



## For Immediate Release

October 19, 2009

Contacts: Brian Adkisson

314.289.4016, [brian-a@keeparthappening.org](mailto:brian-a@keeparthappening.org)

Ellen Futterman

314.289.4011, [ellen-f@keeparthappening.org](mailto:ellen-f@keeparthappening.org)

## Arts and Education Council Announces 2010 St. Louis Arts Awards Honorees

St. Louis, MO – The Arts and Education Council is proud to announce the 2010 St. Louis Arts Awards honorees. Presented since 1992, the St. Louis Arts Award is the preeminent award honoring individuals and organizations who achieve a legacy of artistic excellence, and businesses that enrich St. Louis' arts and cultural community. This year two new awards, *Arts Collaboration* and *Champion for the Arts*, will be given to acknowledge the diverse, growing and evolving St. Louis arts community.

The 19<sup>th</sup> annual celebration will be held Monday, January 25, 2010 in the Khorassan Ballroom at the Chase Park Plaza beginning with a cocktail reception at 6:00 pm, followed by dinner at 7:00 pm. The event will be chaired by James Castellano, Chairman of RubinBrown LLP, and his wife, Karen. Serving as co-chairs are Dick Fleming, President and CEO of the St. Louis RCGA, and his wife, Sarah Smith.

### Lifetime Achievement in the Arts – Stephanie Riven

- As founder and executive director of COCA (Center of Creative Arts) for the past 22 years, Stephanie Riven has created a vibrant organization bringing COCA from a small group with a budget of \$80,000 to the fifth largest multidisciplinary arts center in the country with a budget of \$5 million. Beginning with 40 children in the first set of classes in 1987, COCA now serves over 50,000 people annually through classes, performances and exhibitions. The dance program has led to the eventual employment of COCA dance students in some of the most prestigious dance companies in the world including The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre. Riven has also helped to raise more than \$30 million over the last decade for the organization.

## Excellence in the Arts – David Robertson

- As Music Director for the past five years at the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, David Robertson is considered to be one of today's most important conductors. His consummate musicianship, fresh stylistic instincts and extensive mastery of orchestral as well as operatic repertoire have secured strong relationships for him with major orchestras worldwide. Highlights of Mr. Robertson's current season with the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra include a tour to Carnegie Hall this past fall and a four-city California tour in the spring. He also is Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, a post he has held since 2005, and a regular guest conductor with other major American orchestras, including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and the San Francisco Symphony.

## Arts Collaboration – Citygarden

- This unique oasis, in the heart of downtown St. Louis, is a vibrant and serene blending of lush plantings and internationally renowned sculpture with delights of water, stone, architecture and design. The 2.9-acre public garden contains 24 pieces of sculpture by internationally renowned artists and is the result of a successful partnership between the private, non-profit, St. Louis-based Gateway Foundation and the City of St. Louis. Gateway funded more than \$25 million for the purchase of the sculpture, and the design and construction, while the City of St. Louis maintains it, providing water and electricity, and continues to own the land.

## Champion for the Arts – Regional Arts Commission

- Founded in 1985 and celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2010, the Regional Arts Commission (RAC) is dedicated to the cultivation, promotion and fostering of cultural programming in the St. Louis area. RAC receives its funding through a percentage of the hotel/motel sales tax in St. Louis city and county, and in turn awards grants to the arts community as well as provide technical, promotional and other support. Some of RAC's unique programs and initiatives include Arts Commandos, a corps of volunteers who carry out numerous projects for nonprofit arts and cultural organizations; Community Arts Training (CAT) Institute, which trains artists and others social service providers working in community settings and [artszipper.com](http://artszipper.com), the region's most comprehensive cultural calendar.

### Excellence in Philanthropy – Dr. Wilfred R. and Ann Lee Konneker

- Dr. Konneker, who earned his Ph.D. in physics from Washington University in 1950, founded Nuclear Consultants, the nation's first commercial supplier of radioactive isotopes for pharmaceutical purposes. The couple has established the Wilfred R. and Ann Lee Konneker Distinguished Professor of Physics in Arts & Sciences at Washington University and is receiving Washington University's prestigious Robert S. Brookings Award in November. Over the years, the Konnekers have been major supporters of the arts community, including the Sheldon Concert Hall and Arts Galleries, the Saint Louis Art Museum; the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, COCA and the Arts and Education Council.

### Corporate Support of the Arts – Ameren

- Giving back is a vital component of Ameren's corporate culture. Since 1944, when the Ameren Charitable Trust was established, more than \$62 million (\$5 million annually) has been awarded by the company to thousands of community groups and institutions, including dozens of St. Louis area arts and cultural organizations such as the Saint Louis Art Museum, Black Rep, Dance St. Louis, the Arts and Education Council, The Muny and COCA, among many others.

### Art Educator of the Year – Beverly Whittington

- Music education is not only a career for Beverly Whittington, it also is her passion. As music educator at Ames Visual and Performing Arts School in the St. Louis Public Schools, Ms. Whittington devotes herself every day to helping pre-kindergarteners to fifth graders find creative outlets and emotional fulfillment through music instruction and vocal development. Her commitment goes beyond the classroom, be it driving pupils to Children's Opera rehearsals or spending her "free" time at professional development conferences and workshops to ensure the arts curriculum she imparts is as compelling and as vital as possible.

For sponsorships opportunities and ticket information, please contact the Arts and Education Council at 314.289.4003 or visit [www.KeepArtsHappening.org](http://www.KeepArtsHappening.org).

Since 1963, the Arts and Education Council has raised over \$100 million in private funding for the arts – an important task that directly affects the quality of life of our region. With those funds, the Council annually assists approximately 80 non-profit arts and arts education organizations. Additionally, the Council provides office space, state-of-the-art technology, rehearsal and performance space for 16 arts nonprofit organizations in the Centene Center for Arts and Education, a unique arts incubator located in Grand Center. Visit [www.KeepArtsHappening.org](http://www.KeepArtsHappening.org) or call 314.289.4000 for more information.

###