

Letter from our President/CEO

Dear Friends,

This has been a year marked by uncertainty and hardship for many in our community. In times like these, we're reminded just **how vital our supporters—and every member of Team LifeWise—truly are.** Your generosity makes it possible for us to respond with compassion, creativity, and steadfast care.

The May 16 tornado brought devastation to parts of St. Louis, and recovery has only begun. The City has asked us to be the lead agency for Disaster Case Management for seniors, helping them rebuild and regain stability. 31% of those affected are older adults, and our deep relationships within the senior community make us a natural fit for this work. **We're expanding staff and services to ensure they receive the support they need in this long recovery process.**

At the same time, **many immigrant families we serve are facing renewed uncertainty.** LifeWise StL remains a steady, trusted presence—helping families access essential resources, understand their rights, and work toward stability.

Across the region, families continue to struggle with economic instability—balancing rising costs with limited income, often one unexpected expense away from crisis. At the time of printing, it appears SNAP benefits will not be distributed in November, leaving one in three St. Louis families who rely on them facing even greater hardship. Your partnership helps LifeWise StL provide the support and ongoing programs that move families from surviving to thriving.

Through every challenge, one thing remains clear: we do more—and do better—when we do it together. **Thank you for standing with us, believing in our mission, and helping build a stronger, more compassionate St. Louis.**

With deep gratitude,



Scott E. Walker
President/CEO



Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP)

**MAXIMIZE YOUR
IMPACT WITH
MISSOURI
TAX CREDITS**



LifeWise StL partners with the Missouri Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) which provides tax credits to donors with Missouri Business Income.

Sample Income Tax Results*
Individual/Business with Missouri Income

Donation	\$20,000	\$5,000	\$1,000
MO Tax Credit (50%)	-10,000	-2,500	-500
MO Tax Savings**	-496	-124	-25
Federal Tax Savings**	-2,200	-550	-110
Total Tax Savings	-12,696	-3,174	-635
NET cost to donor*	\$7,304	\$1,826	\$365

*Assumes donor itemizes deductions and is in the 22% marginal Federal income tax bracket and 4.95% Missouri income tax bracket.

**Contribution deduction reduces by amount of Missouri credit per Final Treasury Regulations issued June 2019.

Please consult your tax advisor about your personal tax situation.

For more information visit lifewisestl.org or contact Greta Buck, gbuck@lifewisestl.org 314.260.6369



Superheroes Unite for Trivia Night!

LifeWise StL's Trivia Night celebrated our real-life superheroes—our supporters! Guests donned capes and masks, battled through themed challenges, competed in costume contests, and joined raffles and a silent auction—all to power up youth literacy programs and change lives.

From 0 to 739: Sandra's Path to Financial Independence



Sandra has been part of LifeWise StL for more than eight years and was **one of the six participants who helped launch our first Lending Circles in 2017**. At the time, she had no established credit history. After the first six-month round, her credit score rose from 0 to 542—a powerful start toward financial stability.

Sandra has continued participating in Lending Circles, using them not only to strengthen her credit but also as a savings strategy. Today, her credit score is an impressive 739.

When she joined the program, Sandra's main goal was "to improve financially and pay off my medical debts." A year later, she also enrolled in our **Individual Development Account (IDA) program and was able to purchase a car**—an important step toward greater independence. Reflecting on her experience, Sandra shared that she "learned a lot in the classes—things people usually don't know or talk about."

Now, Sandra continues to build on what she's learned, saving with purpose and working toward her next goal: buying her own home. Her story is a testament to what's possible **when knowledge, community, and opportunity come together**.

Sandra joined the program...

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Spread Holiday Joy:

Donate to Our Holiday Market

Help make the holidays brighter for LifeWise families! We're collecting new toys, household items, and clothing for our Holiday Market (Dec. 5 - 12), where families shop with dignity and joy.

Scan the QR code for more info. You can purchase items from our Amazon Wish List for easy delivery, or drop them off between now and Dec. 9.

For more festive fun - bring the items to our Santa's Workshop on December 2. See details on the back page!



Spotlight on our Volunteer Groups

We are so grateful for the incredible groups that volunteer with LifeWise StL, helping us make a meaningful difference in our community. A special shoutout to **BDO**, who went above and beyond by purchasing and assembling over 100 kits for our participants, including **Senior Companion Cleaning and Activity Kits, Teen Hygiene Kits, Teacher Appreciation Kits, Welcome Home Kits, Home Maintenance Kits, Calming Kits, and even bags of men's underwear**.

Beyond creating these essential resources, BDO volunteers contributed **over 200 hours of service**, including setting up and serving at our Early Childhood graduation. Their generosity and hard work exemplify what it means to be part of **Team LifeWise**—thank you for helping us lift up our community!



Creativity Rekindled: One Senior Companion's Impact

Adrian spent years as his mother's full-time caregiver—a role filled with love but also sacrifice, stepping away from his job as an art teacher. When his mother's health declined, **Ms. Jacque, a volunteer with the Senior Companion Program, stepped in to provide companionship for his mom and much-needed respite for Adrian.**

When his mother passed in 2022, grief and loneliness set in. Several months later, Adrian reached out: **Could Ms. Jacque come back?** She returned as his companion, gently encouraging him to reconnect with what brought him joy—especially painting. Together they visited art stores, browsed galleries, and explored creative ideas.

Today, Adrian's artwork has been featured in three local galleries. What started as a quiet return to an old passion became a celebration of resilience, creativity, and community—all sparked by one Senior Companion who believed in him.



Celebrating our 2025 Impact Award Winners

The Rev. Eugene W. Morse LifeWise Impact Award recognizes partners of LifeWise STL who exhibit a passion for our mission, invest their time and talents as volunteers, support our work financially, and connect others to the work we do to help people achieve a better life.

The 2025 award winners include:

- **Ron Henley**, who contributed his IT expertise and more than 300 volunteer hours to migrate our multiple databases into one single management platform
- **Deb Seidel**, who has generously supported LifeWise educational programs financially for more than 15 years
- **Jennifer and Steve March**, who have been steadfast community ambassadors, strategic advocates, and donors, as well as Jennifer being a vital member of LifeWise staff for 18 years
- **Gordon and Joan Ballam**, who have given countless volunteer hours to LifeWise events over the past 20 years and supported LifeWise financially for more than 40 years
- and **Light a Single Candle Foundation**, who has invested deeply in our Economic Wellness programming and in LifeWise Academy, helping hundreds of families and youth access opportunities that change the course of their lives

Surrounded by LifeWise STL supporters and staff, honorees enjoyed a night together at Busch Stadium watching the Cardinals vs. the Cincinnati Reds from the comfort of a boxed suite. **Thank you to our honorees from the bottom of our hearts for your unwavering support these many years!**



Thank
you!

2025
winners!



SANTA'S WORKSHOP

Kick off our Holiday Market
Giving Tuesday
December 2, 2025
3:00 - 6:00 PM

LifeWise StL 

NORTH POLE

REINDEER PIC

COCOA BAR

ELF WORKSHOP

Boost Your Impact on Giving Tuesday!

This Giving Tuesday, your generosity goes even further! Thanks to Thrivent, **every \$2 donated to LifeWise StL on Tuesday, December 2 will be matched with \$1**—up to \$20,000 for \$40,000 of donations.

To celebrate and kick off our Holiday Market season, **Join us at LifeWise StL from 3-6 p.m. for Santa's Workshop!** Bring your Holiday Market drive items, enjoy a hot cocoa bar, snacks, and treats, help the elves build bikes for the Holiday Market, and get a professional family photo with one of Santa's reindeer! To help us reach our \$40,000 goal, you can bring your donations in person - **or donate that day online!**



Follow this QR code & bookmark the page for December 2, Giving Tuesday!

Generosity multiplied.

Make an even bigger impact
with Thrivent's match!

Giving Tuesday

Conditions apply.

Watch your email for more details—or call Greta Buck at 314-260-6369 to learn more about this exciting opportunity to make your gift go farther!



Manchester UMC Christmas Trees for Sale

Get into the holiday spirit by purchasing your Christmas tree at the Manchester United Methodist Men's Tree Lot! Proceeds support community organizations, including LifeWise StL. The lot opens November 28 at 750 Russel Wirth Lane, Manchester, and is open daily noon-8:30 p.m. (9 a.m.-8:30 p.m. on weekends).

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