

LINC Commission Meeting

October 5, 2020



In Memory of Rosemary Smith Lowe

Rosemary Smith Lowe transitioned to be with her Lord on September 22, 2020. She broke color barriers in a segregated city, forged Black political power, raised up neighborhoods and, even in her 70s, could stand as a fulcrum of peace between police and angry youths.

Lowe was a founding commissioner of LINC and vice chair when LINC was established in 1991 by Kansas City business leader Bert Berkley, who asked Lowe along with Adele Hall, Herman Johnson and Landon Rowland to help nurture the idea of a bottom-up organization that was responsive to community. LINC has emerged as a major non-profit in the region.

The LINC community mourns Lowe's passing with reverence for her indefatigable work as a loyal and committed community activist. Rosemary's strength and determination to make things right prevailed throughout her entire life.



In Memory of Bailus Tate

LINC was deeply saddened by the sudden and unexpected death of LINC co-chair Bailus Tate Jr. on Tuesday, June 30. Tate joined the LINC Commission in 2002 and became co-chair in 2015, taking over leadership from Landon Rowland.

"Kansas City is a great city," Tate commented in the 2012 interview. "But no city is greater than its neighborhoods. No neighborhoods are greater than the families that are there. No families are greater than their children. If you want to live in a great city you have to go and instill those things you feel strongly about into those sectors."

Tate brought firm, steady leadership to LINC and a range of personal and professional skills and experience which were invaluable.

Local Investment Commission (LINC) Vision

Our Shared Vision

A caring community that builds on its strengths to provide meaningful opportunities for children, families and individuals to achieve self-sufficiency, attain their highest potential, and contribute to the public good.

Our Mission

To provide leadership and influence to engage the Kansas City Community in creating the best service delivery system to support and strengthen children, families and individuals, holding that system accountable, and changing public attitudes towards the system.

Our Guiding Principles

1. **COMPREHENSIVENESS:** Provide ready access to a full array of effective services.
2. **PREVENTION:** Emphasize “front-end” services that enhance development and prevent problems, rather than “back-end” crisis intervention.
3. **OUTCOMES:** Measure system performance by improved outcomes for children and families, not simply by the number and kind of services delivered.
4. **INTENSITY:** Offering services to the needed degree and in the appropriate time.
5. **PARTICIPANT INVOLVEMENT:** Use the needs, concerns, and opinions of individuals who use the service delivery system to drive improvements in the operation of the system.
6. **NEIGHBORHOODS:** Decentralize services to the places where people live, wherever appropriate, and utilize services to strengthen neighborhood capacity.
7. **FLEXIBILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS:** Create a delivery system, including programs and reimbursement mechanisms, that are sufficiently flexible and adaptable to respond to the full spectrum of child, family and individual needs.
8. **COLLABORATION:** Connect public, private and community resources to create an integrated service delivery system.
9. **STRONG FAMILIES:** Work to strengthen families, especially the capacity of parents to support and nurture the development of their children.
10. **RESPECT AND DIGNITY:** Treat families, and the staff who work with them, in a respectful and dignified manner.
11. **INTERDEPENDENCE/MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY:** Balance the need for individuals to be accountable and responsible with the obligation of community to enhance the welfare of all citizens.
12. **CULTURAL COMPETENCY:** Demonstrate the belief that diversity in the historical, cultural, religious and spiritual values of different groups is a source of great strength.
13. **CREATIVITY:** Encourage and allow participants and staff to think and act innovatively, to take risks, and to learn from their experiences and mistakes.
14. **COMPASSION:** Display an unconditional regard and a caring, non-judgmental attitude toward, participants that recognizes their strengths and empowers them to meet their own needs.
15. **HONESTY:** Encourage and allow honesty among all people in the system.



Monday, Oct. 5th, 2020

4 – 5:30 p.m.

Online Meeting

Agenda

- I. Welcome and Announcements**
- II. Approvals**
 - a. June 2020 minutes (motion)**
- III. Superintendent Reports**
- IV. LINC COVID-19 Updates**
- V. Voter Registration**
- VI. In Remembrance**
 - a. Rosemary Smith Lowe and Bailus Tate**
- VII. LINC Commission Leadership**
 - a. Discussion**
 - b. Next Steps**
- VIII. Report Out**
 - a. Black History Project**
 - b. Other**
- IX. Adjournment**



THE LOCAL INVESTMENT COMMISSION – JUNE 22, 2020

The Local Investment Commission met online via Zoom. Co-chair **Bailus Tate** presided. Commissioners attending were:

Sharon Cheers
Jack Craft
Tom Davis
Aaron Deacon
David Disney
Mark Flaherty

Tom Lewin
Ken Powell
Marge Randle
David Ross
Marge Williams

A motion to approve the minutes of the Jan. 27, 2020, LINC Commission meeting was approved unanimously.

Superintendent Reports

- **Steve Morgan**, Assistant Superintendent (Fort Osage School District), reported the district is planning to hold in-person summer school July 6-24 after holding an online high school program in June. July numbers are expected to be low due, in part, to no bus service. District families have been served thousands of meals through partnership with USDA, Liberty Foods, and Fort Osage Education Foundation. Fall start date is Aug. 24. Social distancing measures will be in place.
- **Kenny Rodriquez**, Superintendent (Grandview School District), reported the district distributed digital devices students for online learning. District families received food through drop-off locations; food distribution will continue in the summer. The district will hold an all-virtual summer school and a drive-through graduation. District is working through social distancing practices for fall opening, e.g. meals in classroom, how to do bathroom breaks, students wiping down desks after class.
- **Yolanda Cargile**, Superintendent (Center School District), reported the district is planning for the fall semester, holding its first task force meeting to provide parents, students, church members, and LINC staff an overview of the reopening plan, which is expected to be released in mid-July; this week's task force meeting will feature the social and emotional support plan. Graduation will be held July 28 at Starlight Theater. Virtual summer school will be held in July. Digital devices are on order so that students K-2 will have them for the start of the school year, Aug. 24.
- **Carl Skinner**, Assistant Superintendent (Hickman Mills School District), reported the district provided devices and hotspots to parents after spring break. The district's food distribution effort used schools as distribution points, with home delivery for some including MicKinney-Vento students, and with National Guard assistance. Virtual summer school is now in its last week. Graduation is planned for July 26 at Cable Dahmer Arena, with four sessions of 75 seniors each. District is planning for Aug. 24 reopening. **Yaw Obeng**, the new superintendent, starts next week.
- **Kevin Foster**, Executive Director (Genesis School) reported Connecting for Good and School Smart KC provided Genesis families with devices for learning from home. Over 1,000 books from Turn the Page KC were distributed to families who came to the school to pick up work packets for students. Genesis partnered with Emanuel Early learning center for summer school. The Covid-19 closings have resulted in increasing urgency to combat learning loss. KCPS is partnering with Genesis and another charter school on a transportation service. Genesis planning to open for fall semester on Aug. 24.
- **Vivian Roper**, Superintendent (Lee A. Tolbert Academy), reported Tolbert held virtual summer school June 2-19, will hold in-seat summer school July 20-31, and will open for the fall on Aug. 24 with plans to offer both in-seat and virtual programs. Tolbert has providing food for families; KCATA helped to distribute meals to families who couldn't come to school for pickup. Tolbert provided over 400 devices to families at the end of March. Current principal **Dr. LaQuanda Carpenter** will be moving to Georgia; new principal **Dr. Carnest Mitchell** will start July 1.

- **Bob Bartman**, Program Coordinator (Education Policy Fellowship Program), reported **Brad Smith** of Drumm Farm Center for Children will be joining EPFP as coordinator and will be helping to plan the program for the EPFP fellows when they return from sabbatical in January 2021. The ability of fellows to participate may be affected by reductions to school district budgets.

Treasurer **David Ross** reported the LINC Finance Committee met earlier this month; primary funding for LINC remains intact and current spending is on target; the committee approved the budget for next fiscal year. LINC reserves have been variable with the market, as expected.

Caring Communities Director **Janet Miles-Bartee** reported on site coordinators' efforts to help families during the Covid-19 lockdown including supporting virtual learning and distributing books and work packets. Coordinators have also been cleaning spaces in school buildings prior to fall reopening; building a lesson-plan library of over 1,000 plans; aiding in food distributions and other efforts to help families avoid being socially isolated.

LINCWorks Director **Dawn Patterson** reported case managers continue to serve 1,200 clients in five counties, maintaining contact three times a month with limited face-to-face contact; only the main LINCWorks office remains open for in-person service. Case managers are referring clients to FEC, Legal Aid, and mental health providers. State of Missouri will be reactivating work requirements, which were suspended for several months at the beginning of the Covid-19 emergency.

Star School principal **Linda Davidson** reported there was a large increase in the Star School student population after Division of Youth Services closed all of its day treatment centers in March. LINC IT staff were able to provide computers to students in a timely manner, so there was very little learning loss. Teachers have done well collaborating with coordinators across the state. Star School consultant/liaison **Jim Dunn** reported DYS has been pleased with Star School staff's quick response to assess the needs of new students.

Renee Asher, Special Projects, reported on the Missouri Children's Division Infant Toddler Specialist Network initiative to provide training on relationship-based care to area child care centers. After several months of planning LINC held the first training in February; since then training has continued via Zoom. Center directors value the training, which is coordinated by **Jimmarie Smiley**, and have invited ITSN specialists to work one-on-one with teachers. The initiative is set to expand this year.

Human Resources Director **Trent DeVreugd** reported on LINC's efforts to support 475 staff who were furloughed on May 1. These efforts included answering questions about accessing unemployment, sharing information about job search requirements, and connecting staff to FEC for career training opportunities.

Deputy Director **Brent Schondelmeyer** reported on efforts to include site coordinators in community efforts to ensure an accurate Census count and register voters.

President **Gayle A. Hobbs** reported on LINC staff's ability to quickly transition to work remotely while continuing to serve families.

Tate reported on the recent deaths of LINC friends Missie Condit, Gladstone Elementary (KCPS) principal and Heroes Project creator, and Marvin Francois, photographer and Chess volunteer. A video on their contributions was shown.

Sharon Cheers reported the Kansas City Star recently published a salute to 22,000 area high school graduates.

Marge Randle expressed appreciation for the opportunity to meet online.

The meeting was adjourned.



LINC Support of School Districts During COVID19

LINC is supporting our school district partners during COVID19 in a variety of ways which are outlined below.

Academic and School Support

LINC site coordinators are mentoring students who they have worked with at the LINC Caring Communities sites providing extra support for the children and families. The site coordinators are helping children with their virtual learning and school assignments they may not understand. This includes bilingual support for non-English speaking households. We have also been involved in book distributions to children at events, outdoor library boxes and front porch book deliveries. We also have assisted with distribution of printed work packets. LINC site coordinators also have worked with school principals to clean, pack and prepare dedicated LINC building space for custodial cleaning.

Lesson Plans

Several LINC Caring Communities sites are funded by 21st Century Community Learning Center federal funds. This funding source significantly reduces the school direct costs for the LINC Caring Communities programs, but it also involves significant compliance activities including providing documentation of weekly activities and lessons plan tied to state standards. LINC has used this time to develop a library of nearly 1,000 lesson plans as a requirement of the grant but which can support quality programming when out-of-school time programming resumes. The lesson plans are being developed for all LINC sites.

Technology

LINC site coordinators have supported children and families with technology needs and challenges. This includes delivery of computers, hot spots and connecting families to school district resources. We are providing support for virtual learning.

Connecting with Children and Families

LINC site coordinators are maintaining contact with children and families with social media posts, notes and letters to students. These include Facebook Live streaming events, videos and activity links for students and parents. LINC has shared opportunities to stay involved with LINC after-school programs previously available including virtual chess, Read-Alouds, arts and crafts, math, Scouting (boys and girls), Girls on the Run, Harmony Project KC, Bike Walk and other opportunities.

Food Distribution and Emergency Assistance

LINC site coordinators have gone to families' homes and delivered meals, diapers, milk and many other necessities. They also supported school district food distribution efforts. These efforts have included working with Harvesters and faith-based organizations. Household contact has included welfare checks and connecting families with supportive services and emergency assistance including utility assistance.

Part-Time Staff Furlough

In mid-March, LINC had a part-time staff working in the LINC Caring Communities program of approximately 475 employees. LINC paid its part-time staff for approximately eight weeks at an organizational cost of \$800,000 to provide the part-time staff some ongoing financial support given the abrupt closure of schools. LINC part-time staff were furloughed on May 1. LINC filed a "mass claim" unemployment filing to make it easier for furloughed staff to obtain unemployment insurance including the opportunity for the \$600 Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) benefit. Many of the part-time staff furloughed live, or have children, in the school district.

Strange new year: This is what it takes to get all families learning, thriving

September 9, 2020

By Joe Robertson/LINC Writer

With Labor Day behind them, the rest of the area’s school districts leapt into a most daunting school year this week.

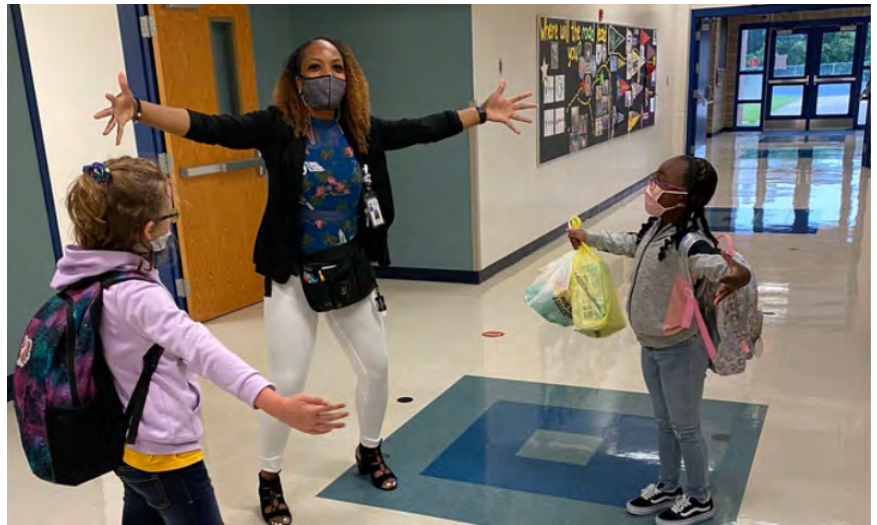
Even with so much preparation, parents and teachers knew that, collectively, their school community would need to help children — and each other — navigate the anxious first steps of remote learning.

“We’ll come to your house,” LINC’s Caring Communities Coordinator at Trailwoods Elementary, Melanie Scott, told an anxious Kansas City parent over the phone opening day.

“Are you serious?” said the parent, who was overwhelmed trying to sort out the technology demands of district-issued devices and online lesson platforms for multiple children.

“Yes,” Scott said, referring to herself and bilingual lead staffer Mayra Hernandez. “We’ll come to your house.”

In-person classes opened for elementary children in the North Kansas City and Fort Osage districts, while classes opened all-online in other districts, including Kansas City and Grandview — joining districts like Hickman Mills and Center that had opened all-online in late August.



It was opening day for LINC, too, at Topping Elementary in the North Kansas City district, where LINC provided before- and after-school programming for children returning to in-person learning at their school.

“It was a good day,” said LINC Caring Communities Supervisor Jeff Hill, after visiting Topping. “Kids were happy and safe . . . the logistics went well.”

Just like at Topping, LINC “will be there,” Hill said, when other partner school districts bring children back into their buildings.

Where schools have started the year all on-line, LINC’s team has stepped in to join teachers and administrators to help children thrive as remote-learners.

In many cases, this meant that LINC’s site coordinators sat in on staff meetings — virtually and in-person — learning the technology strategies, identifying families that needed extra help or who have been difficult to contact.

It meant making the persistent phone calls, checking in on parents and children, whether familiar faces or new to the school. Many site coordinators are ordering children’s books through LINC’s connection with [First Book](#) so they can help encourage reading at home.

“Some of the parents are so stressed,” said Deanna Snider, LINC’s Caring Communities Site Coordinator at Carver Dual Language Elementary School in KCPS.

Snider went along with Carver teachers to visit families’ homes before opening day to deliver lesson packets and workbooks they needed for the school year. At each stop, they checked on how the family was doing, looking for other needs.

Some families lacked school supplies, so Snider packed boxes with pencils, scissors, glue sticks, notebooks and other materials that she will deliver to several families this week.

The first day of school, one of the parents called Snider, “so frustrated,” Snider said, “she was on the brink of tears.”

One child was on one online platform, another on a different one. There was only so much explaining that could be done over the phone, so Snider said she would come to her house.

They went over the logistics of being safe. Planning for masks and distancing.

It’s necessary work carried on by LINC staff in tandem with the districts’ support staff, hoping to see families and their children thrive.

“We sat in on all the grade-level meetings (with teaching staff),” Scott said at Trailwoods, “so we can give families good information.”

The school districts’ administrators, support staff, and teachers have prepared throughout the summer with their families. And many community partners rallied to help, providing funds for computers and tech support, boosting nutrition programs, donating school supplies.

Some families were going to need extra help. Inevitably there would be some scrambling to patch holes in the school districts’ massive online-learning nets.

But Scott joined the messages ringing from schools and across the first day of school in person and in social media posts when, after taking in all the community effort to this point, she said:

“We feel pretty good about today.”



LINC welcomed back children — safely distanced and masked — to its Caring Communities after-school program at Topping Elementary in the North Kansas City School District Tuesday.



Examples of the school supplies for some Carver families

Rosemary Lowe remembered as the 'strong, proud voice of a movement'

Rosemary Smith Lowe broke color barriers in a segregated city, forged Black political power, raised up neighborhoods and, even in her 70s, could stand as a fulcrum of peace between police and angry youths.

Lowe was a founding commissioner of LINC and vice chair when LINC was established in 1991 by Kansas City business leader Bert Berkley, who asked Lowe along with Adele Hall, Herman Johnson and Landon Rowland to help nurture the idea of a bottom-up organization that was responsive to community. LINC has emerged as a major non-profit in the region serving children and families in low-income neighborhoods.

Lowe accumulated many awards for her persistent service in Kansas City, but when asked by a filmmaker to account for it all, to her she was simply “working to keep the neighborhood like it should be.”

That meant being one of the first families to move into Kansas City’s Santa Fe Neighborhood in 1952, defying racist covenants. It meant rising in a fraught political climate for Blacks, becoming the first Black ward committee woman in Kansas City, and helping establish Freedom, Inc., which gave Blacks a political voice.



It meant holding fast to her expectations for her neighborhood and surrounding communities as they struggled against crime and blight and the outward flight of many more-affluent families.

“Rosemary Lowe, you have told us!” the Rev. Vernon Howard Jr. of St. Mark Union Church said to an audience honoring her last year as one of the Communities Creating Opportunity’s activist honorees, “that we should never quit, but always stay grounded.” And when others may have fled, Howard said, Lowe said, “We’re gonna stay right here, build our communities, raise our children, love our family and vote in our own interest!”

The work was rarely easy. Lowe acknowledged that in a 1998 Kansas City Star article recognizing the 50th anniversary of the breaking of the color line in the Santa Fe Neighborhood.

“We have not had anything given to us on a silver platter,” she said. “There has been no battle but that the Lord was on our side.”

The LINC community mourned Lowe’s passing with reverence for her indefatigable work as a “loyal and committed community activist,” LINC President Gayle A. Hobbs said. “Rosemary’s strength and determination to make things right prevailed throughout her entire life.”

Lowe “never settled” for anything less than what was best for her neighborhood and all of Kansas City, said Janet Miles-Bartee, LINC’s Caring Communities Administrator, who also knew Lowe as a longtime member of Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, pastored by her father, the Rev. John Modest Miles.

“She always brought her best to the movement,” Miles-Bartee said. “Whether she failed or succeeded, she gave all she had. Obstacles could not prevent or hinder her. They only made her push harder.”

Many who loved and honored her called her “Mother Lowe.” Rising leaders were encouraged by her strength. Troy Nash, in his successful run for the Kansas City Council, raised her up as his role model, calling her the “Rosa Parks of Kansas City.” Her contemporary, former Mayor Pro-Tem Alvin Brooks, when running for mayor, said Lowe was his political hero.

In his praise for Lowe at the CCO awards ceremony, Howard exclaimed, “Rosemary Lowe, you have shown us — *hallelujah!* — that a woman can stand and be a strong, proud voice in a movement.”

The respect Lowe garnered stretched throughout her community — which was evidenced in the days after a police shooting in June 1996 brought out anger and conflict in the neighborhood around 27th and Benton.

Rocks flew through the air after the shooting. A police car was overturned and burned. And as the city and its community leaders struggled amid conflicting news and commentary to react to the tension, Lowe stepped forward.

A coalition of angry youths, many of them in or close to some of the gangs in the neighborhood, wanted to meet with Lowe, according to news accounts. Some of them had heard her speak in the past. They trusted her.

She became a broker for peace, mediating meetings between police officials and youth leaders. She engendered community pride in the youths, helping them organize efforts to clear weeds and trash.

“I wanted to get their minds in a different channel,” she said at the time.

It was Lowe’s forceful nature, and her courage, that also inspired LINC in its early years, co-founder Adele Hall said in a 2001 interview. “She’s one of the heroes of my life,” said Hall, who died in 2013. One of the images that Hall said inspired her was that of Lowe fighting to get a drug house shut down, and how Lowe waited up until 2 a.m., standing in the street to make sure the police got the job done. She helped LINC realize the “power of the individual,” Hall said. “I can say what I think . . .,” Hall said. “I can have a voice. Maybe I won’t be standing in the street closing a drug house, but I’ll be doing that same thing saying, ‘I’m here. I want to make sure that’s done.’”

Lowe’s ability to motivate people and get things done was essential in working with Leon Jordan and Bruce R. Watkins and others in creating Freedom, Inc.

They pushed for equal public accommodations for Blacks in downtown Kansas City. They rallied Black workers’ groups and plied their communities door to door to build political capital.

“That’s how we got our precincts strong,” Lowe once told KCUR about Freedom, Inc.’s history. “We voted and we voted heavy.”

The key, she said, was not to wage the struggles in a way that divides the community, but to persist with ideas that prevail.

“The only way to do anything about anything,” she said, “is you have to come together, and you have to know how to organize.”

In 1964, the Freedom political effort sent Harold Holliday Sr. and Leon Jordan, Freedom founders, to the Missouri Legislature. “We sent them,” Lowe said. “The men got the titles, but the women did the work.”

Freedom Inc. in 1987 gave her its Distinguished Service Award.

Her political involvement won her a place on the Democratic National Committee, where she served from 1980 to 1986. In 1984, she took an African-American page to the Democratic National Convention. In 1993, Lowe received the Missouri Legislative Black Caucus Foundation Award.

Lowe has served in various capacities in the community, including president of the Santa Fe Neighborhood Association, and a member of the board of directors of the KC Neighborhood Alliance, Missouri Board of Cosmetology, and the Local Investment Commission.

As LINC Commissioner, she was awarded the Rev. Dr. Nelson “Fuzzy” Thompson Legacy Award during the Southern Christian Leadership Conference Kansas City Chapter 2019 MLK Day Community Mass Celebration.



Lowe was honored, via official resolution, by the city council of Kansas City in 2016. She received the Bruce R. Watkins Foundation Pioneer Award in July 2014 and the Harry S Truman Award in 2004 from the Jackson County Democratic Committee.

Funeral services will be held on Oct. 1 at 10 a.m. at Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, 2411 E. 27th Street, Kansas City.

- Joe Robertson, LINC Writer

Bailus Tate Jr: 'Builder of bridges; champion of education; dealer of hope'

By Joe Robertson/LINC Writer

Once while retracing the path that led him to LINC 18 years ago, Bailus Tate recalled how he was eager to take the energy of his corporate success and return it to the core of who he was — his urban upbringing, his family, his community.

"There is nothing to fear when you're just trying to improve where you've come from and where your community's going," he said. And at LINC, he said, he found a match for his conviction that success comes when you "put in the work, put in the time, put in the people and put in the effort."

Tate died unexpectedly June 30 at the age of 73. LINC's community is forever grateful that Bailus Tate's zest for public service embedded in the LINC family. As a commissioner since 2002, and as the commission's co-chair since 2015, his steady hand of leadership and his unending sense of justice empowered LINC. LINC is stronger, more creative and more compassionate in the many schools and neighborhoods it serves.

At his funeral, his family described him as "barreling through life blind to failure." He became "bigger than he imagined," a sister said, "starting in the basement and becoming the bossman. He was bright, bold and brilliant."

Tate had a highly successful career with Kansas City Power and Light, retiring in 2002 as vice president of administration. He served as president and chief executive officer of the Black Economic Union of Greater Kansas City.

In addition to being co-chair of LINC, Tate was a private sector member of the Missouri Family and Community Trust – a public/private sector partnership working to improve state services. Tate's other civic involvement included serving as president of the Kansas City Board of Police Commissioners and chair of the Kansas City Crime Commission.

He loved his family, friend Ken Powell said at Tate's funeral, and he was an inspirational companion to his friends.

"He was a great civic leader . . . an explorer of new paths and opportunities," Powell said. "He was a builder of bridges across racial divides. He was a champion of education. He was a dealer of hope."



The Central High School Class of 1964 in a joint letter of condolences to his family and friends remembered him for his “effervescent smile” in his ability to lead his classmates, serve as master of ceremonies and always “keep us laughing with his wit and wisdom.”

He loved the city, its neighborhoods and its people.

“Kansas City is a great city,” Tate commented in a 2012 interview. “But no city is greater than its neighborhoods. No neighborhoods are greater than the families that are there. No families are greater than their children. If you want to live in a great city you have to go and instill those things you feel strongly about into those sectors.”

Tate brought firm, steady leadership to LINC and a range of personal and professional skills and experience which were invaluable to the entire LINC family — from the staff and commissioners he led, to the teachers, parents and children he served.

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“Kansas City is a great city,” Tate commented in a 2012 interview. “But no city is greater than its neighborhoods. No neighborhoods are greater than the families that are there. No families are greater than their children. If you want to live in a great city you have to go and instill those things you feel strongly about into those sectors.”

Kansas City at its best — sharing strength in food, voting power with Chiefs, Royals

September 29, 2020

By Joe Robertson/LINC Writer



LINC volunteers joined many others distributing food from Harvesters at the Truman Sports Complex, Sept. 29.

Stadium event highlights months of work by LINC to inform and empower voters.

Lines of cars wound their way around Kansas City's pro sports stadiums in brilliant sunshine. Autumn's early fallen leaves skittered across the asphalt. A drumline *rat-a-tatted* its welcoming beat as Chiefs cheerleaders and KC Wolf and the Royals' Sluggerrr mascots waved.

Here was Kansas City at its best — though not playing sports this time.

This was a city registering voters, raising its civic voice and sharing thousands of pounds of food to help each other in a strange, challenging time.

"This is a testament to what makes Kansas City such an amazing community," said Steve Davis, the chief operating officer of Harvesters, "when you look at all the people that came together today."

Many months of LINC's work — registering and informing voters, helping its community partners distribute food — reached a peak Sept. 29 in Parking Lot L of the Truman Sports Complex.

The train of vehicles passing through represented more than 1,400 households and nearly 6,000 people, including more than 2,700 children, Harvesters reported.

LINC had dreamed up several registration ideas in tandem with the League of Women Voters of Kansas City/Jackson-Clay-Platte Counties, but this one, said LWVKC's Becky Yockey, was particularly rewarding.

The League has been busy, Yockey said, running "tons" of voter registration efforts. "But this is probably



The Royals' Sluggerrr and the Chiefs' KC Wolf entertained the car line and the volunteers at the food giveaway and voter registration drive Sept. 29.

one of the biggest we've done. It's inspiring to see so many people come together."

The League and LINC had imagined trying to register and inform voters at Chiefs and Royals games, but with Covid keeping fans away, the idea turned to creating a drive-through event.

The United Way of Greater Kansas City joined, and Harvesters came in to couple the drive with a massive food distribution, and the Chiefs and the Royals completed an enthusiastic partnership.

"In collaboration with our players, we have placed a priority on voter registration efforts," said Chiefs President Mark Donovan in a written statement. "We are excited to help ensure that all Kansas Citizens — whether they live in Missouri or Kansas — are engaged in the voting process and are prepared to exercise their right to vote."

"We are thrilled," said Royals Chairman and CEO John Sherman, "to be part of this collective effort of community leaders to not only feed Kansas City area families, but to help lift civic pride through voter registration and participation."

It has been great to share the message, said LINC Site Coordinator Deanna Snider and one of the leaders of LINC's voter registration team, "that your voice matters."

"This is a testament to what makes Kansas City such an amazing community," said Steve Davis, the chief operating officer of Harvesters, "when you look at all the people that came together today."

Whether here at the massive stadium event, or work-



Registering voters in the car line at the Truman Sports Complex Sept. 29.

ing in smaller crowds at community events and food distributions, the rewards of LINC’s voter empowerment campaign have been clear.

People are registering, Snider said, and they’re getting information they didn’t know, or didn’t know they needed to know — like learning one likely can vote despite a criminal record, or how to vote absentee, or by mail.

“We opened up that communication,” Snider said.

The union of so many partners made the stadium event soar, said Todd Jordan, United Way of Greater Kansas City’s chief community engagement officer — all of it brought together in only six weeks.

“Harvesters runs a top-notch operation,” he said, “and all the volunteers that come out, that’s what makes the machine go. There’s so many people who knew this was the right thing to do and that we had an opportunity to make a huge impact by doing it. So it was full steam ahead.”

Harvesters brought out 100 pallets with 100,000 pounds of food — ready to help as many as 2,000 families. And the voter registration effort signed up some 75 new voters, but helped many more think about their Election Day plans for voting.

For LINC, the day built upon other efforts dating back to the early summer.

“We’re doing what LINC does,” LINC Site Coordinator Steve McClellan said. “We’re giving back. We’re volunteering. Helping the Kansas City community. We’re here for voter registration as well.”

The response of the community has been “extremely incredible,” said Site Coordinator Darryl Bush. “The love and passion transcends race, religion and gender. The support is overwhelming.”

Previous campaigns included organizing Registration Sunday in early September to rally faith communities in the effort. LINC staff have also worked at other food distributions, recruiting and informing voters, including community events at Ruskin High School, in the One Love events in the city and many more.

Yockey with the League of Women Voters watched the people come through at the sports complex, car by car by car, to get some food that so many need to help get through a hard, hard year. But just as there is strength in that food, there is strength in their ballot, she said.

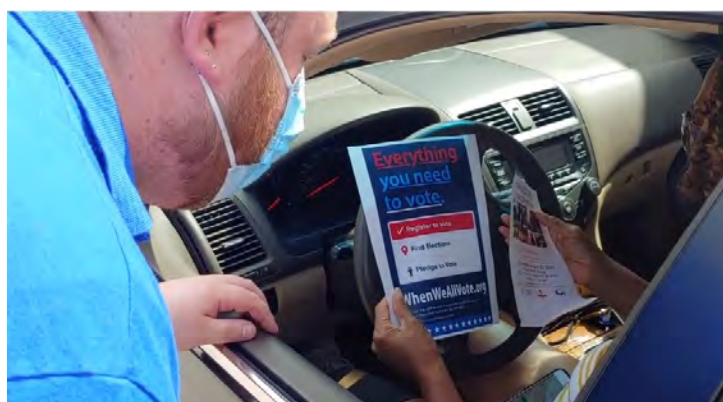
The chance to reach so much of “an underserved community,” she said, “is the greatest thing here.”



Registering voters at LINC’s table at the Spirit of Freedom Fountain, June 28.



Recruiting new voter registrants on Emanuel Cleaver II Boulevard, June 28.



LINC shared voter registration information at numerous food distribution events, including this one at Ruskin High School in mid-July.



KANSAS CITY'S UNITED WAY TEAMS UP WITH THE CHIEFS AND ROYALS FOR VOTER REGISTRATION EVENT

The drive-through event will allow anyone from Missouri or Kansas to register to vote in time for the November 3rd election.

(KANSAS CITY, MO – Sep. 28, 2020) – The Kansas City Chiefs, Kansas City Royals and United Way of Greater Kansas City, along with other community groups, have organized a voter registration and food distribution event at the Truman Sports Complex on Tuesday, September 29th from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The drive-through event will allow anyone from Missouri or Kansas to register to vote in time for the November 3rd election.

Harvesters—The Community Food Network will be onsite for a community food distribution. There will be enough food to feed 2,000 households. Food will be distributed beginning at 11 a.m. and will continue until 3 p.m. or all food has been distributed. The food distribution is open to anyone and you do not have to register to vote to receive food.

Members of the public should enter through Gate 4 off of Raytown Road. They will be then directed into Lot L for the distribution. Residents should not arrive at the Truman Complex before 7 a.m.

Other groups supporting the project include the Kansas City Election Board, Jackson County Sports Complex Authority, League of Women Voters and the Local Investment Commission (LINC).

“It’s great to see the Chiefs and Royals, along with other key community organizations, lend their support to combine our efforts at keeping households fed and engaged in the upcoming election. United Way has always helped to address food insecurity and we are excited to now lead voter engagement efforts,” said Brent Stewart, President and CEO United Way of Greater Kansas City. “The participation and support of the Chiefs and Royals reflect support by the team and their players on the importance of voter engagement.”



“We are excited to join these great community partners for a unique and important event on Tuesday,” Chiefs President Mark Donovan said. “In collaboration with our players, we have placed a priority on voter registration efforts, and we are excited to help ensure that all Kansas Citizens – whether they live in Missouri or Kansas – are engaged in the voting process and are prepared to exercise their right to vote.”

“The Royals have been proud to partner with Harvesters in their efforts to relieve food insecurity,” said John Sherman, Royals Chairman and CEO. “We are thrilled to be part of this collective effort of community leaders to not only feed Kansas City area families, but to help lift civic pride through voter registration and participation.”

The Kansas City Chiefs – its organization and players – have supported voter registrations with public service announcements and a place on the team’s website (www.chiefs.com/vote) to help voters register and get other information on voting – including how to register and details on absentee or vote by mail.

The Kansas City Election Board announced this week Arrowhead Stadium would be a central polling place for the upcoming November 3 election for voters registered with the Kansas City Election Board. Fans can learn more about the Royals voter registration efforts at www.royals.com/letsvote.

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For more information and interview requests

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MISSOURIANS CAN VOTE BY MAIL IN 2020



Questions or problems? Call 1-866-OUR-VOTE

STEP 1: ABSENTEE OR MAIL-IN BALLOT?

By Mail: Voters with an excuse (such as confinement due to illness, or those at risk for COVID-19, including ALL voters over age 65) can vote Absentee by Mail. Others can cast a no-excuse Mail-in Ballot.

In Person: Voters can vote Absentee in person at their local election office starting September 22, 2020

STEP 2: APPLY FOR YOUR BALLOT!

To get an Absentee or no-excuse Mail-in Ballot by mail, send a request to your local election office. Find an application at sos.mo.gov. Ballot requests must be received by Oct. 21, but send it in as early as you can! Your application must be signed and if voting absentee, must list the reason you are voting absentee.

STEP 3: SEND THE FORM TO YOUR LOCAL ELECTION OFFICE

Mail-In Ballot requests must be delivered in person or by mail. Absentee Ballot applications can be sent by email or fax as well as mailed or delivered in person. The request must be received by Oct. 21 but send it **AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE!**

STEP 4: MAKE SURE YOUR REQUEST WAS ACCEPTED

Mistakes in filling out the form can result in your ballot request being rejected. Call after you send it in to make sure everything is OK, giving yourself time to correct any errors.

MAKE YOUR BALLOT COUNT IN 2020



Questions or problems? Call 1-866-OUR-VOTE

Call your local election office to make sure they mailed your ballot to you. If you don't receive a ballot within two weeks of confirming your application, you can request a replacement, vote absentee in person or vote at the polls on Election Day.

STEP 5: CAST YOUR BALLOT

Voters have a right to assistance if they need help casting their ballot. The assistant will need to sign the ballot envelope where indicated. For nonpartisan information on what's on your ballot, visit Vote411.org

STEP 6: SEAL, SIGN, & DELIVER

Once you have voted, put the ballot in the envelope and seal it. Complete the statement on the envelope, verify your address, and sign the ballot envelope, in front of a notary if required. Absentee ballots cast for a health-related reason DO NOT require a notary.

STEP 7: MEET THE DEADLINE

Your ballot must be RECEIVED at your local election office by 7pm on Election Day. Absentee Ballots can be mailed in or dropped off in person. Mail-In Ballots can **ONLY** be submitted by US mail. Mail your ballot well in advance. Call to make sure it was received & accepted, and your options to vote at the polls if it hasn't arrived.

