Financial Empowerment

Tishaura O. Jones
Treasurer
City of St. Louis, MO
What does the Treasurer do?

- Chief Cash Management and Investment Officer
- Process payroll for all city employees
- Parking Supervisor
  - >7,000 metered spaces
  - 6 garages, 2 surface lots
  - Parking Enforcement
- NEW: Office of Financial Empowerment
Snapshot of St. Louis, MO

- Population - 314,000 and falling
- Majority minority city
  - 57% people of color, 47.5% African-American
  - Largest concentration of Bosnians outside of Serbia
- Median income - $38k
- 30.9% of African-American households in poverty
- 34.6% of African-American households have zero net worth
- 66% of African-American households unbanked
- 29.9% of African-American households underbanked
- 31% of African-Americans are homeowners

Source: 2019 Prosperity Now Scorecard
Difference in credit scores

732

552

180 points

Source: Urban Institute
Office of Financial Empowerment

- Passed by local ordinance in 2015
- Funded by residual parking revenue
- Partners with financial institutions and others to provide:
  - Financial education classes
  - Free credit counseling
  - Workplace financial wellness tools
  - College Kids Children’s Savings Account Program
College Kids

- Provides all kindergarten students in public and charter schools in the city with $50 savings account for college
- Seed money and overhead paid for by residual parking revenue
- Beginning fifth year next month
- >13,500 children
- >$950K in assets
How does it work?

- Students receive bonus deposits when parents/guardians participate in financial empowerment courses
- Deposits made by family/friends matched dollar for dollar up to the first $100
- Additional incentives for good attendance
- Children w/less than $500 saved are three times more likely to attend college and are four times more likely to graduate from college*

Source: Washington University, Brown School of Social Work
My name is Chase Simmons.
There’s no better investment than in the future of our children.
- Treasurer Jones