



KeepArtHappening.org

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Contact: Emily Hellmuth  
Director of Marketing and Communications, Arts and Education Council  
314.289.4010 or [Emily-H@KeepArtHappening.org](mailto:Emily-H@KeepArtHappening.org)

## ARTS AND EDUCATION COUNCIL NAMES JESSIE YOUNGBLOOD DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT



**ST. LOUIS – Jan. 10, 2019** – The Arts and Education Council has named Jessie Youngblood director of development. In this role, Youngblood will cultivate and manage individual, corporate and foundation donors and prospects for A&E.

She also has direct oversight of A&E's affinity groups, the Muse Society (women's leadership giving) and Young Friends of the Arts. She works closely with senior leadership to devise comprehensive strategies for A&E's future growth through new funding initiatives as well as securing investments in A&E's arts incubator, the Centene Center for the Arts, and sponsorships of programs like the St. Louis Arts Awards, Catalyst Conversations, Arts Leadership and Management Academy and others.

"Jessie is an accomplished nonprofit professional who is passionate about the arts and understands the impact strong arts support from individuals, corporations and foundations can have for our region," said Cynthia A. Prost, A&E president and CEO. "We look forward to working with her as we continue to grow the base of arts supporters in our community."

Youngblood comes to A&E from Metro Theater Company, where she increased contributed income more than 15% and conducted the first ever Jazz Benefit Concert and Gala with special guest Terence Blanchard. Prior to her role at Metro Theater, Youngblood served as assistant director of development at Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis and donor services and database manager and box office manager at Jazz St. Louis.

Originally from Boise, Idaho, Youngblood relocated to St. Louis in 2013 after completing her Master of Music in violin pedagogy at Boise State University. She has been playing the violin for 23 years and performs in a variety of ensembles; from a 180-person full orchestra and chorus in Eisenstadt, Austria, to a string quartet behind legendary jazz pianist Billy Childs, and currently an Electric Light Orchestra tribute band. She holds a Master of Business Administration from Washington University in St. Louis.

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**About the Arts and Education Council: *Keep Art Happening*.** – The Arts and Education Council builds appreciation, participation and support for the arts and arts education throughout the St. Louis region, shaping a more vibrant arts community for all. A&E ensures the 16-county, bi-state region is rich with arts and cultural experiences through programs and services that support more than 70 organizations each year, including: operating grants; arts incubation at the Centene Center for the Arts; PNC Program Grants; the Monsanto Creative Impact Fund; the Maritz Arts and Education Fund for Teachers; Monsanto Rural Community Arts and Education grants; the Art Education Fund, underwritten by Wells Fargo

Advisors; the Catalyst Innovation Lab; the Katherine Dunham Fellowship; Catalyst Conversations; the stARTup Competition; Leadership Roundtables; Arts Marketers; the St. Louis Suburban Music Educators Association; the Keep Art Happening Scholarship; and the St. Louis Arts Awards.

A&E is entirely funded by individual donors, corporations and foundations in the St. Louis region. Since its inception in 1963 as the region's only privately-supported united arts fund, A&E has raised and distributed more than \$100 million in private funding for the arts – a significant contribution that directly impacts the quality of life in our region. A&E meets all 20 Better Business Bureau Charity Standards and has earned the Wise Giving Seal of Approval, a three-star rating from Charity Navigator and a Guidestar Exchange Silver Participant rating.

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**Photo:** Jessie Youngblood. Photo by ProPhotoSTL.