



# St. Louis

## Main Streets, Urban Main & Notes from the Frontline

May 6, 2021 | 8:30 am



### Caya Aufiero

Co-owner

Urban Eats Café

Caya is an ardent serial entrepreneur, problem solver, real estate investor. Her professional corporate background was in business development. Caya runs the property management, construction, and design side of their long-term and short-term rentals for SolutionWorks, their real estate company. She was the Co-creator/Chef of the previous Urban Eats Café and the Urban Arts Collective. Urban Eats pivoted during the Global Pandemic into a Kitchen Incubator and Neighborhood FoodHall Restaurant Incubator.

A long-time urban pioneer, Caya is passionate about St Louis city architecture and history. 4th Generation prodigal Dutchtowner. She was the Co-founder of Downtown Dutchtown Business Association (DT2), the progenitor of the Dutchtown CID (Community Improvement District). Co-founder with John of the new social impact startup, the Neighborhood Innovation Center (NICstl).

She and her husband John live above Urban Eats in their 6000 SF repurposed 1929 furniture store loft in Downtown Dutchtown.



### John Chen

Co-owner

Urban Eats Café

John is an engineer turned social entrepreneur, a process improvement consultant, and an accidental restaurateur. His healthcare management engineering and analytics background led to a technology startup in a cloud computing solution in 2005, still active, and being used by some of today's largest healthcare systems. John's fascination with architecture and the way technology and design can change the world, find a happy marriage within SolutionWorks Investments, their residential real estate practice. That

combination has fashioned John into a mixed-used micro developer in Dutchtown, one of the largest, most diverse neighborhoods in the City of St. Louis.

A first-generation immigrant, John and his wife Caya are devoting all their energy and time now to reinvigorating neighborhood entrepreneurship. Finding new real estate solutions to support neighborhood food, retail, and tech-driven small businesses. John co-founded the Downtown Dutchtown Business Association, is a co-founder of Urban Eats, and the new social impact startup the Neighborhood Innovation Center (NICstl).



# St. Louis



## Rachelle L'Ecuyer

Executive Director

The Delmar Loop

Rachelle is an economic development and real estate professional based in the St. Louis Region who has been recognized for developing and managing economic improvement initiatives including incentive programs, distinctive events, and marketing and public relations campaigns. Her experience includes The New York Landmarks Conservancy, RISE St. Louis Community Development, City of Maplewood, and The Delmar Loop. Rachelle is known for having developed the Nation's First Green Dining District and created the following community events Let Them Eat Art, Coffee Crawl, Stringfest, and the Sweet Tooth Tour for Historic Downtown Maplewood.

Rachelle serves on a number of boards including: Vice President of the Board of Directors of the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership CDC; Chairwoman, Commercial Districts Committee; Co-manager, Delmar-DeBaliviere Form Based District Planning Initiative; Board Member, Skinker-DeBaliviere Committee Council; The St. Louis Economic Development Partnership Business Attraction & Retention Committee; and Loan Committee Member, St. Louis Economic Development Partnership CDC.



## Adam Stroud

Senior Project Manager

PGAV Planners

Adam is an urban planner with PGAV, a planning and architecture firm with locations in Kansas City and St. Louis. He specializes in economic development planning for communities ranging in size from a few hundred residents to tens of thousands. He is a member of the Urban Land Institute and volunteers his time to help out with the Urban Plan program to share knowledge of the real estate development process with

students, elected officials, and community leaders. In 2020, Adam started Stroud City Bagels to sell baked goods at the farmers' markets and he started the business out of Urban Eats Shared Kitchen located in Dutchtown.



## Keith Winge

Community Development Director

Main Street Missouri Connection

Keith Winge has been working to revitalize downtown communities since the mid-1990s. Prior to his role as Executive Director for Downtown Excelsior Partnership, he served as a board member and officer from 2006 to 2010. Keith also has over 20 years of experience in hotel and hospitality management. His experience encompasses commercial district revitalization, grant writing, funding strategies,

project management, tourism marketing and customer service experience, and community engagement. While in Excelsior Springs, Keith helped lead the effort to create a Community Improvement District to aid in the further expansion of tourism marketing and economic development in the Main Street district. Keith has been with Missouri Main Street Connection since 2013.