



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COCA ANNOUNCES NEW BOARD PRESIDENT AND ADDITIONS TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

COCA Ready for Next Chapter with New Leadership in Kristin Johnson, Principal and Chief Transformation Officer at Edward Jones, as President of COCA's Board of Directors

ST. LOUIS (September 14, 2023)—[COCA](http://COCA.org), the fourth largest multidisciplinary community arts center in the U.S. and a leader in innovative arts education, announced the appointment of key leadership to its Executive Committee, including Kristin Johnson as Board President, and nine new members to its Board of Directors. The Board will lead COCA into its next chapter as the organization further expands its impact and creates an environment that fosters artistic excellence, cultivates creativity, and nurtures the next generation of artists.

"I am excited to partner with COCA President & CEO Indigo Sams on this next chapter of growth, building on the successes of those leaders who have come before us and taking the organization to new heights," said Kristin Johnson, President of COCA's Board of Directors. "Being part of the COCA family for many years, I know firsthand the power of arts and education in building a vibrant St. Louis that is creative, connected, and inclusive."

Kristin Johnson has been a COCA Board Member since 2002 and joined the Executive Committee in 2008, serving in a variety of Vice President roles. As a former ballet dancer, Johnson is a strong advocate for the arts in St. Louis.

As Chief Transformation Officer at Edward Jones, Kristin works to empower, inspire, and mobilize the firm's 52,000 employees to grow their impact on the clients, colleagues, and communities they serve. She joined Edward Jones in 1995 and has held positions within the firm's Internal Audit department, Operations division, Retirement Services and Client Reporting areas, and Human Resources.

Johnson graduated from the University of Illinois with a bachelor's degree in accountancy. She earned a master's in information management from Webster University and completed Washington University's executive MBA program. She is active in several organizations and serves on the boards of Webster University, the St. Louis Fashion Fund, and Mercy Hospital St. Louis.

Four board members were appointed to join COCA's Executive Committee: **Meg Schneithorst**, Treasurer, Co-Chair of Finance Committee; **Ricky Nix, Jr.**, Vice President, Co-Chair Board Nominating; **Tyler Meyr**, Vice President, Building & Grounds Committee; and **Sherri Tichenor**, Vice President, Co-Chair of Finance Committee.

2023–2024 Executive Committee

Kristin Johnson, Chief Transformation Officer, Edward Jones

Hope Abramov, Partner, Thompson Coburn, LLP

Elizabeth Mannen Berges, Managing Director – Investment Officer, Mannen Financial Group of Wells Fargo Advisors

Bill Bradley, Chief Marketing & Communications Officer, Schnucks Markets

Hunter Brown, Partner, Moneta Group

Suzanne Johnson, Community Volunteer
Pauline Kim, Daniel Noyes Kirby Professor of Law, Washington University School of Law
Tyler Meyr, Executive Director, Lamar Johnson Collaborative
Ricky Nix, Jr., President, Butler's Pantry
Meg Schneithorst, President, St. Louis Region, Enterprise Bank & Trust
Brian Thomas, Head of School, Proctor Academy
Sherri Tichenor, Head, Acct. BP CS, Global Seeds & US, Bayer U.S. – Crop Science
Susan Werner, Designer, Whimsy Rose

2023–2024 Board Members

Lael Bagnall, Community Volunteer and Educator*
Nancy Barnes-Ault, VP & Community Relations Officer, Regions Bank
Ann Beatty, Founder/CEO, Beatty Leadership
Claudia Brodie, Senior Vice President, McCormack Baron Salazar, Inc.
Christy Buchanan, Director + Strategic Growth, Anders CPAs + Advisors
Sheila Burkett, CEO & Founder, Spry Digital
Kelly Doria, Senior Director, Communications, Ameren
Gina Eanes, Financial Advisor, Prudential Advisors*
Erica Glanz, Sr. Counsel-Employment & Sr. Director of Diversity and Inclusion, Bunzl Distribution
Lisa Guirl, Community Volunteer*
Donna LaVoie, Dean, College of Arts & Sciences, Saint Louis University*
Steve Mackin, President and CEO, Mercy*
Melissa Merlin, Partner, Husch Blackwell LLP
Daffney Moore, Consultant
John K. Nickel, Co-Chairman and Co-Owner, Switch*
Kanika Pandey, Performing Artist, Indian Classical Vocalist
Riisa Rawlins-Easley, Chief Operations & Strategy Officer, St. Louis Regional Health Commission*
Rachel Seward, SVP, Corporate Communications & CSR, MiTek
Shuntae Shields-Ryan, Chief Marketing & Communications Officer, United Way of Greater St. Louis*
Anna Tegethoff, Director of Philanthropy, Tegethoff Development*

**New Board Member for 2023–2024*

COCA's operational budget is \$8 million for its current fiscal year, up \$1.4 million from last year, as the organization increases vocal and theatre program offerings and expands arts outreach across the region.

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ABOUT COCA

COCA's mission is to *enrich lives and build community through the arts*. With a commitment to equity and access, COCA serves as a regional hub for learning in and through the arts for all ages from all backgrounds. One of the most diverse cultural institutions in St. Louis, COCA serves more than 50,000 students, audience members, artists, and families from more than 200 zip codes across the St. Louis region every year. The fourth largest multi-disciplinary arts organization in the country, COCA is committed to supporting the vitality and creativity of more than 200 artists at the heart of their work in schools, community centers, local business, cultural organizations, and onsite at its campus in University City.