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Civic Progress and Regional Business Council Invest \$500,000 to Advance St. Louis Communities

- Contributions support regional initiatives of the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis -

ST. LOUIS, May 6, 2020 – Members of Civic Progress and the Regional Business Council announced today a total of \$500,000 in funding to support the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis economic and educational community programs. An additional \$25,000 contribution from the Regional Business Council will support COVID-19 community relief efforts.

The joint funding supports the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis's Save Our Sons program, which equips African American men with the education, job training, career skills and work ethic needed for success, as well as the organization's Gun Violence De-escalation public safety program. Civic Progress contributed \$150,000 to each program, and the Regional Business Council invested \$100,000 to each program.

"These investments represent the ongoing commitment of more than 125 of the region's leading businesses and community organizations to advance the St. Louis region by improving economic development, community safety and educational opportunities for the neighborhoods that need it most," said Tom Santel, president of Civic Progress.

The Regional Business Council made an additional \$25,000 contribution to support COVID-19 community relief. These efforts include community health evaluations, increased access to food, school supplies, clothing and employment services.

"This is a time for action and investments in organizations that are making a real difference in our community and serving our most vulnerable. I can think of no better investment than in the work of the Urban League and Michael McMillan and James Clark," said Kathy Osborn, president and CEO, the Regional Business Council.

As the largest affiliate of the National Urban League, the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis serves 100,000 residents in St. Louis, St. Louis County, and St. Clair County, Illinois, with 50 different programs in the areas of economic opportunity, community empowerment, educational excellence, civil rights and advocacy.

“We are very thankful for Civic Progress and the Regional Business Council’s continuous support of the Urban League’s Save Our Sons and Community Response programs to help alleviate the devastating economic effects of the COVID-19 crisis on our communities. Their contributions have truly made a difference in the lives of those who are in need throughout the greater St. Louis region,” said Michael P. McMillan, president and CEO of the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis.

According to James Clark, vice president of public safety and community response of the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis, there’s been a staggering increase in the St. Louis Metropolitan area homicide rate over this same period last year.

“We appreciate the Regional Business Council and Civic Progress for understanding the importance of NOW, as we strive to meet the immediate needs of the community during this crisis. The efforts to effectively engage individuals involved in conflicts that have a trajectory towards gun violence must be scaled up. Scaling up outreach in our more challenged neighborhoods is going to be keenly important as we focus on the aftermath of COVID-19. The Public Safety Division is working to establish an infrastructure that focuses on the, Neighborhood, Porch, and Living rooms (N.P.L.) to access and resource families in need,” added Clark.

Background:

Civic Progress is an organization comprising the CEOs and business heads from more than 30 of the St. Louis region’s leading employers who seek to leverage public and private resources to improve the region and better connect St. Louis with the global community. Since its founding in 1953, Civic Progress has supported many significant projects, including the recent transformation of the Gateway Arch grounds. **To learn more about Civic Progress, visit www.civicprogressstl.org.**

The Regional Business Council, founded in 2000, is composed of 100 CEOs representing some of the region’s largest employers. These companies have a tremendous impact on the economic health of the region, employing over 120,000 people and generating over \$65 billion in revenue annually. In addition to supporting the Clean Sweep efforts, the mission of the RBC is to unite and engage members to act on high-impact business, civic and philanthropic affairs for the betterment of the St. Louis region. **To learn more about the Regional Business Council, visit www.stlrbc.org.**

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