

Deaconess selects five organizations for effort to change policy for children

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By Angela Mueller – Reporter, St. Louis Business Journal

The Deaconess Foundation has selected five organizations to serve as the inaugural cohort in a new program focused on improving children's well being through racial equity and changes in public policy.

The anchor institutions for the new Just for Kids program will include the American Civil Liberties Union of Missouri Foundation, ArchCity Defenders, Community Organizing and Family Issues, Metropolitan Congregations United and Missouri Health Care for All. The partners were selected after a seven-month search process.

Deaconess will invest about \$2 million, including consultative and technical support, in the organizations over the four years of the program in an effort to enhance their leadership and technical capacities and improve their overall effectiveness.

“This was a difficult selection, but we’ve learned a lot about a remarkable set of finalists we hope to work with in news ways,” Rev. Starsky Wilson, Deaconess Foundation president and CEO, said in a statement. “We will need the power which comes from deeper relationships to build a community where the 640,000 children of this region are well and their futures are not predicated on race and zip code.”

The inaugural Just For Kids program will officially launch in January.

A ministry of the United Church of Christ, Deaconess has invested more than \$80 million in the St. Louis community since 1998.



*Rev. Starsky Wilson, president and CEO,
Deaconess Foundation*