

MCPSA Board of Directors



Missouri Charter Public School Association Board of Directors:

Ms. Jeanne Bates	2010-2012
Mr. Tom Bloch	2011-2013
Ms. Trina Clark James	2008-2012
Mr. Alan DuBois	2006-2011
Mr. Kirk Farmer	2006-2011
Mr. R. Crosby Kemper III	2006-2012
Ms. Millie Krna	2006-2012
Dr. Michael Podgursky	2008-2012
Mr. Bill Ross, Vice President	2006-2012
Ms. Amber Simpson, President	2008-2012

Jeanne Bates

“ I believe that Kansas City children and their families deserve a quality educational experience, and that charter school leaders and sponsors have an obligation to provide such quality. If, after careful monitoring and support, a school is not able to deliver on this promise, the sponsor is obliged to close the school. ”

Jeanne is currently retired, following 37 years at Hallmark Cards in Kansas City. The majority of her career at Hallmark was spent as a program officer and Vice President of the Hall Family Foundation- the philanthropic arm of the Hall family. Her portfolio at the foundation included support for the Missouri charter school movement in its earliest years.

In addition to this board, Jeanne is also on the board of the Rose Brooks Center in Kansas City and is a mentor for a student at Cristo Rey High School, also in Kansas City.

Tom Bloch

In 1976, Tom Bloch joined H&R Block, the world's largest tax preparation service. After introducing automation to the company's retail network, he was elected President of the Tax Operations in 1981. Later, he oversaw the company's innovative practice of filing tax returns electronically to the IRS, which revolutionized the industry. Tom was promoted to President of the corporation in 1989 and CEO in 1992.

Tom Bloch's career change in 1995 from CEO to inner city teacher drew national media attention. He appeared on numerous television shows, such as *Today* and *Oprah*, and his story was featured in many publications, including *The New York Times* and *People*.

His second career began as a middle school math teacher at St. Francis Xavier, an inner-city parochial school. Five years later, he cofounded the University Academy, a public charter school in Kansas City. Tom continued to teach 7th and 8th grade math at the urban college prep school he helped design and launch. He was also President of the school's board from 2000 to 2010.

The Academy has grown from 200 students in grades seven through nine in its first year to more than 1,000 students in kindergarten through grade twelve. The school moved into a new, \$40 million facility in 2005, and it became the first school in Missouri to receive a ten-year extension of its charter. Over the last six years, all but three graduates of the Academy have gone on to attend college, an almost unheard-of success rate for an urban school.

Tom Bloch's first book, *Stand for the Best*, is a memoir about his journey from CEO to inner-city teacher and school founder. In the book, he shows what can be accomplished when teachers, students, and the community all stand for the best. His second book, *Many Happy Returns*, is a biography about his father Henry Bloch, cofounder of H&R Block.

Tom is Chairman of the UMKC Trustees and is President of the Endowment Fund for the Henry W. Bloch School of Management. He is also a member of the board of the UMKC Foundation and the Missouri Public Charter School Association.

Tom Bloch graduated cum laude in 1976 from Claremont McKenna College in Claremont, California. Tom and his wife Mary have two sons, Jason and Teddy.

Trina Clark James

Trina Dyan Clark James, a native of St. Louis who grew up in the Ville neighborhood, is the founder of Jamaa Learning Center and will serve in the capacity of Chief Executive Officer managing the day-to-day operations of the school and reporting to the Board. In this role, Ms. Clark James will strategically plan for the growth of Jamaa, secure and manage all operational services required by the school, and serve as the lead person for cultivating community partnerships.

Ms. Clark James most recently spent two and a half years working as the Executive Director of St. Louisans United To Attract KIPP (SUTAK). In this role, she successfully led the efforts to identify and secure the necessary human, financial, and capital resources required by KIPP for the successful startup and growth of a cluster of KIPP schools resulting in St Louis being selected as the sole expansion site for KIPP in 2007 and the first KIPP St. Louis middle school, KIPP Inspire Academy, opening in July 2009.

Prior to KIPP St. Louis, Ms. Clark James completed the two-year Broad Residency in Urban Education program at St. Louis Public Schools (SLPS), where she was the Special Assistant to Superintendent Creg Williams overseeing the development and implementation of various strategic projects aimed at achieving major public education reform within the SLPS district. Ms. Clark James began her career as a process and quality engineer at Solectron, an electronics manufacturing company in the San Francisco Bay Area, later moving on to Pinnacle Systems, a video editing equipment manufacturer also in the Bay Area. She spent the majority of her engineering career at Apple Computer, Inc. in a variety of roles at the Elk Grove, CA manufacturing site culminating with two leadership roles- New Products Program Manager and Site Test Engineering Manager.

Ms. Clark James earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering at Georgia Institute of Technology, a Master of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering at Stanford University, and a Master of Business Administration at University of California, Davis.

Alan DuBois

“ Quality schools require adequate resources, quality leadership and commitment. Providing quality schools is a community process that requires parent choice. ”

Alan DuBois was the founder/Executive Director of Genesis School from 1977-2008. Genesis School received various presidential awards including awards from the Department of Labor, Health and Human Services, and the National Alliance of Business. Genesis national awards include Blue Ribbon School of Excellence and a National Association of Partners in Education. Alan also served as an Adjunct Professor for William Jewell College from 2009-2010.

Personal awards include National Child Labor Committee, Lewis Hine Recipient, Inc. Magazine Entrepreneur of the Year-District, Kansas City *Up and Comers*, Kansas City Tomorrow Year IV, and K. C. Police Baton 2008. Alan earned his JD from American University, MA from the University of Missouri, and BA from Franklin & Marshall College. He is a member of the Virginia Bar Association.

Kirk Farmer

“ I think that it is imperative that MCPSA promotes the school quality agenda that it has articulated. Part of the charter school bargain is that charters will produce outcomes for its students that exceed the outcomes the students could achieve in non-charter school entities. If charters are not doing that, then we are not holding up our end of the bargain. Good schools should continue to receive the resources they get regardless of whether they are charter public schools or traditional public schools. Those that aren't performing should be held accountable to improve or go out of business, again regardless of whether they are charter public schools or traditional public schools. ”

Kirk Farmer is a partner in Zephyr Properties LLC, a real estate investment company located in Kansas City, Missouri. Kirk is also a board member of the Missouri Charter Public School Association and a former board member of Academie Lafayette charter school. Before forming Zephyr Properties, Kirk was Senior Vice President of Finance for Sabre Inc., a \$2.4 billion company providing technology solutions to the travel and transportation industry. In his five years with Sabre, Kirk held a series of high level financial and operational positions dealing with executive leadership, organizational revitalization, mergers & acquisitions, strategic planning, organizational development and team building, cost analysis and improvement, human resources, corporate services, process improvement and systems implementation. Prior to his work at Sabre, he held several analytical and financial management positions with American Airlines. Kirk has a Master of Business Administration in Finance from Southern Methodist University and a Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering from the University of Missouri. Kirk, his wife Lisa and their daughter Erin live in Kansas City, Missouri.

R. Crosby Kemper III

“ School choice has focused charters, independent schools and district schools on quality. While on the whole charters have performed about as well, or factoring in demographics maybe slightly better, than district schools both in Kansas City and nationally there are still too many failing schools that face no consequences. Consequences for failure is a philosophical basis of the charter school movement which is why a number of us got together with the KCMUSD last year to write an MOU on unified standards and consequences based on the value added performance model being prepared by Dr. Michael Podgursky and others. I believe very strongly in this idea and in the general accountability of charter schools. ”

Crosby Kemper III is the Director of The Kansas City Public Library and former CEO of UMB Financial Corporation. Educated at Pem-Day, Andover, Eton and Yale he has taught English at Sichuan University in Chengdu, China and been a bookseller in Grand Central Station in New York City. He is the editor of, and contributor to, *Winston Churchill: Resolution, Defiance, Magnanimity, Good Will* published by the University of Missouri Press.

In 2003-04 he chaired the Commission on the Future of Higher Education in Missouri for Governor Holden. He has served on the board of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation which operates Monticello; and the boards of The Kansas City Symphony, the Black Archives of Mid America, Union Station and Lapham's Quarterly. He helped Marilyn Strauss found the Heart of America Shakespeare Festival and was its first Board Chair. He also founded and chaired the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival. He co-founded and is Chairman of The Show-Me Institute, a libertarian public policy think tank for the state of Missouri.

In 2008 Crosby received the Difference Maker Award from The Urban League of Kansas City; and he and the Library received the Gold Medal for Libraries from the Institute for Museum and Library Services presented at the White House by former librarian, Laura Bush. In 2009 he was inducted into the Mid-America Education Hall of Fame by the Kansas City Kansas Community College Endowment Association. In 2010 he was appointed to the Missouri Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission by Governor Jay Nixon, and received the William F. Yates Medallion for Distinguished Service from William Jewell College and the 2010 Harmony Humanitarian Hoffman Legacy Award.

Millie Krna

As the Executive Director, Mrs. Millie Krna is the leader of all of the Brookside programs - Charter School, Extended Care, and Preschool. With 20 years experience as a Middle School English teacher, and 5 years experience as a school administrator.

Mrs. Krna started at Brookside in 2000 to help create the charter school. The following years brought expansion and changes through three buildings and additional sections of each grade level. The charter school is showing academic growth with dramatically improved MAP scores for 2011.

Mrs. Krna believes that all children can learn and that the school's and families' responsibilities are to work with the children for them to be proactive and active workers in their learning. This year marks the beginning of Brookside's Middle School with the vision to prepare their students for any high school in Kansas City.

Mrs. Krna enjoys working with the children, families, and teachers to bring Brookside's mission and vision into reality.

Michael Podgursky

“ Charter schools can raise the quality of public education by serving as laboratories for innovation. Parents are free to choose these schools for their children, and entrepreneurial school leaders and teachers can combine to deliver more focused and coherent approaches to education. Charter sponsors must set high academic standards for charter approval and renewal. It is my hope that MCPSA will be an important voice in developing and sustaining high academic standards for charters and by extension all public schools. ”

Michael Podgursky is Professor of Economics at the University of Missouri – Columbia, where he served as department chair from 1995-2005, and an education fellow at the George W. Bush Institute at Southern Methodist University. His research focuses on the economics of education. He has written many articles in the area, with a primary focus on educator labor markets and compensation redesign. His recent research has been focused on the labor market effects of teacher retirement benefit systems. He serves on the board of editors of Education Finance and Policy, Peabody Journal of Education, and advisory boards for various statistical agencies and research institutes. He is a co-investigator at the National Center for Performance Incentives at Vanderbilt University, and the Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research at AIR, two national research centers funded by the Institute on Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education. He has served as a consultant for school districts, K-12 non-profits, foundations, and governments on school finance and educator compensation.

Bill Ross, Vice President

“ A quality education, more specifically literacy, is the last chance for many children to lead a healthy and productive life. Charter schools and the MCPSA represent choice for a positive change in our public education firmament. MCPSA is committed to support and advance high quality programs and provides needed assistance to our members. Advocacy and accountability are core values of MCPSA. It is being recognized as a source of quality support that will enable our members to create positive outcomes for the most precious resource of all, our students. ”

Bill Ross is an original board member and Vice President of the Missouri Charter Public School Association. He is chairman and past President of the board of Della Lamb community services and charter school as well as a board member of the scholarship committee for the Kansas City Securities Association. This fund with approximately \$1,000,000 is administered by the Greater K.C. Community Foundation and is one of the largest private scholarship funds in Kansas City.

Past community service for Bill includes serving as a board member and various offices, including Vice Chairman and Finance committee head, over more than 10 years at KCPT Channel 19. Bill has been deeply involved in advancing and improving education activities most of his adult life. As president of the board, he was a leader in developing internal board support for the first charter school to open in Missouri, Della Lamb.

As a longtime board member and scholarship committee member of the Kansas City Securities Association, Bill has had the opportunity to review and help to award 4 year scholarships to several hundred under privileged Kansas City youth over the last 20+ years.

While serving several terms in the 80's and 90's and in various officer capacities at the Public Television station, KCPT channel 19, Bill had an opportunity to observe and help advance various child oriented education programs.

Bill is the current Vice President of Perkins, Smart & Boyd, Inc.

Amber Simpson, President

“ I believe that it is the fundamental right of every child to receive a "free and appropriate public education" that will equip them to become productive citizens - being economically independent, civically active and respectful of others. Public charter schools in Missouri have the unique privilege of being a choice for families seeking high quality educational options. For those families that have made the choice to entrust us with their most precious resource - their children - we must do all in our power to deliver on the promise of providing the academic and social environments that will prepare our students to create positive, productive futures for themselves and their communities. The role of MCPSA is to provide both technical and advocacy support to these schools so that they can create and implement sustainable, high quality environments for their students. I am a firm believer in school choice, high standards and the ability of all students to achieve their personal best - that is why I support MCPSA. ”

Amber is an international business leader with over a decade of experience in strategy, business development, operations and management. In her role at U.S. Bank, she has supported International Treasury Management sales, implementation and training for the Lower Midwest and Southeast regions, as well as serve as the Business Development contact for U.S. Bank's international banking networks – including IBOS (Europe, North & South America) and Standard Chartered Asian Gateway. Most recently, she has been promoted to the National Multicultural Markets Manager, where she will focus on strategic business development and building strong corporate citizenship for the bank across its 24 state footprint and beyond.

She began her professional experience in International Business while working abroad in Paris, France, as the Assistant to the International Commercial Director for a prominent fashion house. After returning to the States, she joined a leading Customer Relationship Management firm and helped to set up support teams for Hispanic markets. Later she spent several years at CPI Corporation where she served in many internationally focused positions, including managing the technical support center for Canada and Puerto Rico and launching the international expansion of the company into Mexico. From CPI, she moved to The Home Depot where she worked as the Regional Program Manager for the Store Leadership Program covering stores across the Midwestern Region.

Amber is currently working towards her PhD in Education Policy at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. She earned an MBA (Executive Masters of International Business) from Saint Louis University and a Bachelor of Arts, French Language and Literature/International Business, from Washington University.