For ticket information to the 94<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner, please call (314) 615-3668 or email [specialevents@urbanleague-stl.org](mailto:specialevents@urbanleague-stl.org).



**Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis, Inc.**  
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## **Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis, Inc. Locations**

**Agency Headquarters**  
3701 Grandel Square  
St. Louis, MO 63108  
(314) 615-3600

**St. Clair County Operations**  
1401 E. Broadway  
East St. Louis, IL 62201  
(618) 274-1150

**St. Louis County Operations**  
8960 Jennings Station Road  
Jennings, MO 63136  
(314) 388-9840

**Vaughn Cultural Center**  
3701 Grandel Square  
St. Louis, MO 63108  
(314) 615-3600

**Workforce Investment Act—Youth Div.**  
Missouri Career Center  
26 North Oaks Plaza  
St. Louis, MO 63121  
(314) 679-3500

**Head Start Headquarters**  
8964 Jennings Station Road  
Jennings, MO 63136  
(314) 867-9100

**North Spring Division**  
911 N. Spring  
St. Louis, MO 63108  
(314) 652-2406

**Mt. Zion Division**  
1440 S. Compton  
St. Louis, MO 63104  
(314) 773-0733

**Martin Luther King Jr. Division**  
1437 Laurel  
St. Louis, MO 63112  
(314) 389-8800

**Fannie Mae Mortgage Help Center**  
222 S. Central, Ste. 402  
St. Louis, MO 63105  
(866) 442-9375



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