

# volunteer

## Lead Reach Teach: *Rockwood Students Get Summer Workplace Experience*

*While most high school students were kicking back for the summer, more than a dozen VICC students were getting the jump on college hunts and career preparation through a new summer program at Rockwood School District.*

Rockwood high school sophomores and juniors who participate in the VICC program were part of a new summer enrichment project known as Lead Reach Teach. Students took part in a mixture of culturally enhancing activities and volunteer opportunities.

"Learning outside of the classroom is extremely important, especially during the summer," said Brittany Hogan, Rockwood coordinator of education equity and diversity. "I hope students can continue to develop interpersonal skills that they can apply at school, home and work."

With the help of Partners in Education, Rockwood officials were able to provide 14 students a chance to interact with and volunteer for local business partners. Students visited places such as the Missouri History Museum to explore the new Civil Rights exhibit. Other days, students worked with business partners such as the Chocolate Factory, the Open Space Council and the St. Louis Surge women's basketball team. There, students helped front office staff members prepare for the opening home game.

"I'm hoping to reinforce the things we teach during the school year and also help them develop new life skills," said Hogan.

Some of the students took a field trip to Grant's Farm. While on a lunch break, students wrote thank-you notes to the owners of a local business they had visited.

Rockwood social worker Twylaa Taylor, who accompanied students on that trip, said organizers hope to expose students to what it's like to operate in the business world.

"We take these students out into the community to make sure they get the experience of what that's like," said Taylor. "They're at an age where you want to have a job, but you're not old enough. So with Lead Reach Teach, you get to come out and see what it's like."

Other participating organizations included CIC St. Louis, Laumeier Sculpture Park, St. Louis Zoo, St. Louis Science Center and the Rockwood Technology Department.

The students also took college tours of Washington University, Saint Louis University, Harris-Stowe State University and Southern Illinois University.

Hogan chose the participants for the inaugural season of Lead Reach Teach carefully. "I was looking for kids who had grit and tenacity," she said. "It wasn't about being a straight A student. It was about kids that I knew would bring something to this experience. I was looking for kids who just wanted to have a good time and wanted to learn and were open to growing and developing."

Rockwood Summit sophomore Abdou pointed out the excursions are not all "fun" days like the field trips to Grant's Farm and the History Museum.

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Lead Reach Teach*



Kay Ann Dotson, David Isom, Deidra Martin and Terrez Jones (from left) talk over the business at CIC St. Louis.

**For a video about Lead Reach Teach, visit:**

<https://vimeocom/226046867?ref=em-share> [vimeocom/226046867?ref=em-share](https://vimeocom/226046867?ref=em-share)

# VICC Featured in Education Podcast

*The VICC program is the subject of a recent podcast, "The Future of School Desegregation in St. Louis, Missouri: Lessons Learned From the Voluntary Inter-District Desegregation Program," sponsored by the Midwest and Plains Equity Assistance Center.*

VICC CEO David Glaser recorded the podcast on March 21 with host Sarah Diem, an associate professor at the University of Missouri and an Equity Fellow with the Midwest and Plains Equity Assistance Center, a project of Great Lakes Equity Center at Indiana University. The podcast was posted online June 5.

"I believe the podcast paints an accurate and thorough picture of the history of the VICC program as well as our plans for the future," Glaser said.

The discussion focused on the history, progress and future plans of VICC's desegregation efforts in the St. Louis area.

Parents, teachers and administrators are encouraged to listen to the 40-minute podcast at <http://glec.education.iupui.edu/spotlight.html> (Episode 7) or to download the transcript from the site.

On the podcast, Glaser reviews the history of VICC, whose origins date back to 1972, when a group of black North St. Louis parents led by Minnie Liddell filed a complaint in the U.S. District Court to address the quality of education in the St. Louis school district. The resulting legal case, *Liddell vs. Board of Education for the City of St. Louis*, led to a regional voluntary desegregation plan agreement in 1983, endorsed by 20 county school districts and the St. Louis Public Schools. The program continued under federal court jurisdiction until 1999, when it was extended another 10 years, powered by a sales tax increase. The Voluntary Interdistrict Coordinating Council, which had administered the program, became the Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation.

Several subsequent extensions approved by the participating districts will enable new students to be enrolled through 2023-24. During the last five-year extension, from 2019 to 2024, VICC will emphasize bringing siblings of current participants into the program. Currently, 12 county districts participate.

Glaser related VICC's major successes, including the fact that more than 70,000 students have participated so far. Test scores, attendance rates and graduation rates have improved for participants over the same measures in the city schools. Over time, those measures also have improved in the city schools, he said.

"It's been a very positive thing for the whole St. Louis metropolitan area," Glaser said. "So, how could we continue some of the benefits of the program into the future?" The VICC board of directors has looked ahead, realizing that a race-based program cannot continue in perpetuity and envisioning a time that it may evolve to a socioeconomic-based

program. "That would likely be permissible from a legal perspective, and it would still help us achieve a lot of diversity from a race-based perspective as well," he said.

Glaser and Diem discussed the importance of building support in communities for an interdistrict desegregation program and helping the public see that it's beneficial for all students.

"It's good for the minority students, but it's also good for the kids who are not minority students as well." It's also vital for the program to get an adequate level of funding.

Glaser also stressed the value of VICC coordinating all student transportation, including bus routes and taxi routes. "We bear the costs of doing that, and school districts don't have to worry about that."

"I really hope that the program does continue in some shape or form beyond '23-24," Glaser said. "I think that we've accomplished too much, we've come too far for it to just come to an end and not continue in some way. I think our program is an example of one that has worked really well and has stood the test of time and been successful in most ways. There were some bumps along the road at the very onset of the program, but now it's been around for quite a while, and it works for kids, it works for families, and it works for the community."

The MAP Equity Assistance Center is funded by the U.S. Department of Education to provide technical assistance, resources and professional learning opportunities related to equity, civil rights and systemic school reform throughout a 13-state region.



# Dailey Signs to Central Methodist University Makes VP History

*Newly minted graduate Daniel Dailey made Valley Park High School history in May when he signed with Central Methodist University for an indoor and outdoor running scholarship of \$15,000 per year, becoming the school's first track athlete to sign with a university.*



Coach Latonya Davis bids Daniel Dailey farewell after dropping him off at Central Methodist University.

Athletic Director John Sherman described the signing as emotional. "Track has given students the opportunity to participate and excel in a spring activity, and it's changed their lives," he said. "Daniel has benefited greatly because he's able to go to college and run track at the same time. This is a great day."

Dailey's track career began in the 2015-16 school year with the team's inaugural season. Dailey ran the 100-meter dash, 200-meter dash, long jump and high jump. He ran the 100-meter dash and 200-meter dash in Sectionals, qualifying in the 100 and placing sixth at State.

He doubled his track efforts in 2017 after learning John F. Kennedy High's football coop with Valley Park was ending for seniors. Dailey had played on the joint team for two years, so he turned his full attention to track. In 2017, Dailey added the 4 x 200-meter relay and the 400-meter dash to his repertoire, earning medals at every track meet where he competed. In the May 2017 Sectionals, he placed fifth in the 400-meter dash, missing out on qualifying but beating his personal best. He qualified in the 100- and 200-meter dash and went on to compete at the State meet the next weekend.

Track coach Latonya Davis has known Dailey since he came to Valley Park in third grade, when she was his physical education teacher. "He was successful in our annual Hawk Run races, so when I knew I would be the head high school track coach, he was one of the first students I wanted to recruit," Davis said. "He was a leader and great supporter of his teammates. I am so proud of Daniel, and I am truly going to miss him."

Davis, in fact, helped Dailey fill out his FAFSA, sign up to retake the ACT and apply to four colleges. She drove him to CMU to meet coaches and for summer orientation and did the honors of dropping Dailey off at CMU for his freshman year. But she wasn't alone. Several other teachers and community members chipped in for fees and travel expenses.

"Daniel Dailey is a very special kid who is dear to my heart," said Davis, a 1997 graduate of Eureka High School and a VICC participant herself. "He has an infectious smile and a great talent. He reminds me of myself, being the first in my family to go to college. I didn't have much at all when I went, and I didn't want him to have to worry about that when he left this fall."

Davis entered the VICC program in fourth grade, ran track and was a cheerleader. She has been a PE teacher for 14 years, one in the Rockwood district and 13 at Valley Park.

"I honestly believe I wouldn't have had the opportunities or tools needed to go to college if not for the VICC program," Davis said. "I learned a lot about diversity and communication with other people. I had many teachers who believed in me who helped me along my journey, some of whom I still keep in touch with today. I wasn't planning on going to college until my cheerleading coach at the time, Ellen Hinds-Garner, made me apply and fill out my FAFSA."

"I am only paying it forward," Davis continued. "I was just doing what other teachers did for me, a poor broke girl who lived in the city."

## STATS

- ✓ **Voted as Most Valuable Runner on the team two years in a row**
  - ✓ **Valley Park history-making accomplishments:**
    - ✓ First in district to qualify for State
    - ✓ First to medal at State
    - ✓ First two-time State qualifier
    - ✓ First to qualify in two events at State
- Fastest times:
- ✓ 100 meter — 11.1 seconds
  - ✓ 200 meter — 22.9 seconds
  - ✓ 400 meter — 51.9 seconds

# Message from the CEO

## St. Louis has many points of pride — including our VICC program



David S. Glaser

As a lifelong resident of the St. Louis metropolitan area, I recognize that I am slightly biased when I state that I think St. Louis is a wonderful place to live and that we have many things to be proud of. Most people associate the Gateway Arch with the city of St. Louis. I still remember watching as the final piece was put in place when it was built. It indeed is an architectural marvel and, at 630 feet in height, is America's tallest monument.

High on my list is also the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team. St. Louis is recognized as one of the best baseball towns in the nation. The excitement of attending a Cardinals game is truly electric. At nearly 1,293 acres, Forest Park is 50 percent larger than Central Park. The park is also home to five major attractions, including the St. Louis Art Museum, the St. Louis Zoo, the St. Louis Science Center, the Missouri History Museum and The Muny Amphitheatre. The St. Louis Zoo is regularly recognized as one of the top zoos in the nation and, unlike almost all of the others, admission is free! The Muny is an outdoor amphitheater that seats about 11,000 people, making it the largest theatre of its type in the nation. In addition, there are 1,500 free seats available for everyone to enjoy. St. Louis is also home to the Missouri Botanical Garden, which is the oldest botanical garden in operation in America and also features a geodesic dome called the Climatron.

St. Louis also has many outstanding restaurants. When I travel I don't even consider eating Italian food, because I know it won't measure up to what is available right here on The Hill. We are the birthplace of toasted ravioli as well as gooey butter cake — two items that are generally not available in other towns. When you are ready for dessert, you can visit Ted Drewes and get what has been rated the best ice cream (yes, I know it is really frozen custard) in the nation.

We also have museums of interest to people young and old including the City Museum, which is a unique all-ages playground, as well as the Magic House, which has been rated one of the top children's museums in the nation. I can't fail to mention several other entertainment options, including the fabulous Fox Theatre, the St. Louis Symphony, which is the second oldest symphony in the nation, and numerous other entertainment venues throughout the region.

Something else of which St. Louis should be proud is our St. Louis desegregation program. As I have learned while serving as the chief executive officer of this organization for the past eight years, our program is one of the longest continuously operating voluntary desegregation programs in the nation. As further described and featured in a recent education podcast, our program has been in existence since 1982 and, since its inception, has served over 70,000 students and made a positive difference in the lives of many students in the St. Louis metropolitan area. So when you join with me and celebrate the many outstanding and wonderful things about the St. Louis metropolitan area, please add our program to that list of the things of which we can all be proud.

David S. Glaser • [dglaser@choicecorp.org](mailto:dglaser@choicecorp.org) • 314.721.8422, ext. 3013

A newsletter published by the Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation to spread the word about the positive things happening in the voluntary transfer program and to offer educators a glimpse at innovative programs helping students succeed at area schools.

**David S. Glaser**, C.E.O.  
[dglaser@choicecorp.org](mailto:dglaser@choicecorp.org)  
314.721.8422, ext. 3013

**Eileen P. Duggan**  
Feature writer and editor  
[DugganPubs@sbcglobal.net](mailto:DugganPubs@sbcglobal.net)  
314-647-7646

**Judy Dodd**  
graphic designer  
[doddjudy@sbcglobal.net](mailto:doddjudy@sbcglobal.net)  
636-346-9584

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### Lead Reach Teach

"We do team building, and it's very interesting and engaging," said Abdou. "We went to a business and learned about how start-ups work and being an entrepreneur."

Frolic Inn kennel owner John Madlinger hosted students in the Lead Reach Teach program. He shared with them some of the details of running his Wildwood animal boarding and daycare facility and then put them to work.

"Kennels are constantly in flux because animals wear things out," said Madlinger. He had some students take out some older kennels for cats

that were showing signs of wear, while other kids cleaned up an area around the pool to make way for a big dog park.

Eureka sophomore Coreyn recommended the program. "We're gaining job experience, we're working toward our education and building goals and helping us figure out what we're going to do with our careers. We're going on college tours — opportunities that students don't usually get."

Hogan plans to repeat the successful program next summer.