

***St. Louis Mental Health Board (MHB)
Community Children's Services Fund
Faith-Based Youth Development Project***

Background: Upon the passage of Proposition K, the St. Louis Mental Health Board expressed interest in wide distribution of funds in the community. Aware that faith-based communities provide opportunities for children and youth to engage in positive activities, we decided to create a faith-based project. Since we had little or no experience in this area, we proceeded slowly and cautiously. We spoke with three intermediaries who were interested-Faith Beyond Walls; Metropolitan Congregations United, and St. Louis Metropolitan Clergy Coalition. The Board authorized \$5,000 for the project and Lutheran Foundation of St. Louis provided \$5,000.

We met with the three organizations and determined that a collaborative approach would be the most effective and Memoranda of Agreement were executed. A list of over 600 faith-based communities in the city was divided up between the three organizations who contacted them by mail and telephonic follow-up asking them to submit proposals for funding in accordance with the objective below.

Objective: To invest in projects that promote positive youth development that increase the chances that youth in faith communities are avoiding undesirable behaviors and their consequences by awarding mini-grants for youth driven community service activities.

Projects: Forty-one (41) projects were accomplished between June 1 and August 31 by St. Louis faith-based youth groups that planned, developed, implemented and evaluated a community service activity that had a positive impact in their community or neighborhood. Up to \$500 per project was awarded and funds were provided to the intermediary organizations for their start-up and administrative costs. The total investment in the project was \$25,919.

Of the 41 projects, 12 were focused on working with seniors, 10 were neighborhood beautification, 6 were health fairs and 13 were community-building projects, such as block parties, back-to school fairs etc.

**Faith-Based
Groups:**

The following received a faith-based youth development mini-grant from the Mental Health Board.

1. All Saints Episcopal
2. Centennial Christian Church
3. El-Bethel Missionary Baptist Church
4. Emmanuel Temple Church
5. Neighborhood Houses-Caroline Mission
6. Samaritan United Methodist Church
7. Third Baptist Church

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8. Union Memorial Methodist Church
9. Christ Church Cathedral
10. St. Mark's Episcopal Church
11. Union Missionary Baptist Church
12. Grace and Peace Fellowship
13. Solomon's Temple
14. Cote Brillante Presbyterian
15. Fresh Anointing Home of Pray
16. Emmanuel Outreach Church
17. Centennial Missionary Baptist Church
18. Tri-Union AME Church
19. Mt. Pleasant AME Church
20. New Jerusalem Cathedral Church
21. Mount Jerusalem Cathedral COGIC
22. Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church
23. Lane Tabernacle CME Church
24. Christ Community Temple, aka Christ Conquers in the Temple
25. St. Vincent De Paul's Youth Group
26. St. Anthony of Padua
27. Williams Temple Junior Church
28. New Northside Missionary Baptist Church
29. Prince of Peace Missionary Baptist Church
30. Christian Love Missionary Baptist Church
31. New Tower Grove Missionary Baptist Church
32. Life Center International Church
33. Greater St. Mark Baptist Church
34. Fresh Start Bible Church
35. Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church
36. Galilee Missionary Baptist Church
37. St. James AME Church
38. St. Louis Park Baptist Church
39. Greater Mr. Carmel Baptist Church
40. Pilgrim Congregational United Church of Christ
41. St. John United Church of Christ

Summary: In conclusion, we learned that there are a significant number of faith-based youth groups who are eager and ready to engage in community-service activities which provide the youth an opportunity to take charge and develop as leaders. The projects themselves had positive impacts on the persons/groups the youth were trying to engage and/or help or also served to beautify or improve their neighborhoods.