

St. Louis Association of Community Organizations (SLACO) NEWS AND EVENTS



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Would Neighborhoods Be Better Served by Fewer Governments?

FEBRUARY 19 ALL-NEIGHBORHOODS FORUM TO HIGHLIGHT FRAGMENTED GOVERNMENT QUESTIONS

The conversation about the organization of governments in St. Louis City and County is back in the spotlight. Although this debate ebbs and flows, both the aftermath of the Ferguson shooting and the emergence of the Better Together organization and its reports have contributed to renewed interest.

Thursday evening, Feb. 19, the general public is welcome to join us from 7-8:30 p.m. for a forum on this topic at St. Louis Community College at Forest Park, Room T204 in the Performing Arts Center Theatre. The well-qualified panelists will include Dave Leipholtz, Director of Community-Based Studies at Better Together; Mayor Gerry Welch of Webster Groves, also an economist and former President of the St. Louis County Municipal League; and Mike Jones, member of the State Board of Education, former Deputy Mayor of the City of St. Louis, and recently retired from the County Executive's Office.

The format of the evening will include opening statements from each panelist, followed by nearly an hour of time for the panel to answer audience questions. A moderator will select from among the written questions submitted. Audience members will not be allowed to speak, but their concerns and perspectives will be much in evidence.

Parking is available in Lots C and D in the area south of the theatre building, which is at the northwest corner of the campus off Highlander Drive.

Our goal for the evening is to make sure that neighborhood people with all different levels of prior knowledge of local government have an opportunity to have their questions and concerns discussed by people who have wrestled with the issues of efficient, economical, and equitable basic services extensively.

Y.O.U., Young Organizers University, Is Underway

The first class of Y.O.U. started Jan. 26 at SLACO. The 12-week program helps students ages 14-18 learn about how neighborhoods work, leadership skills, and neighborhood organizing. Each participant will do a community project in his or her own neighborhood.

We are looking for the site for the next 12-week session. If you can offer a meeting space in another quadrant of the City, please contact Mike Reid at mreid@slaco-mo.org.

An Exciting Agenda for the Year

In January SLACO member neighborhoods brainstormed about action and learning priorities for 2015. Results fell into three broad categories:

1. Organizing for action on one or two of the “big issues” for urban core residents, identified as vacant land and buildings, crime and drugs, and more responsive solutions from government;
2. Creating more opportunities for seeing one another’s neighborhoods and providing service to each other, including programs such as the [250 Exchanges of Peace](#) idea and an alley clean-up day in the fall; and
3. Improving internal effectiveness of the SLACO member neighborhood associations, including practical fund-raising methods, leadership and volunteer development, and cooperation to save money and improve newsletters and programs.

Committees are working now to make these ideas a reality. Come join us!



Tilles Park Neighborhood Association Joins SLACO

The latest member of SLACO, a coalition of neighborhood associations, is the Tilles Park Neighborhood Association. This brings us up to 18 member neighborhood groups, which collectively represent 23% of the population of the City.

If your neighborhood association is not a member, don't be left out of the peer learning, joint advocacy, and just plain fun as we grow.