



2025
Annual Report

JSMF

Letter from the President & CEO

Over the past year, St. Louis was reminded that progress is rarely linear. The tornado that struck our region took lives, damaged homes, disrupted schools, and displaced families in neighborhoods already carrying significant economic burdens. In moments like these the strength of a community is tested. So is the strength of the relationships and institutions that support it.

At the James S. McDonnell Foundation, our mission is to improve economic mobility for St. Louisans facing the starkest disparities. That work does not pause when challenges arise. If anything, those moments make even clearer why it matters.

When the tornado hit, partners across the region moved quickly. Families were connected to housing assistance, social services, early childhood supports, and education resources. These efforts were not separate from our strategy. They showed its value.

Throughout 2025, organizations supported by the Foundation expanded pathways into quality jobs, strengthened early childhood systems, increased access to capital for small businesses, and helped families build financial stability. We also continued investing in the civic infrastructure that helps leaders and organizations work across sectors, respond to challenges, and co-design solutions that are stronger because they are built together.

This work is urgent. Children born to low- and moderate-income households in our region today earn less by adulthood than children born 15 years earlier – a sign that the region's economic strengths are not yet reaching every family.

Uneven access to opportunity persists across neighborhoods. That reality will not change quickly or through isolated efforts. It requires sustained investment, serious collaboration, and a long-term commitment to regional progress that is more broadly shared.

Across the region, we continue to see creativity, resilience, and determination in every neighborhood. This report highlights organizations and initiatives helping move St. Louis in a stronger direction. Each represents a practical step toward a more inclusive regional economy.

The challenges facing our region are real. So is the commitment of the people working every day to meet them. JSMF will remain steady in supporting that work and in partnering with others to help build prosperity that works for St. Louis.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason Q. Purnell". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Jason Q. Purnell, Ph.D., MPH
President & CEO

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Mission & Vision

At JSMF, we aim to help build prosperity that works for St. Louis. What follows is an overview of how we advance our vision for shared prosperity and quality of life for the St. Louis region, with inclusive and equitable economic growth as our North Star.

JSMF



Mission

We invest in organizations and initiatives focused on improving economic mobility for St. Louisans facing the starkest disparities.



Vision

We envision a thriving St. Louis region where inclusive growth elevates shared prosperity and quality of life.



Guiding Principles

- We are conveners and collaborators.
- We are committed to an evidence-based approach.
- We strive to be responsive to the community.
- We seek true partnership.
- We advance equity authentically.

Areas of Focus



Civic Infrastructure



Small & Midsize Businesses



Wealth Building & Protection



Workforce

Since transitioning to a St. Louis-focused mission, **JSMF has approved or funded 48 local investments between December 2023 and December 2025**, including two impact investments. Each of these investments aligns with one or more of JSMF's core areas of focus and contributes to the shared goal of building an inclusive economy where **all St. Louisans have the opportunity to thrive**.

To advance its mission and vision, JSMF focuses on four interconnected areas that reinforce one another and offer opportunities for collaboration and impact: Civic Infrastructure, Small and Midsize Businesses, Wealth Building and Protection, and Workforce.

Each area of focus includes key strategies designed to help create the conditions necessary to achieve our long-term desired state. For more information on areas of focus and tactics, see [Appendix A](#).

Our objectives aim to move the needle in areas that will increase the income and wealth of our priority populations and contribute to overall regional growth and prosperity. Those priority populations include:

- Individuals and families with low-to-moderate income
- Residents of the City of St. Louis and JSMF North St. Louis County (19 ZIP codes, including University City)
- Groups excluded from economic opportunity

AREA OF FOCUS



Civic Infrastructure

Strengthen and support regional leadership capacity



Small & Midsize Businesses

Support the growth of small and midsize businesses



Wealth Building & Protection

Help individuals and communities build and protect wealth



Workforce

Increase opportunities and enhance systems

TACTICS

- Strengthen collaborative capacity to drive change
- Support current and future leaders to impact policy and actions across sectors
- Enable shared knowledge development and learning
- Help the formation of a shared narrative about our region and destiny

- Increase access to capital and capacity-building supports
- Strengthen connections to drive new business opportunities

- Increase access to low-cost, low-barrier financial products and services
- Build the capacity of community-based organizations to support wealth-building
- Attract new investment to the region

- Expand quality Early Childhood Education
- Wrap-around support for students and job seekers
- Job seeker, post-secondary education and industry integration for high-wage/ quality work

DESIRED LONG-TERM STATE

- Coalitions have the resources – and the experience – to act boldly together
- Civic leaders are knowledgeable about and champion economic mobility and practice collaborative leadership
- Shared data and information drive understanding and action
- St. Louis tells a shared story of progress and possibility that is known locally and nationally

- Capacity building and capital of different types is readily available and accessible to small, midsize, and diverse-owned businesses to scale
- Established networks and pathways help local companies in high-wage industries reach customers and thrive.

- Innovative and effective financial tools help priority populations build and protect wealth
- Community organizations are equipped and resourced to accelerate wealth-building efforts
- Investments flow into under-resourced communities to support long-term prosperity

- All children in priority populations have access to the education and support they need to be ready for kindergarten
- Students and job seekers receive coordinated support – including social-emotional, health, academic, and family resources – to help them succeed
- Clear pathways to quality high-wage careers exist, with or without a college degree

St. Louis Context

This section highlights the assets and opportunities shaping economic mobility across the St. Louis region. Many regional indicators reflect a strong foundation, including solid employment levels, competitive household incomes, and meaningful wealth-building capacity. At the same time, access to these opportunities is not yet consistent across all communities. JSMF and its partners are working to build on these existing assets – ensuring that more St. Louisans, in more places, can fully participate in and benefit from the region’s economic potential.

JSMF



St. Louis stands at a pivotal moment

The St. Louis metropolitan area is home to 2.8 million people. Between 2022 and 2024, the metro grew by less than 0.5%. Among JSMF’s comparison metros (see [Appendix B](#)), growth has varied widely – from low single-digit increases in some regions to more than 5% in Austin, TX, and Grand Rapids, MI.

In recent years, the region’s Hispanic and Latino communities have expanded significantly (with an increase of more than 20,000 people between 2022 and 2024), contributing to the region’s cultural and economic vitality. Meanwhile, the City of St. Louis continued to lose residents (down 2.4% since 2022). Population shifts point to opportunities to better align growth and long-term prosperity.

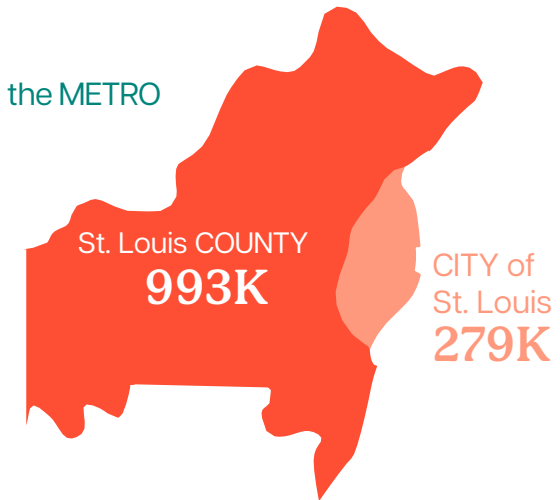
The **region’s labor market reflects a strong foundation**, with an employment rate of 96.4% in 2024, comparable to peer regions such as Kansas City (96.8%) and Nashville, TN (96.6%). **Labor force participation (65.6%) also exceeds the national average**, indicating that many residents are actively contributing to and benefiting from the region’s economy.

Across the region, employment trends point to both progress and opportunity. **Employment increased modestly across the metro and in St. Louis County** between 2022 and 2024, while the City of St. Louis overall experienced slight declines (from 95.6% to 95.0%), with employment for Black residents in the City declining by a more significant 13.9%. Similarly, the metro area’s unemployment rate improved (4.0% to 3.6%) from 2022 to 2024 but worsened in the City (4.4% to 5.0%). These patterns highlight the importance of strengthening employment pathways to ensure that all residents can fully access and benefit from the region’s labor market.

Taken together, these trends underscore both the region’s strong labor market assets and the opportunity to expand access so that more residents can participate in that economic growth.



2.8 M
People in the METRO



Source: ACS 1-year estimate (2024)

STL METRO

96.4% employment rate

65.6% labor force participation rate

3.6% unemployment rate

US OVERALL

95.4%

64.0%

4.6%

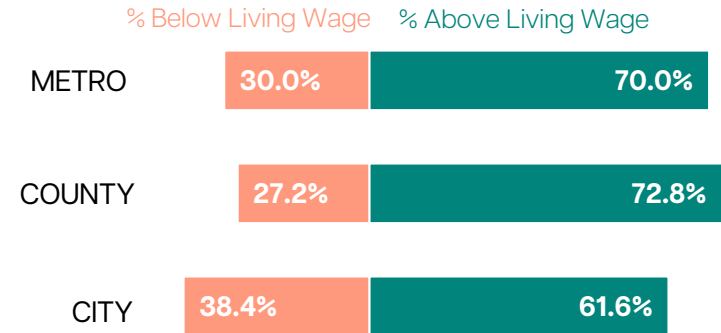
Region demonstrates foundational wealth-building capacity

A strong regional economy creates the conditions for financial stability and upward mobility. Across the St. Louis metro, many households are achieving income levels that support long-term stability and upward mobility, reflecting a strong economic base.

In 2024, **70.0% of married-couple families in the metro earned above a living wage, outpacing several comparison regions**, including Nashville (60.7%), Columbus (61.3%), and Denver (61.8%). At the same time, these gains are **not experienced equally across all households and geographies**. A smaller share reached regional living-wage thresholds in the City of St. Louis (61.6%) and among single-earner households (60.7%), highlighting an opportunity to expand access to stable, well-paying employment. Expanding access to living-wage opportunities, especially for single earners and families in the City, represents a critical pathway to ensuring more households can build on this foundation.

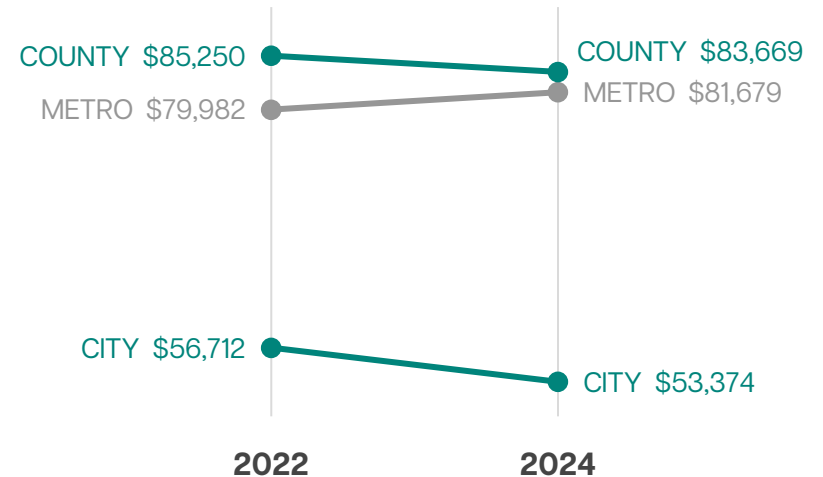
In 2024, the **median household income across the metro slightly exceeded the national median** (\$81,679 vs. \$81,604) and **outpaced several comparable regions**, including Cincinnati (\$81,489), Indianapolis (\$80,239), and Pittsburgh (\$77,214). Household incomes remain highest in St. Louis County; however, residents in both the **City of St. Louis** and **St. Louis County** saw **small income declines** in recent years.

Married Couples with Children Households Below/Above Living Wage



Source: ACS, 1-year estimates (2024)

Adjusted* Median Household Income



Source: ACS, 1-year estimates (2022, 2024)

* 2022 income values are adjusted for inflation and expressed in 2024 dollars to ensure comparability across the years.

St. Louis **demonstrates significant capacity for wealth-building, supported by strong homeownership rates and relatively high household net worth.** Homeownership, a critical pathway to generational wealth, remains a key regional asset.

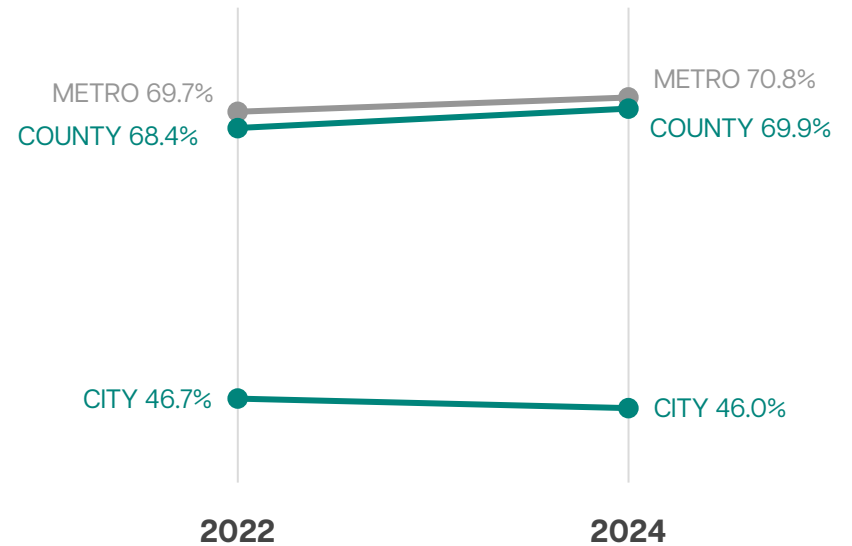
In 2024, **the percentage of owner households in the St. Louis metro area was relatively high (70.8%),** compared with some metros of interest, such as Cincinnati (68.5%), Kansas City (66.8%), and Indianapolis (66.7%).

At the same time, **access to homeownership and the wealth-building opportunities it enables varied across communities:** 78% of White households owned homes, compared to just 45% of Black households (2024). There were some modest improvements from 2022 to 2024; notably, **homeownership increased in the metro and St. Louis County but declined in the City of St. Louis.** Expanding access to homeownership, particularly in communities where ownership rates remain lower, represents a powerful opportunity to build wealth more broadly.

This pattern is also reflected in measures of net worth. By age 35, **the median household net worth in the St. Louis metro exceeded the national median (\$255,553 vs. \$225,545)** and compares favorably with peer regions, such as Detroit (\$250,084), Kansas City (\$219,101), and Columbus (\$200,344), demonstrating strong overall wealth-building potential. However, closing the more-than-fivefold net-worth gap between the broader metro and the City and majority-Black ZIPs represents one of the region's largest opportunities for shared wealth-building.

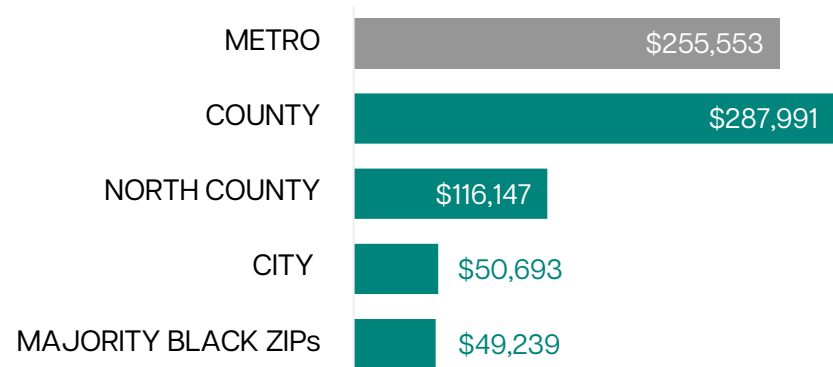
Strengthening pathways to asset ownership and wealth accumulation will be key to translating the region's existing strengths into more widely shared prosperity.

Percent Owner Households



Source: ACS, 1-year estimate (2022, 2024)

Median Household Net Worth



Source: ESRI (2024)

Note: JMSF North County consists of 19 ZIP codes in north St. Louis County, and Majority Black ZIPs consists of all ZIP codes within the St. Louis MSA that have a Black population greater than 50%

For the next generation, strengthening pathways to economic mobility is critical

St. Louis has many of the foundational elements needed to support upward mobility, including a relatively strong labor market and meaningful wealth-building capacity. At the same time, **outcomes for children vary depending on the income of the families into which they were born.**

Recent data show children born to families with low and moderate incomes in our region earned less than the previous generation. According to the 2024 [Opportunity Atlas](#), children born in 1992 to low- and moderate-income families in the St. Louis region earned \$27,250 by age 27. That was down from \$28,966 for those born in 1978, a **5.9% decline that exceeded the national decrease of 4.2%**. These estimates are adjusted for the inflation rates at the time that they were measured to make them comparable across time. Meanwhile, children from higher-income families saw gains.

As a result, St. Louis ranked 32nd out of 50 major metros in economic mobility progress. The earnings gap between low-income Black people and low-income White people born in 1992 and raised in St. Louis decreased by 40%, or roughly \$5,600, compared to the earnings gap for those born 15 years earlier. While **racial gaps in economic mobility have narrowed slightly, class divides have widened.** Opportunity is shaped by where a child is born and the resources with which their family starts.

The St. Louis region is anchored by strong economic assets, including high employment, solid household incomes, and meaningful wealth-building capacity. Many households are achieving financial stability and participating in a relatively strong labor market, while high homeownership rates and net worth underscore the region's potential for long-term wealth creation. At the same time, **access to these opportunities remains uneven across neighborhoods**, limiting many residents' ability to fully participate in the region's prosperity.

This is **a call to act with greater focus and urgency.** St. Louis stands at a pivotal moment with strong assets, growing capacity, and committed partners. The challenge ahead is to ensure that **growth is measured** not only by regional averages but also **by whether it is felt in more neighborhoods and by more families.** Our region must leverage its assets to expand opportunities and build a more inclusive economy where prosperity is shared across communities. The economic vitality of our region ultimately depends on more people having access to more resources.

**St. Louis
ranks 32nd
out of 50
major metros
in economic
mobility
progress.**

By the Numbers

In this section, we highlight JSMF investments in communities working toward change. Since transitioning from its previous mission, JSMF has funded or approved **48 St. Louis-focused projects from 2023 to 2025** (including 2 impact investments). Here we provide an overview of the investment portfolio by areas of focus, tactics employed, and investment timelines.

JSMF



Number of St. Louis-focused investments working in each area of focus*

* Some investments work in more than one focus area



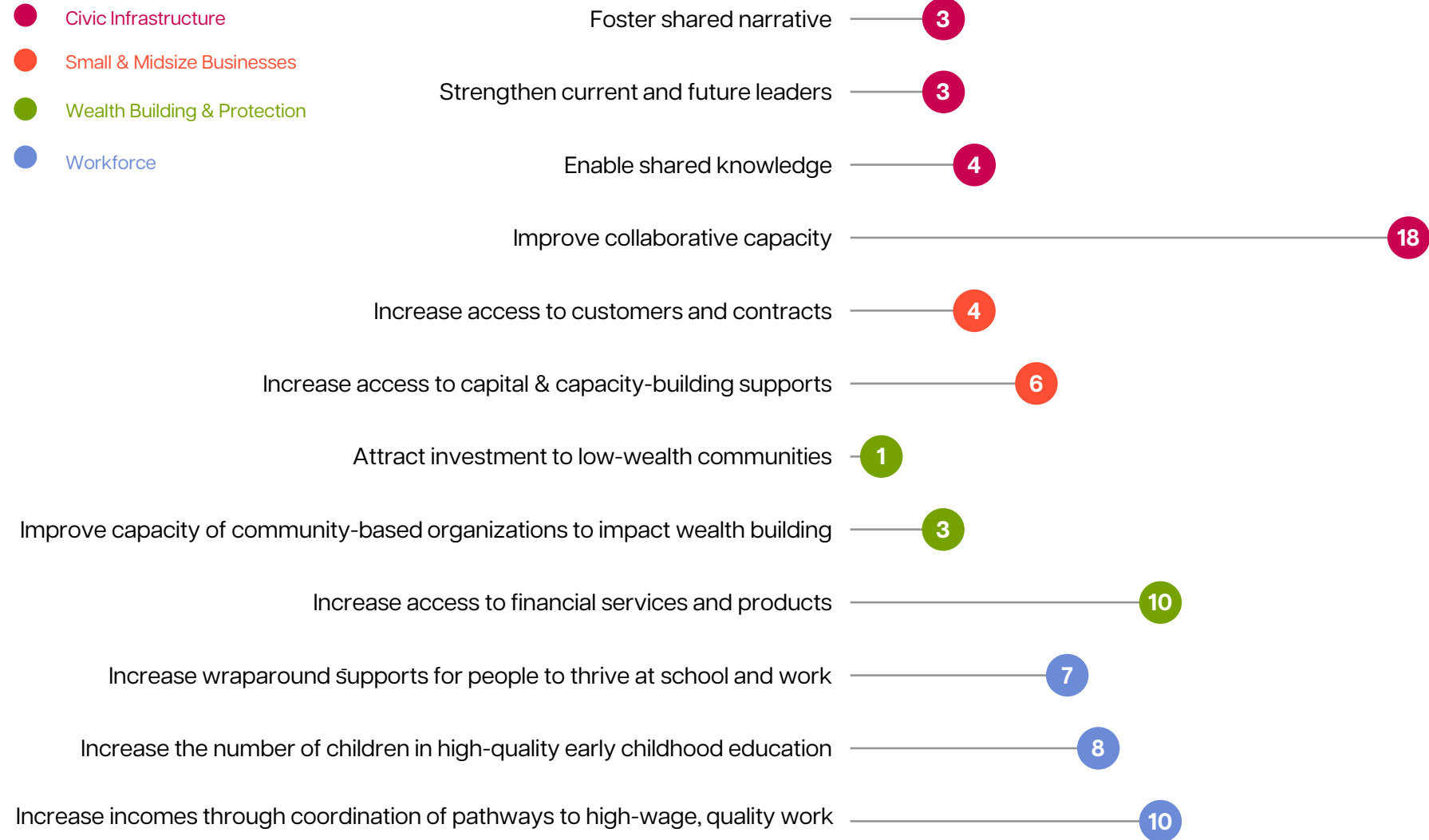
JMSF has committed to 48 STL-focused investments totaling over \$90 million, of which nearly half had been distributed by the end of 2025

See [Appendix A](#) for more details

JSMF provided nearly \$3 million in time-sensitive tornado relief grants to six organizations

Tactics Employed

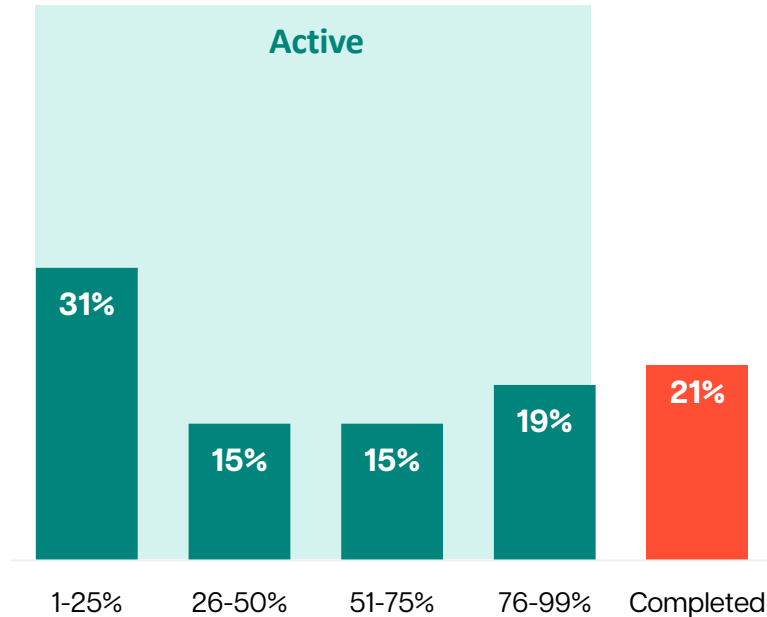
St. Louis-focused investeeuse a variety of tactics to advance JSMF objectives. The chart below shows the number of investments that employ specific tactics in each area of focus, with some investments using multiple tactics.



Investment Timelines

As of the end of 2025, the 48 approved St. Louis-focused investments were at various stages of planning and implementation. Across all St. Louis-focused initiatives, the time to planned completion ranged from 4 to 84 months, with an average of 28 months (over 2 years).

Nearly half (46%) of the investments approved by the end of 2025 are less than halfway through their projected timelines. Ten investments have been completed or are no longer active. Additional details about each investment are provided in [Appendix A](#).



	Investments (#)	Investments (%)
1-25%	15	31%
26-50%	7	15%
51-75%	7	15%
76-99%	9	19%
Completed	10	21%

Signals of Progress

This section highlights cumulative contributions to the Foundation's short-term goals from across the portfolio as one early signal of progress toward creating the conditions for inclusive growth and economic mobility.

JSMF



We reflect on the ways JSMF investments are advancing desired changes in our region, including the extent to which they have contributed to short-term goals set by the Foundation.

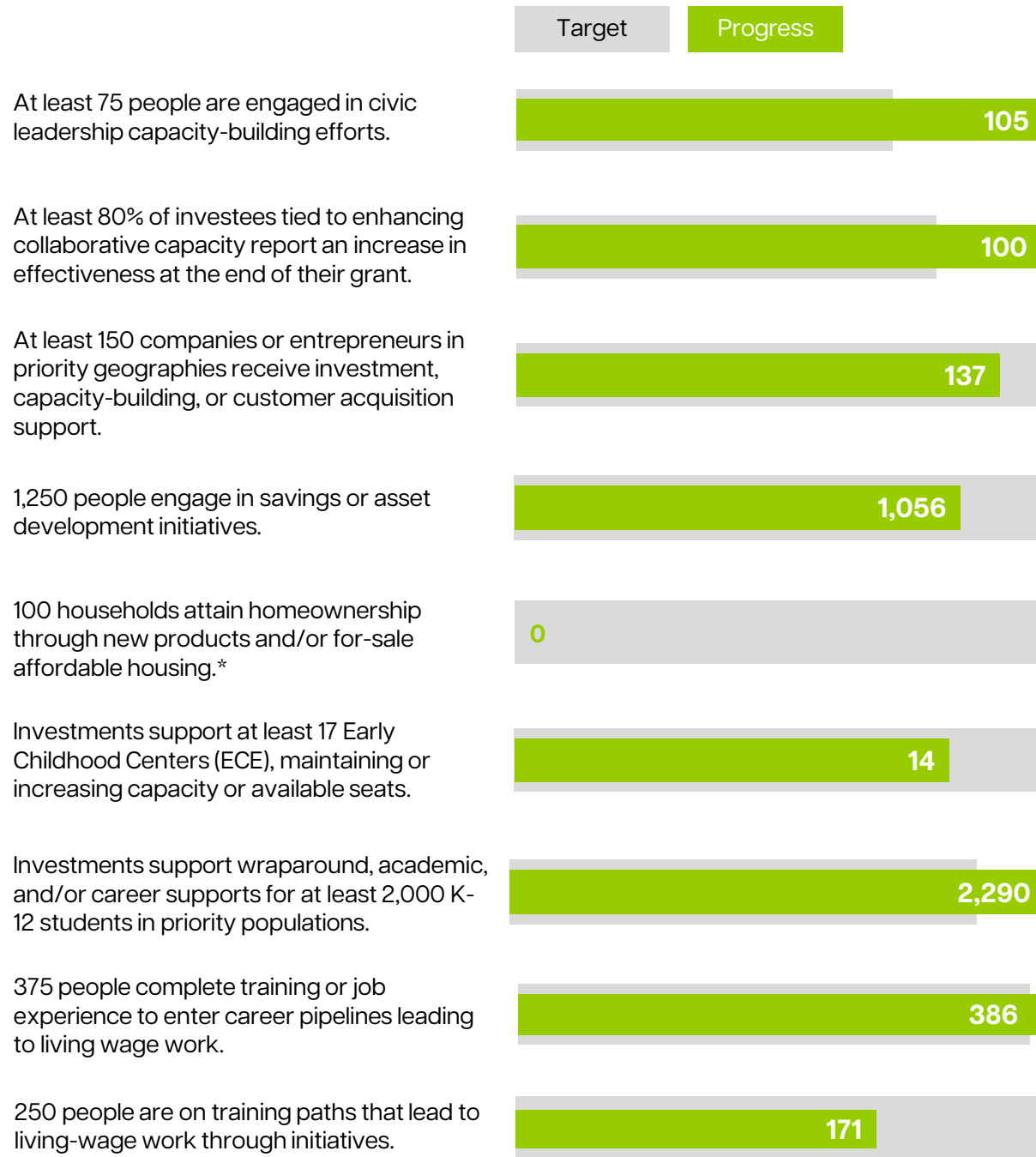


JSMF Short-Term Goals

In 2025, JSMF set short-term, intermediate, and long-term goals for each area of focus. Targets were informed by numerous population-level measures (e.g., living wage, net worth, homeownership) and by what it will take for every community in the region to thrive. Setting clear horizons helps the Foundation track how conditions are changing and where to invest next.

The next page shows cumulative progress through year-end 2025 toward the short-term goals JSMF aims to achieve by the end of 2026.

Progress on JSMF Short-Term Goals



As of the end of 2025, JSMF had met or exceeded four out of nine goals, all targeted for achievement by the end of 2026.

Note: *First investment tied to this goal launched in early 2026

Investment Spotlights

This section spotlights five of JSMF's current investments, 4theVille, Arch Grants, IFF, Invest STL, and the UMSL School of Engineering, as they address challenges ranging from underrepresented entrepreneurs facing limited access to capital to the widespread shortage of early childhood education seats in St. Louis.

JSMF



Investment Spotlight



Arch Grants

The Challenge

Underrepresented entrepreneurs often lack access to capital that could help them scale their businesses, and many have to dilute their ownership stake to secure financing.

How It Works

Companies in the Arch Grants portfolio can apply for a loan through the new [Founder Lending Program](#). If the startups meet minimum eligibility requirements, they can go through a traditional underwriting process with St. Louis Community Credit Union. **Arch Grants provides collateral to guarantee the loans**, mitigating lending risk. Meanwhile, the businesses have the potential to grow and hire more workers. As the loans are repaid, that capital is recycled for other entrepreneurs who may need it.

With a \$900,000 grant from JSMF, Arch Grants aims to provide **18 entrepreneurs** with investment, capacity-building, and customer acquisition support.



Investment Spotlight



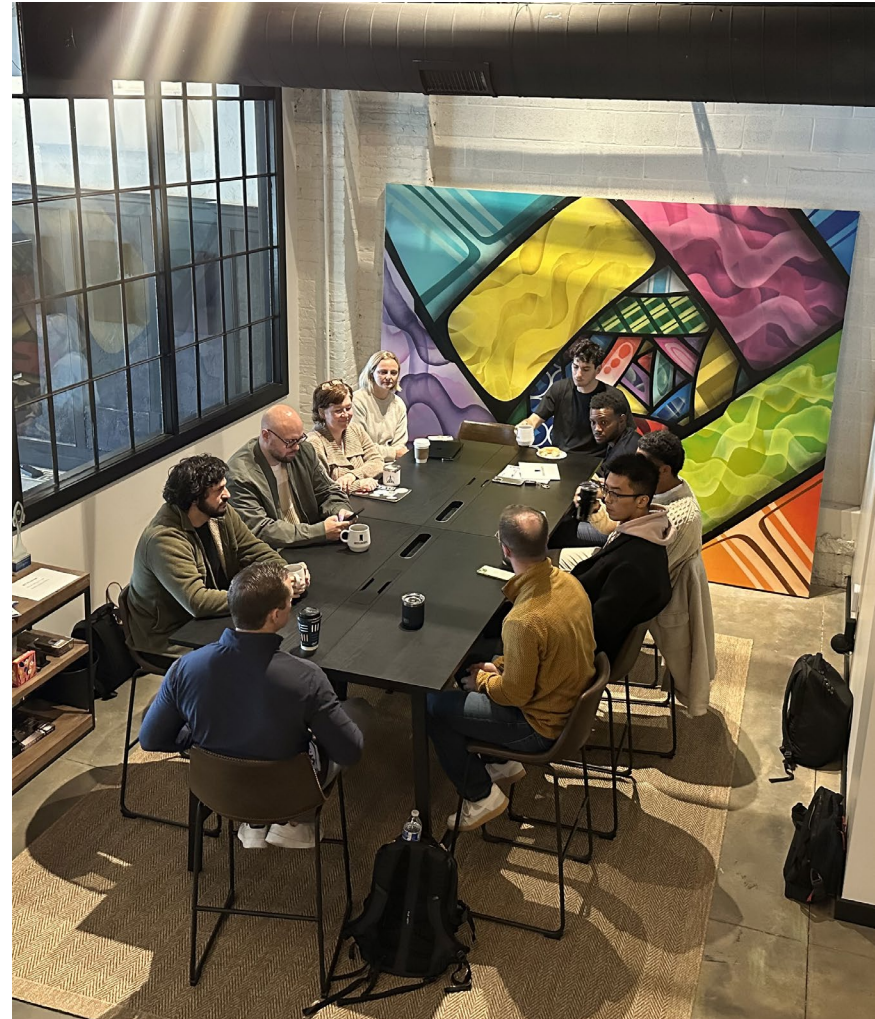
Arch Grants

Why it Matters

Over the years, Arch Grants has heard from many company founders that if they had more flexibility early on, **they could have gone to market earlier or avoided diluting their ownership stake.** The new Founder Lending Program is a way for entrepreneurs who have already worked with Arch Grants in the past to **access financing without giving up equity in their companies.**

Adequate access to capital may also **prevent some companies from departing the St. Louis region for other opportunities.**

One of the requirements of the program is for companies to commit to at least one year of growth in St. Louis, creating more local economic impact and opportunity.



Investment Spotlight



IFF

The Challenge

Even before the May 2025 tornado, the St. Louis region faced a **shortage of at least 20,000 early childhood education seats.**

How It Works

IFF is a Midwestern community development financial institution that provides nonprofits with lending, development, and real estate solutions. One major focus of their work involves increasing and improving access to early childhood education. In St. Louis, that takes form as Joyful Spaces, a program that **empowers providers to assess their own facility needs, apply for funding to make improvements, and receive guidance throughout the process.**

With two investments from JSMF totaling more than \$800,000, IFF is supporting **facility improvements at seven early childhood centers** through Joyful Spaces and an **additional seven centers impacted by the tornado.**



Investment Spotlight



IFF

Why it Matters

Working parents need to feel confident that their children are being cared for in a safe, accessible, and enriching environment. By improving the quality of ECE facilities – **from large expansions all the way down to smaller projects like replacing a fence or a rusty railing** – IFF is investing in quality early education, which has a ripple effect across the entire region.

Further, this work is **expanding capacity for new or sustained seats by more than one-third at Joyful Spaces centers and protecting hundreds of early childhood education seats** that could have been lost due to the tornado.



Investment Spotlight



Invest STL and 4theVille

The Challenge

After the May 2025 tornado, **impacted St. Louis residents needed support with debris cleanup, housing stabilization, and basic needs**. As time has passed, the region's focus has shifted from immediate relief to long-term recovery efforts.

How It Works

One month after the tornado, Invest STL launched the Northside Resilience Fund, which provided **\$3,000 in direct, unrestricted cash to 1,378 affected households in North St. Louis City**.

JSMF's \$1 million investment supported 300 households.

A second JSMF grant of \$150,000 to Invest STL and 4theVille enhanced the organizations' capacity to coordinate immediate relief efforts in impacted communities. Invest STL and 4theVille are implementing a **system to document and address the relief and stabilization needs of more than 200 residents** and refer them to appropriate resources.



Investment Spotlight



Invest STL and 4theVille

Why it Matters

Invest STL's **direct cash assistance program preserved the financial well-being of individuals and families** recovering from tornado-related disruptions. The program also served as a bridge to connect impacted households with other financial, housing, and recovery resources.

Invest STL and 4theVille's initiative has already led to collaboration with numerous partner organizations, including Northside Community Housing, Kingsville Corporation, the City of St. Louis, Dream Builders 4 Equity, and the Child and Family Empowerment Center. This coordination gives rise to a more **dynamic and efficient approach to supporting residents in need.**



Investment Spotlight



UMSL School of Engineering

The Challenge

Missouri faces a shortage of engineers, with the number of engineering graduates in 2023 only covering 16% of the state's workforce deficit. Prior to 2025, there were no public engineering degree programs in Eastern Missouri to help meet local market demands.

How It Works

JSMF's \$8 million investment helped launch UMSL's School of Engineering, which **enrolled 61 students in its first class in the fall of 2025**. The grant has also **provided 16 scholarships to students with low-to-moderate incomes**, reducing financial barriers and helping UMSL attract top local talent.

Further, UMSL is building a **pipeline of first-year engineering students** by targeting local school districts and community colleges and expanding its flagship Bridge Program, that helps high school students develop the skills needed to succeed in complex math and engineering courses.



Investment Spotlight



UMSL School of Engineering

Why it Matters

Engineering jobs are high-wage, providing a path for upward mobility to St. Louis youth. UMSL's new engineering program offers a critical opportunity for students from households with low-to-moderate incomes, with **86% of the university's student body receiving financial aid.**

UMSL's Bridge Program, engineering summer camps, and credit transfer agreements with local community colleges drive awareness of and interest in engineering as a viable pathway for high school students in the region.

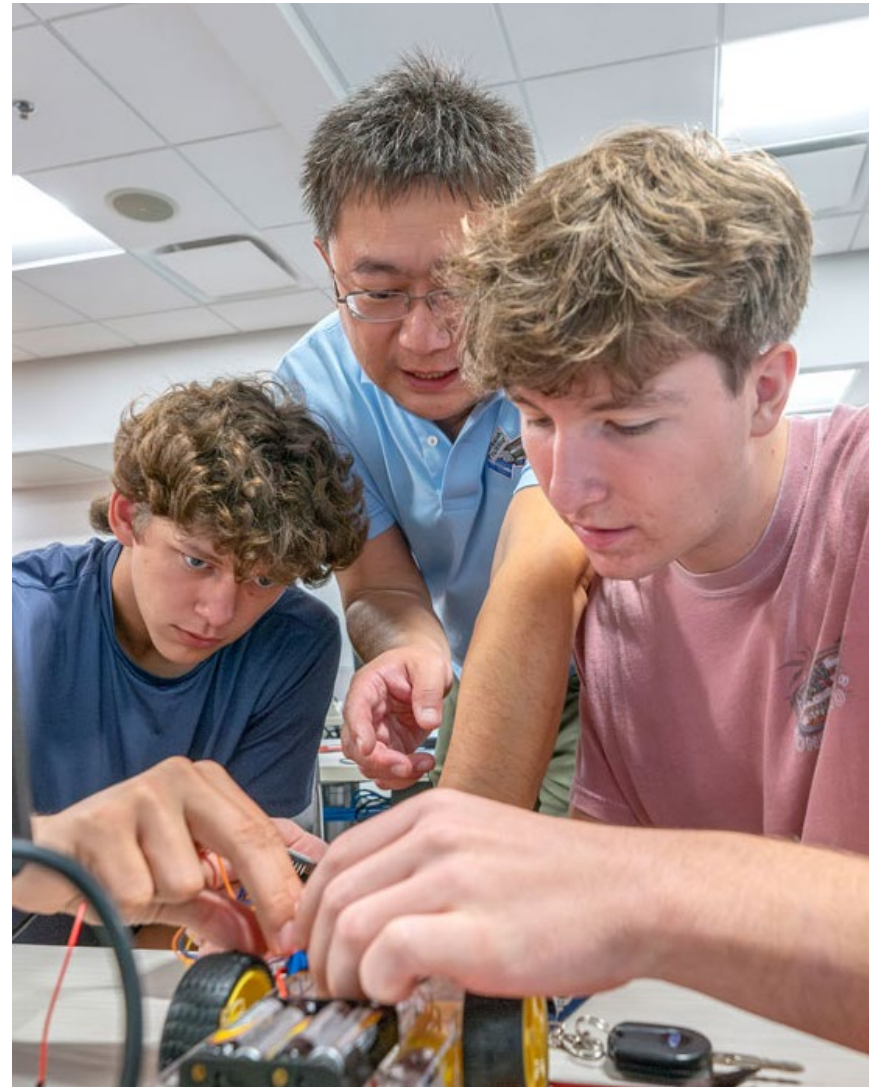


Photo by Derik Holtmann

Looking Ahead

JSMF will continue building on the signs of progress emerging across its portfolio. In 2025, partners expanded pathways into quality jobs, strengthened early childhood systems, increased access to capital and financial tools, and deepened the relationships and shared infrastructure needed to act across sectors.

These are meaningful signals. But this report also makes clear that the real test ahead is whether **growth is felt in more neighborhoods and by more families**, not just reflected in regional averages.

One expression of JSMF's commitment is its largest St. Louis-focused investment to date: the Inclusive Prosperity Partnership. The IPP is a pooled fund supported by a cross-section of St. Louis business and philanthropic institutions. Its **goal is to seed up to five economic mobility solutions over the next 10 years**, with as much as \$25 million available for the implementation of each.

Just as important as the financial investment is the way the work is taking shape. The IPP brings together people from different sectors and lived experiences to **co-design practical responses to some of the region's most persistent challenges**. Business and education leaders, workforce training organizations, and job seekers are helping shape solutions designed to be systemic, scalable, and grounded in the realities of St. Louis.

As that work continues, JSMF looks forward to helping more St. Louisans see where they fit into the effort to build a stronger regional economy.

The challenges facing this region are real. So is the commitment of the people working every day to meet them. JSMF will **remain steady in supporting those efforts and partnering with others to help build prosperity that works for St. Louis**.



Stay Connected



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Appendix A: Investments by Areas of Focus

Table: Areas of Focus by Investment

Organizational Name	Civic Infrastructure	Small & Midsize Businesses	Wealth Building & Protection	Workforce
314Oasis	•			
A Red Circle	•	•		
Action St. Louis	•			
AMICSTL				•
Arch Grants		•	•	
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern MO/Upward Mentoring				•
BioSTL – BioGenerator Venture Fellows		•	•	
BioSTL – Bioscience Workforce Collaborative	•			•
Brookings Institute		•	•	•
City Connects				•
City of St. Louis – Guarantee Basic Income Pilot*			•	
CORTEX*				•
Dream Builders 4 Equity (DB4E)	•			
Gateway Early Childhood Alliance – Capacity Building*	•			
Gateway Early Childhood Alliance – Regional Hub	•			•
Gateway Early Childhood Alliance – Tornado Relief				•
Goalsetter Foundation			•	
Habitat for Humanity Saint Louis			•	

Table: Areas of Focus by Investment

Organizational Name	Civic Infrastructure	Small & Midsize Businesses	Wealth Building & Protection	Workforce
Harris-Stowe				•
Home Repair Network – Local Contractor Pool		•		
Home Repair Network – Tornado Relief	•		•	
IFF – Joyful Spaces		•		•
IFF – Tornado Relief				•
Inclusive Prosperity Partnership	•			•
Invest STL – Pilots	•		•	
Invest STL – Tornado Relief Cash Assistance			•	
Invest STL/4theVille – Tornado Relief Capacity	•			
Kids Win Missouri	•			•
Legal Services of Eastern MO/Home Repair Network	•		•	
LOVetheLOU	•			•
Midwest Bank Centre Foundation**			•	
MOCAFI – Junior Bonds			•	
North Star*			•	
Regional Response Team	•			
Show Me School-Based Health Alliance				•
Small Business Empowerment Center		•		

Table: Areas of Focus by Investment

Organizational Name	Civic Infrastructure	Small & Midsize Businesses	Wealth Building & Protection	Workforce
St. Louis Anchor Action Network	•	•		•
St. Louis Community Credit Union**		•		
St. Louis Community Credit Union/The FAM			•	
St. Louis Magazine	•			
St. Louis Public Radio	•			
St. Louis Regional Public Media, Inc.				•
St. Louis Youth Jobs				•
UMSL – Bridge/School of Engineering				•
UMSL – CLIMB	•			•
UMSL and MU Extension – Civic Collaboration Fellows	•			
WEPOWER – Early Childhood System*	•			•
WEPOWER – Market Rate Survey*				•

* No longer active/completed

** Impact Investment



Appendix B: JSMF Comparison Regions

JSMF

2025

JSMF has selected an initial set of comparison regions based on characteristics such as comparable population size, metro areas with smaller but growing population levels, and non-coastal metropolitan areas that demonstrate progress in equity and growth.

JSMF examines population-level measures of comparison regions, as well as rates of change, to better understand how the St. Louis region's context and progress compare with other regions across various dimensions.

JSMF Comparison Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs)

1. Austin, TX
2. Charlotte, NC
3. Cincinnati, OH
4. Cleveland, OH
5. Columbus, OH
6. Denver, CO
7. Detroit, MI
8. Grand Rapids, MI
9. Greenville, SC*
10. Indianapolis, IN
11. Kansas City, MO
12. Nashville, TN
13. Pittsburgh, PA
14. Raleigh, NC
15. San Antonio, TX

All Comparison Regions, except one, are classified by Brookings as “very large” metropolitan areas, defined as one of 54 very large metropolitan areas with at least 1 million residents.

*Greenville is classified as a “large” metro area and is one of 55 large metro areas with 500,000–1,000,000 residents. As of 2024, Greenville's population was **958,958**.