

Speakers were introduced by Brittney McFarland, a Junior Biology Major at HSSU

Speaker Bios

Mary Ostafi

Mary E. Ostafi, Executive Director of Urban Harvest STL, cross pollinates urban agriculture and architecture. She founded the nonprofit Urban Harvest STL and pioneered an effort to build the FOOD ROOF, St Louis' first rooftop farm, the topic of her recent TEDx Talk. Mary has been at the forefront of green buildings for over a decade, and now drives sustainability through building-integrated urban agriculture projects that cultivate equitable access to healthy, sustainably grown food; mitigate storm water runoff; and enhance biodiversity in cities. A strong community activist, Mary focuses on educating and engaging the community to increase resiliency in our food systems and position urban environments for climate adaptation. She holds a Master's degree in Sustainability Leadership from an acclaimed university in Sweden, is a licensed architect, LEED AP, and was named one of St. Louis Business Journal's 40 under 40.

Wasit Wulamu

Dr. Wasit Wulamu is an Assistant Professor with the Center for Sustainability at Saint Louis University. He has been working in GIS and remote sensing applications for sustainability for over 15 years. He has been PI/Co-PI for a dozen grants funded from NASA, NSF, DOE, USGS, and private foundations. He has authored over 50 peer-reviewed journal publications, one book chapter, and presented more than 40 conference papers and workshops. At Saint Louis University, he is teaching a number of classes in remote sensing, GIS, and unmanned aerial systems.

Michelle Salois

Michelle Salois is passionate about healing human beings and healing the Earth. She began her professional career as an RN and now works full time as a family therapist and Clinical Social Worker at Mercy Professional Services. Her personal reading and passion have focused on the increasing problems of human global impact on the health of air, water, soil, and species extinction. These declines were troubling her deeply. When she discovered the field of Permaculture and all the solutions it provides, she knew she had to learn it and share it! She took the annual online Permaculture Design Course from Geoff Lawton and graduated in May of 2015. She offers her weekends to work on designs in urban and suburban settings for individual households and through non-profits at their fundraisers.

Sarah Bell

Sarah Bell is a senior at UMSL majoring in Biology, and has worked in the UMSL Sustainability office for almost two years. She is involved with the student-run UMSL Environmental Adventure Organization, and is working on efforts to promote campus recycling and involvement in our community garden. In the future, she is interested in working in the area of urban agriculture and nutrition, and studying the intersections between food and culture.

Trevor Dobbs

Trevor Dobbs is a Criminology/criminal justice major at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. When he graduates from UMSL, he wants to pursue a law degree at Stanford Law School. It's his goal to promote environmental justice at his institution as well as in practice as an attorney.

Richard Reilly

Richard Reilly is Energy Programs Manager of the Missouri Botanical Garden's EarthWays Center. Reilly spent over 30 years in custom residential construction; rising from carpenter to Chief Operating Officer. He was a St. Louis Business Journal Heroes of the Planet Finalist in 2008, winner of a St. Louis USGBC Growing Green Award in 2009, and has served on the Board of Directors of Habitat for Humanity St. Louis and the St. Louis Artists' Guild. He is also Co-Founder of the Sunflower+ Project: STL, Principal Photographer for All the Art Magazine and a working artist who shows regularly in the region.

Theresa Coble

Dr. Theresa Coble serves as the E. Desmond Lee Endowed Professor of Experiential and Family Education at the University of Missouri – St. Louis in collaboration with Forest Park Forever (www.forestparkforever.org). Her research examines visitor meanings and perspectives, explores professional development needs and approaches, assesses program effectiveness, and identifies strategies to engage audiences about complex and controversial science topics. At UMSL, Coble is helping to launch an online doctoral program entitled *Heritage Leadership for Sustainability, Social Justice and Participatory Culture*.

Timothy Makubuya

Dr. Timothy Makubuya is an Assistant Teaching Professor and Coordinator of Physical Education and Exercise Science in the Department of Educator Preparation, Innovation and Research in the College of Education. He serves as a faculty steward for degree programs leading to a B.S. in Physical Education K-12 and BES. Exercise Science and Wellness, in addition to a Minor in Exercise Science and the Athletic Coaching Minor. He is a faculty mentor for doctoral students in the Ed.D cohort in Heritage Leadership, for Sustainability, Social Justice, and Participatory Culture.

Katy Mike Smaistrla

Katy Mike Smaistrla moved to STL over ten years ago to change minds and behaviors about the way we use our natural resources. No matter what her formal role may be (be it her previous position as an educator & volunteer coordinator for the Missouri Botanical Garden or now as the sustainability coordinator at the University of Missouri – St. Louis), she serves as a community conduit, connecting people to their bioregion, their urban environment, and ultimately, their identity. These days Katy Mike serves the UMSL campus in crafting a healthier and more sustainable place for learning & working. When not working in the higher ed sector, she enjoys working to infuse innovative art & literacy programming into other non-traditional, transformative programs. She's a big fan of creative community building and has been known to pop up in unusual places, always ready to lend a hand. She's participated in a number of projects, from the GOOD Ideas for Cities design challenge to St. Louis Green Drinks, Mentor St. Louis, the Regional Arts Commission, the US Green Building Council, and even the St. Louis Sports & Social League.

John Wagner

As Director of the Bi-State Development Research Institute, Dr. Wagner works with St. Louis area communities and local, regional and national partner organizations in support of the Institute's mission to study, plan and evaluate regional public policy, land use, economic development and the economic impact of regional infrastructure improvements and investment. Prior to becoming Director of the Bi-State Development Research Institute in July 2016, Dr. Wagner served for three years as a Project Manager for Economic Development at Bi-State Development. Before that, he was the Community Policy Director at FOCUS St. Louis from 2008 to 2012. He has also worked in the St. Louis region as an urban planner from 2000 to 2008, in both the public and private sectors. From 1989 to 2000, John worked as an environmental chemist in laboratories throughout the country, testing various substances for pollutants such as dioxin and PCB's, among others. Dr. Wagner holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Wildlife Science from Purdue University, a Masters of Urban Planning from the University of Kansas, and a doctorate in Public Policy from Saint Louis University.

Jasmin Aber

Jasmin Aber is the Executive Director and Co-founder of CEL Center for Architecture and Design STL. She is an expert in the field of using art, culture, architecture and design as catalysts for improving quality of life and sustainable economic development of weak economy cities and in strategic planning for underinvested neighborhoods. By profession, Ms. Aber was trained at the University of Portsmouth in the United Kingdom where she earned both her BA degree with honors and a post graduate honors degree in Architecture. She is a licensed architect and has over 10 years of work experience as an architectural designer in private sector architectural firms based in London, Frankfurt, San Francisco and Berkeley, California. Ms. Aber has been an invited guest and

panelist at various forums including the Federal Reserve bank, CEO for Cities, Chicago Architecture Foundation, and a “Ted Talk”.

Nick Speed

Nick graduated from the University of Missouri of St. Louis with a Bachelors of Arts in Communications in 2011. Afterwards, he sought out ways to improve the city he was born and raised in. His interests in youth empowerment and food access led him through a 3-year stint as an AmeriCorps service member. In August of 2016, Nick joined the EarthDance Organic Farm School staff as Volunteer Coordinator. In addition to giving farm tours, managing volunteers, and engaging the community, he also leads field trips. He has helped facilitate 12 interactive field trips on the farm to over 250 youth. Working at EarthDance has truly ignited his passions for food and environmental justice. In addition to his service with AmeriCorps, he has volunteered with several organizations including Gateway Greening, Operation Food Search, St. Louis Area Foodbank, and St. Louis YouthBuild.

Harold Coleman

Harold Coleman was educated in the St. Louis Public School system, graduating from O'Fallon Technical Center in 1987. He studied Electrical Engineering at Southern University Baton Rouge. Harold has been involved in the residential energy conversation in one way or another for several years. He currently works as a consultant for local utility demand side management programs.

Sylvester Brown, Jr.

Sylvester Brown, Jr. is the former publisher of Take Five Magazine and former columnist for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. In 2012, Sylvester founded the Sweet Potato Project, a program that teaches at-risk youth entrepreneurial skills through planting, harvesting and creating food-based products from food grown on vacant and community