



Leveraging River City – Real Estate and Economic Development along the River

Speaker Biographies



Sara McGibany

Executive Director, Alton Main Street

Sara McGibany has been the Executive Director of Alton Main Street since 2006. She holds a bachelor's degree from Illinois State University, with a major in Public Relations. Besides working on a variety of projects that promote and improve downtown Alton, Illinois, Sara also enjoys serving on the Board of Directors for a number of organizations that work to improve quality of life both locally and internationally. In 2018 Sara was elected to a seat on the Democratic Precinct Committee, and she was recently appointed to the Community Development Advisory Council of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.



Asim Raza

Chief Legal Officer, Director of Corporate Affairs, Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis

Asim S. Raza joined the Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis in 2011 and currently serves as the company's Chief Legal Officer and Director of Corporate Affairs for TRRA. In his role, Mr. Raza's responsibilities include overseeing all legal matters of the company and its various subsidiaries, serving as the company's compliance officer, managing governmental affairs and overseeing the company's business development and real estate. Mr. Raza earned his B.A./M.S. in Criminal Justice from The American University in Washington, D.C., his J.D. from DePaul University in Chicago, Illinois and his M.B.A. from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. Mr. Raza is the President of the Board of Directors for The Churchill Center & School and serves on the Board of Directors for both John Burroughs High School and the St. Louis Civic Pride Foundation.



Ronda Sauget

Executive Director and CEO, Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois

Dr. Ronda L. Sauget is the Executive Director and CEO of the Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois. The Leadership Council is a not-for-profit member-based economic development corporation in Southwestern Illinois working to unite the region for growth. In this role, she is responsible for identifying and mobilizing leaders in business, industry, labor, education and government, and building effective partnerships to address regional economic development issues, often playing a leadership role in advancing those initiatives that top the Leadership Council's priority list. Dr. Sauget has served with the Leadership Council for many years as an Executive Committee member, as well as on all of the current committees. She is a past Vice President (2012), President (2013), and Chairman (2014) of the Board of Directors. In 2016, Dr. Sauget was appointed by the 8th District Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis to serve on the Workforce Innovation Task Force for the district. Also, in 2016, Ronda Sauget was selected and served as the 1st Honorary Base Commander of the 375th Air Mobility Wing, Scott Air Force Base, IL. In 2017, Dr. Sauget was selected

and serves as the Air Mobility Command Civic Leader for Scott Air Force Base, IL. In 2018, Dr. Sauget received the Air Mobility Command Public Affairs Special Achievement Award for Communications Excellence. This award of distinction was the first to be awarded to a civic leader in recognition for outstanding contributions in critical Air Force retention efforts. Prior to this role, Dr. Sauget brings to the Leadership Council over 20 years of experience working across industry sectors and consulting roles in strategic management, market research, and executive leadership. She was the President of her own firm, Validus Business Strategies LLC, started in 2006 and served for over 10 years as the Executive Director of Archview Economic Development Corporation attracting millions of dollars in new investment and creating hundreds of regional jobs in Southwestern Illinois. Formerly, she was a SVP and Corporate Director of the Competitive Intelligence group at Fleishman-Hillard International Communications, LLC, wherein she developed and directed one of the agency's top revenue generating groups. In this capacity, she conducted hundreds of industry and competitive positioning research, analysis, and strategies for many of the agency's largest domestic and international clients. Early in her career, Dr. Sauget worked in Market Intelligence for the 8th District Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis wherein she conducted numerous monetary/public policy analysis, banking industry studies, and business development strategies. Dr. Sauget has been an adjunct professor for 8 years for the George Herbert Walker School of Business, Webster University, St. Louis, instructing the capstone strategic planning and competitive intelligence capstone course for the International MBA program.



Susan Taylor
Director, Port Authority
St. Louis Development Corporation

Susan Taylor is Port Director for the St. Louis Development Corp, the city's development agency. A licensed architect, she has worked at SLDC for 18 years, including the last 10 for the City's Port Authority. She manages Port marketing and business development, design and construction projects, lease negotiations, grant applications, and staffs the Mayor at national port events. She is currently pulling together an \$8M rail expansion at the city's public dock, the Municipal River Terminal, in concert with the dock's operator, SCF Lewis & Clark Terminals. She is on the board of Inland Rivers Ports & Terminals, works with the Mayor on the Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative, sits on the Freightway's Council and the Barge Industry Subcommittee, and has received her Inland Port Executive certification from the International Association of Maritime and Port Executives.