

# DESALES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## 2020 IN REVIEW



Serving St. Louis  
neighborhoods since 1976.

### Our Mission

DeSales Community Development is a community-based non-profit formed in 1976 to serve the Fox Park and Tower Grove East neighborhoods in the City of St. Louis.

Governed by a board of directors and employing a full-time professional staff, DeSales promotes the ongoing growth of neighborhoods as healthy, diverse urban communities with quality housing.

2759 RUSSELL BLVD.  
ST. LOUIS, MO 63104  
PHONE: (314) 776-5444  
[WWW.DESALES-CD.COM](http://WWW.DESALES-CD.COM)

# Table of Contents

<b>Letter from the Executive Director</b>	<b>p. 4</b>
<b>Who We Are</b>	<b>p. 5</b>
<b>Key Statistics</b>	<b>p. 6</b>
<b>What We Achieved</b>	
Property Development	p. 7
Property Management	p. 8
Addressing COVID-19	p. 9
Community Service Coordination	p. 11
Youth Programs	p. 12
Community Engagement	p. 13
Fundraising	p. 14
<b>Our Partners</b>	<b>p. 16</b>
<b>Our Donors</b>	<b>p. 17</b>
<b>Our Team</b>	<b>p. 18</b>



## Letter from the Executive Director

How can anyone sum up the year 2020 other than to say it was a year like no other? That certainly was true for our organization. Being primarily an owner and manager of affordable rental housing, DeSales serves many households whose financial situation can be tenuous even in normal times. In March of last year, as COVID-19 was spreading and the economy was being shut down, I will admit we had great apprehension.

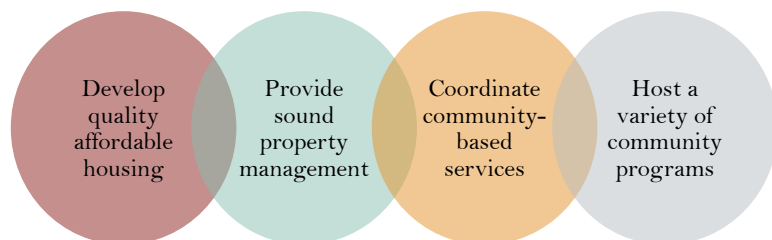
By year-end however, I am happy to report that our worst fears had been averted. In fact in some ways 2020 was a great success for us. It was a year of adapting on the fly and inventing ways to remain effective while working virtually in social isolation.

As you read this report I hope you will appreciate why I am so proud of our team at DeSales and Fox Grove Management. I have to especially commend the fantastic work of our staff in connecting our residents with multiple rental assistance programs throughout the year. In a most challenging time I believe we rose to the occasion.

Tom Pickel  
Executive Director

We care about people.  
People deserve safe,  
comfortable, affordable,  
homes. We are connected  
with residents and the  
community. We do what it  
takes to get the job done.  
We believe in the mission  
and the people we serve.

## What We Do



## Who We Serve



Fox Park



Tower Grove East

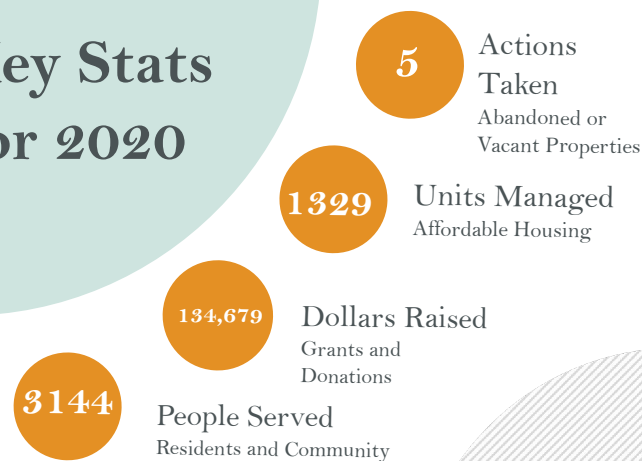


Benton Park West

## We're Committed to Our Values

1. We are leaderful.
2. We are always working to do better.
3. We do what we say and say what we do.
4. When the going gets tough, we're just getting started.
5. We're in it for the mission.

## Key Stats for 2020



## Strategic Framework



### Internal Purpose Statement

To create consciously-inclusive equitable STL neighborhoods by providing safe, stable, affordable homes while having a positive impact on our community through the professional work of satisfied employees while maintaining our financial goals.

## Property Development

### 3432 Juniata

A vacant single-family home at 3432 Juniata came to DeSales' attention thanks to the action of nearby neighbors, who had become frustrated by years of inaction on the property. Vacant for over a decade, the property had become a danger to the neighborhood. In 2019, DeSales was able to purchase the property from the owner. DeSales did a substantial clean-up of the property and sold it to a couple who intended to complete a full renovation and live there. They completed their renovation and moved in in 2020. Today, 3432 Juniata is home to our new neighbors.

### The Rung for Women Facility

Another substantial success was the completion of the Rung for Women facility on Sidney. We were not responsible for the development, however, our role in acquiring the building from the previous owners and finding the right buyer in Rung was essential to making that project a success.



### Senior Housing in Benton Park West

In 2020, we continued to work on our planned senior housing development in Benton Park West, with hopes of receiving a LIHTC award in 2021. If the LIHTC award comes through this year, we are expected to break ground in 2022.



## Fox Grove Management

9

Site Offices

36

Properties

1265

Households

2694

Residents

In 2020, Fox Grove Management prioritized projects to streamline operations. Standardizing office procedures and introducing new technologies created efficiencies in day-to-day activities. During the pandemic, Fox Grove suspended late fees, complied with the eviction moratorium, implemented office safety precautions, and sought rental assistance for tenants. Despite the challenges of COVID-19, our diligent managers successfully maintained collections, surpassing that of the previous year.

### RENTCafe Resident Portal

When the pandemic began, Fox Grove accelerated the roll-out of RENTCafe Resident Portal across 33 properties. By April, residents could pay rent, manage their account and submit maintenance requests online. RENTCafe was a vital piece in maintaining operations and customer service while limiting health risks to residents and staff during COVID-19.

#### Fox Grove Households Using RENTCafe:

**75%** were more likely to pay rent on-time

**86%** felt safer with a remote tool

**72%** felt empowered by seeing their ledger



**FOX GROVE**  
MANAGEMENT  
A Delata Community Development Company

#### Contact us at:

Fox Grove Management  
2758 Russell Blvd.  
St. Louis, MO 63104  
314-664-8200

## Addressing COVID-19

### Proactive Outreach

At the onset of the pandemic, DeSales and Fox Grove Management immediately took measures to protect staff and residents by making as many functions as possible remote.



Continuous outreach helped to assess the COVID related needs of Fox Grove residents and our neighbors in the DeSales service area. When a resident expressed a need, we did rapid referrals to community partners and helped people navigate applying for unemployment, connecting to expanded benefits, and receiving

**64%**

Fox Grove households  
impacted financially by  
COVID-19

stimulus checks. Site Managers held resource drives and found new ways to work with their residents when walk-in appointments were no longer possible.

Our team of AmeriCorps VISTAs organized food drives in early May and throughout June and July to collect and distribute food to neighborhood families experiencing food insecurity.

### Rental Assistance

DeSales and Fox Grove Management staff have been very aggressive in pursuing rental relief on behalf of residents. We worked with social service agencies and partnered with our partner nonprofits Red Dough, Prosperity Connection, and St. Louis Community Credit unions to connect residents to significant rental assistance.

**155**

Households directly  
assisted regarding  
COVID-19

**\$135,500**

Total rental  
assistance accessed  
in 2020

**55**

Referral residents  
awarded Red Dough  
forgivable loans

## Supporting residents in a time of need

On an early morning in September of 2020, a tragic fire destroyed the homes of five families living in apartments managed by Fox Grove Management. The families were able to alert each other and escape the building safely, but they lost nearly all of their belongings. Against the backdrop of a pandemic, this devastating event threw their lives into disarray.



Photo credit: Fox 2 News



Photo credit: Robert Cohen, rcohen@post-dispatch.com

Immediately, Fox Grove staff found nearby apartments for the families while DeSales Community Service Coordination staff learned what else could be helpful. By collaborating with a deep network of community partners, staff were able to fully furnish the new apartments with furniture from partner agency Home Sweet Home, secure funding for food and essential items, and connect affected individuals to mental health experts. DeSales organized a fundraiser with matching funds from St. Louis Equity Fund to assist the families directly with the immense financial need they were suddenly faced with.

Although none of this made up for the tragic loss these families endured, DeSales and Fox Grove responded with support when a crisis turned the lives of our residents upside-down. We are extremely grateful for the overwhelming support our community and partners showed our families.

## Community Based Service Coordination

### Here To Stay

DeSales' "Here To Stay" 3-month Eviction Prevention Program gives our Fox Grove Management residents an alternative to eviction, offers supportive services and connects residents to financial coaching to catch up on rent. Participating families reduced their rental debt by an average of \$1,760 and achieved wide-ranging personal goals.



### Shadonna's Story

Shadonna is a Fox Grove Management resident and a part of one of the households affected by the Old Frenchtown Townhomes fire in 2020. She was able to quickly recover her life and belongings through strong family ties, determination, and the assistance of Fox Grove Managers and DeSales Community Services Coordination. She now continues her career assisting St. Louis youth and aspires for a new chapter in her life as a homeowner.

### Latasha's Story

A busy mother and IT professional, Latasha had plenty on her plate before the pandemic. As COVID-19 began to spread, she also found herself in the midst of managing a childhood illness. The Here to Stay program was a huge help to alleviate financial stress. Through Community Services Coordination, Latasha was connected to comprehensive resources that helped her get back on track towards financial stability. She's now planning a career step-up into cybersecurity, and continues to enjoy her life in South St. Louis.



21

Households graduated from "Here to Stay" Eviction Prevention Program in 2020

### Angela's Story

Angela joined the Here to Stay program after both she, a child caretaker, and her husband, a chef, lost income during the pandemic. During the course of the program, Angela and her husband got the support needed to return to stable employment, and were connected to rental assistance and benefit programs to fill gaps along the way. No longer at risk of eviction, Angela is now enrolled in courses to advance her childcare certification and has worked with a Here to Stay financial coach to raise her credit score and purchase a car for their family of five.

## SouthSide Rec Youth Program

### What is SouthSide Rec?

The SouthSide Rec (SSR) Youth Program is a free to low-cost program for kids of all ages that provides recreational and enrichment opportunities. Since 2016, SSR has provided programming to the Fox Park and Tower Grove East neighborhoods. SSR is not only a product of DeSales' desire to provide accessible and free outlets for children in the community, but also an example of DeSales' initiatives to form ongoing connections with a variety of community groups and members.



1500+ YOUTH AND ADULTS SERVED SINCE 2016



### Adjusting to 2020

With the outbreak of Covid-19, it was necessary for SSR to modify programming content and distribution. Partnerships stayed intact by making practical adjustments to regular programming: virtual art classes and take-home art bags were created for kids, free meals were distributed through curbside pick-up in the summer and fall, and cooking classes were streamed online with digital gift cards given to participants to purchase groceries for the classes from Schnucks.

Through partnerships with organizations such as Artscope and Operation Food Search, SSR has been able to grow its services beyond fitness activities and sports leagues. SSR connects children and families to opportunities to be active, explore the arts, and interact with local peers.

## Engaging with the Community



### Cultivating Informed Citizens

Many residents in the communities which DeSales serves are historically undercounted in census data, leading to negative and lasting consequences. Recognizing this, DeSales made a concerted effort to ensure that our residents and renters were given every opportunity to be counted in the 2020 Census. We actively collaborated with the Census Community Engagement staff, the League of Women Voters, and our own property management team to provide promotional materials, info sessions (both virtual and in-person), and mass communications encouraging our residents to join the count.

DeSales, Fox Grove and the League of Women Voters joined forces again to distribute non-partisan voting information to register new voters for the 2020 election.

### Exploring our Shared History

The Interactive History Map showcases the developments that have built our surrounding neighborhoods into a thriving portion of South St. Louis. In 2020 we updated our mapping application. Check it out at [www.desalescd.com/interactive-history-map](http://www.desalescd.com/interactive-history-map)

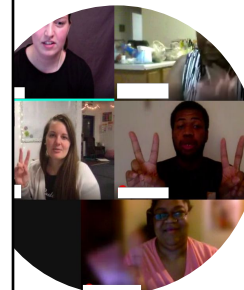


## Around DeSales

### Fox Park Field House Project

DeSales is working to renovate and redesign the Fox Park Field House, which is currently used for park storage. Our vision is to restore the building to its past functional glory while transforming its purpose to a community-reflective space and physical hub for SouthSide Rec. In 2020, we launched the project's website and began collecting feedback from the community. For more information, visit [www.foxparkfieldhouse.com](http://www.foxparkfieldhouse.com).

### Virtual ASL Course



In response to the need for virtual community programming, DeSales coordinated an American Sign Language (ASL) course for all ages and skill levels. The instructor was Deaf, and the class used student interpreters from St. Louis Community College and Southwestern Illinois College. After 6-weeks, students could sign the alphabet, sign numbers 1-50, introduce themselves, and provide basic personal information. The success of and strong demand for the class led to a request for it to continue into 2021.

### Community Garden

DeSales Community Garden provided opportunities for much-needed community connection and camaraderie in a year of social distancing. The garden added fruit trees and received a Gateway Greening Expansion Grant to replace old garden beds and add a new compost system. Plans were laid for the youth gardening program in 2021.

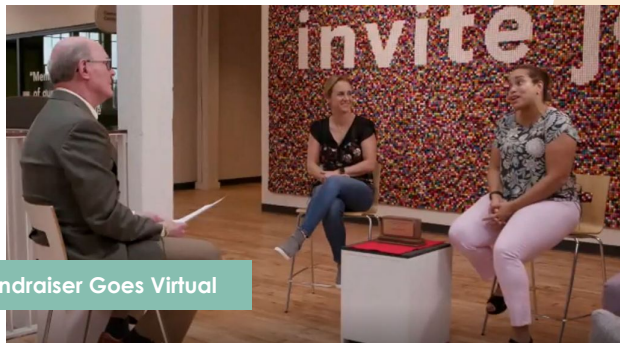


## Your Support in 2020

During the pandemic support of our mission was stronger than ever. Your giving broke records for events like Give STL Day and some of you gave entire stimulus checks. When DeSales called for help to support neighbors in need during several food drives, you provided abundantly. Because of your generosity, community members attended online ASL and cooking classes, connected to supportive services, and accessed rental assistance. It's been a privilege to work with our contributing community members and partners during an extremely challenging year. Thank you for all you've done to support the ongoing growth of St. Louis neighborhoods as healthy, diverse urban communities with quality housing.

Further our mission by making a donation today, and thank you!

[www.desalescd.com/donate](http://www.desalescd.com/donate)

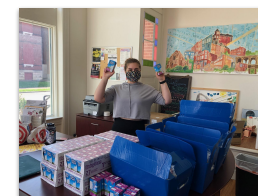


Annual Fundraiser Goes Virtual

On October 8th, DeSales held their annual fundraiser virtually for the first time. With over 100 tickets claimed, Night In For Neighborhoods gathered attendees over Zoom for an interview with Rung for Women and informational breakout sessions led by DeSales staff. DeSales was excited to present the 2020 Better Neighborhoods Leadership Award to Rung for Women's Ali Hogan and Leslie Gill. While enjoying previously distributed complimentary beverages and snacks, attendees submitted bids in the virtual silent auction and took their chances in the mystery booze pull. Overcoming new logistical challenges, the online gathering was enjoyed by all and netted over \$22,000.

## Thank you to Our 2020 Partners!

- Artscope
- Cardinals Care
- Census Bureau (Census Outreach project)
- Community Builders Network
- Dutchtown South Community Corporation
- Eagle College Prep.
- Fit and Food Connection
- Gateway Greening
- Girls on the Run St. Louis
- JRB Catering
- League of Women Voters
- Lifewise STL
- Lutheran Development Group
- Messiah Community Center
- Messiah Lutheran Church
- New Dimensions Soccer
- Operation Food Search
- Orchestrating Diversity
- Prosperity Connection
- Red Dough
- Redbird Rookies
- Rung for Women
- Salvation Army
- Shenandoah Elementary
- St. Louis Dept. of Recreation
- Tower Grove Neighborhoods CDC



# Thank You to Our 2020 Donors!

## Corporate Sponsors:

Accurate Disbursing  
Banterra Bank  
Brake Landscaping and Lawncare  
Commerce Bank  
Enterprise Bank and Trust  
FCB Banks  
First Bank  
Fox Park Neighborhood Association  
Galmiche and Sons Heating and Cooling  
Gateway CDFI  
Gladiator Consulting  
Jefferson Bank and Trust  
King Realty Advisors  
Midwest BankCentre  
ND Consulting Group  
Nestle Purina  
Quality Lawn Management, Inc.  
Simmons Bank  
Spencer Fane  
St. Louis Equity Fund, Inc.  
St. Louis Title, LLC.  
Sterling Bank  
Sugar Creek Capital  
US Bank

## Foundations and Grants:

Affordable Housing Trust Fund  
AmeriCorps VISTA & Mission STL  
Horizon Housing Foundation  
Messiah Lutheran Church  
St. Louis Community Foundation  
St. Louis Philanthropic Organization  
Target  
Trio Foundation  
US Bank

## Individual Donors:

Abbey Allred Wharton	Ian Simmons	Marjorie Deem
Adam Castagno	Jasmine Cobb	Mary Holland Patterson
AJ Pluss	Jason Deem	Mary Jo Conley
Allison Johnson	Jean Birmingham	Mary Wilson
Amanda Colon-Smith	Jennifer Connelly-Bowen	Megan Mead
Amy McDermott	Anonymous	Melisa Sanders
Andy Hoppe	Jessica Deem	Meredith Toler
Angela Kearbey	Joan Burgess Ruegg	Mike and Sara Austin
Annemarie Spitz	Joe and Linda Cavato	Mike Tomalis
Annie Rice	Joe Manning	Mike Ziegler
Anonymous	Joe Monahan	Mitch Jorstad
Arjun Bhat	John and Peggy Ziegler	Molly Metzger
Becky Reinhart	John Kennedy	Patrick Moore
Bryan King	Joyce Kampwerth	Paul Woodruff
Bryan Walsh	Julia Stevens	Paulette Grana
Cammie Lewis	Justin Browne	Rachel D'Souza-Siebert
Christian Naffziger	Kate Grindstaff	Riahna Kastner
Christine Ingrassia	Kate McCarthy	Roberta Williams
Connor Dougan	Kathryn Palacios	Robyn Heidger
Cory Schmitt	Kathy Reeves	Ryan Reed
Dana Gray	Kathy Siddens	Samuel Yang
Daniel Lee	Keri McBride	Sara Koehler
David Rodgers	Larry McCarthy	Sara Levin
Deborah Millett	Laura Grindstaff	Sarah Grindstaff
Deeds Bonham	Lena Woltering	Sarah Small
Denise Heinz	Leslie Nicole Godwin	Sharon McCarthy
Derik Heidemann	Liam Dougan	Shawn Grindstaff
Diana Williams	Lillie States	Sonya Henry
Diane McKinney	Lindsey Noblot	Stephanie Herbers
Don Buchmueller	Lisa Thorp	Stephanie McKinney
Donna Ellebracht	Liz Kramer	Steven Mennerick
Elizabeth Payne	Loura Gilbert	Susan Montgomery
Emily Cohn	Lucy Reinhart	Tamara Hershey
Emily Dittmer	Maggie Haller	Thomas Pickel
Emily Kohring	Margaret Russell	Tiffany Minx
Erin Godwin	Margaret Stein	Trey Coad
Gary Newcomer	Marguerite Brake	Vickie Newcomb
Greg Lyon	Marguerite Grady	

# Meet Our Team



## DeSales Staff

Tom Pickel, *Executive Director*  
Lisette Ortega-Vidal, *Chief Operating Officer*  
Becky Reinhart, *Assistant Director*  
Tatyana Cody, *Controller*  
Mike Ziegler, *Community Services Manager*  
Tiffany Minx, *Program Coordinator*

## AmeriCorps VISTA

Abby Miller, *Youth Programming*  
Hannah Daniels, *Community Engagement*  
Kate Grindstaff, *Fundraising and Development*  
Sarah Small, *Youth Programming*

## AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associates

Julie Pellegrino, Morgan Van Vleck, Megan Spasenoski

## Fox Grove Management Staff

Karen Bartley, *Compliance Manager*  
Dino Dogic, *Maintenance Manager*  
Alacious McKissic, *Area Manager*  
Diana Williams, *Area Manager*  
Rachel Fields, *Area Managers*

## MSW Practicum Students

Maddie Kronfeld  
Jacinta Kahle

## Meet Our Team

### Board of Directors

Chris Naffziger, *President*  
 Patrick Moore, *Vice President*  
 David Rodgers, *Treasurer*  
 Melisa Sanders, *Secretary*  
 Laura Gilbert, *Tower Grove East Resident*  
 Steve Souder, *Full Circle Design Works*  
 Mary Wilson, *Fox Grove Resident*  
 Larry McCarthy, *Tower Grove East Resident*  
 Sonya Henry, *Fox Park Resident*  
 Jessica Deem, *Virescent*  
 Riaha Kastner, *St. Louis Real Estate Society*  
 Stephanie McKinney, *SouthSide Early Childhood Center*  
 Tammie Shelton, *St. Louis University Hospital*  
 John Kennedy, *St. Louis Equity Fund, Inc.*

### Board of Managers

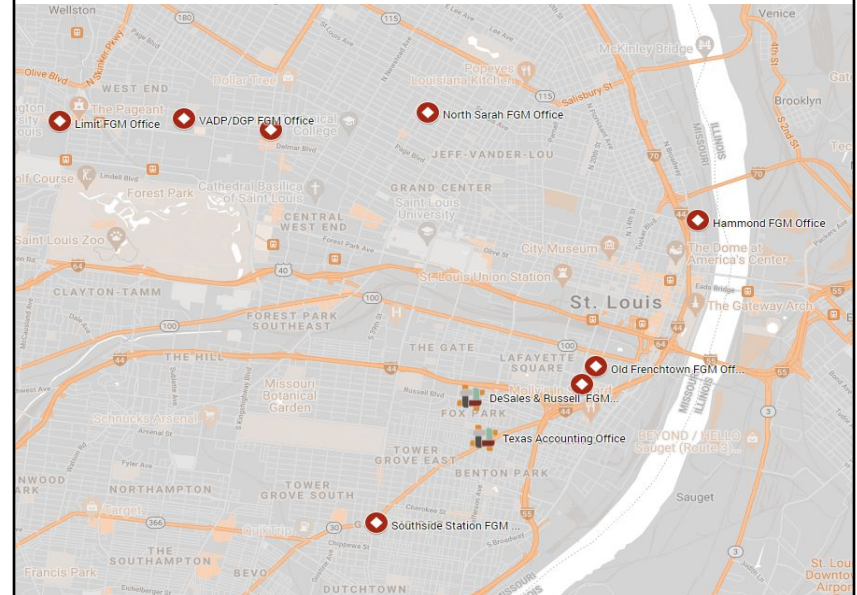
Tom Pickel, *Chair*  
 Riaha Kastner  
 Patrick Moore  
 Tammie Shelton  
 Maggie Grady

### Young Ambassadors

Nathan Jackson, *President*  
 Reina Stovall, *Vice President*  
 Liz Gerard, *Treasurer*  
 Kate Grindstaff, *Secretary*  
 Richard Allington, *Co-founder*



## DeSales Community Development & Fox Grove Management (FGM) Offices



**DeSales Office**  
 2759 Russell Blvd  
 St. Louis, MO 63104

**Russell FGM Office**  
 2758 Russell Blvd  
 St. Louis, MO 63104

**Texas Accounting Office**  
 2528 Texas Ave  
 St. Louis, MO 63104

**Hammond FGM Office**  
 217 Cass Ave  
 St. Louis, MO 63102

**North Sarah FGM Office**  
 2501 N Sarah St  
 St. Louis, MO 63113

**VADP/DGP FGM Office**  
 789 Belt Ave  
 St. Louis, MO 63112

**Limit FGM Office**  
 554 Limit Ave  
 St. Louis, MO 63130

**Old Frenchtown FGM Office**  
 1260-1200 Hickory St  
 St. Louis, MO 63104

**King Louis Square FGM Office**  
 1524 S 13th St  
 St. Louis, MO 63104

**San Remo FGM Office**  
 848 N Kingshighway Blvd  
 St. Louis, MO 63108

**Southside Station FGM Office**  
 3548 S Grand Blvd  
 St. Louis, MO 63118

[www.desalescd.com](http://www.desalescd.com)

[www.fox-grove.com](http://www.fox-grove.com)