



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SARAH TOPAL

Hello 2025!

Dear Friends and Supporters,

CJM is growing and thriving! We've completed much-needed repairs on our housing for women, ensuring a safe and supportive environment for those we serve. Our team is stronger than ever, with new talent bringing fresh energy and expertise to our mission. Behind the scenes, we're enhancing operational efficiency to better serve our clients and community. In our current climate, we remain steadfast in our commitment to providing exceptional services and supporting our community partners. With these incredible advancements, we're looking forward to a year filled with impact, innovation, and hope. Stay tuned—there's so much more to come!

Executive Director

In this newsletter
you can expect:

Community Updates

Mark Your Calendars;
2025 Events!

Volunteer Highlight

Staff Appreciation

Client Success Story

Donation Link

Community News



Recently, CJM's Executive Director, Sarah Topal and Director of Reentry Programs, Stefanie Moore met with Kathy Green of the American League St. Louis to accept the generous donation of dozens of children's books.

These books are a blessing to CJM's upcoming reunification apartments aimed at helping women affected by incarceration in rebuilding a relationship with their children.

The books provide an opportunity to engage in meaningful activities to restrengthen the maternal bonds. A parental relationship is important to the reentry process.

Big thank you to Kathy Green and the American League St. Louis!



Construction Update: Spring and Dunnica

CJM acquired the 16-unit apartment building in 2019. With generous funding from the Affordable Housing Commission and the Mental Health Board, rehab was able to begin.

The building has been a massive rehab project involving new electric, plumbing, flooring, appliances and refreshed paint. As the apartments became habitable, CJM clients were housed there as they returned to the community from incarceration.

CJM is proud to announce the last 5 apartments are in the final stages of rehab completion. These 5 apartments are vital to provide additional shelter and stability to ensure our clients have the best chance to rebuild their lives.



Mark Your Calendars! Events for 2025

- Consider Donating 5/8 to GIVESTL Day
- Secure your Trivia Night Tickets
- More Information coming soon about CJM's Gala and Holiday Event. Visit our website for updates -

DONATE



BUY NOW

CLICK HERE



EVENTS 2025

MAY 08 GIVESTL DAY

JUNE 07

TRIVIA NIGHT

ST. JAMES THE GREATER GYM
6401 WADE AVENUE, ST. LOUIS, MO 63139

JULY 26

SUMMER CELEBRATION

IL MONASTERO BANQUET CENTER
3050 OLIVE ST, ST. LOUIS, MO 63103

SEPT 04

KEYS & CANVAS GALA

21C MUSEUM HOTEL
1528 LOCUST ST, ST. LOUIS, MO 63103

DEC 06

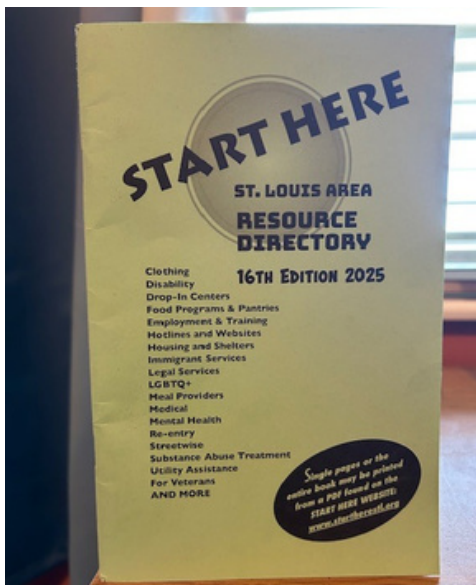
HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

IL MONASTERO BANQUET CENTER
3050 OLIVE ST, ST. LOUIS, MO 63103



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
WWW.CJMSTLOUIS.ORG

The 2025 and 16th Edition of the START HERE St. Louis Area Resource Directory is Available Now!



Through generous donations and the hard work of staff and volunteers, CJM is proud to offer this year's Start Here Resource Directory Guide.

The guide is a comprehensive list of St. Louis area need-based organizations that is broken up into chapters to help individuals easily locate the resources.

Guides can be requested by clicking this [link](#) or call 314-652-8062

Volunteer Highlights

Meet Ginny McDonald:

A Champion of First Services

With a bright smile and a friendly hello, Ginny comes into CJM's First Services office to start her volunteer work as she has for over 3 years. Ginny provides St. Louis' in-need community members with foundational items, such as hygiene products, clothing and bus passes.

Ginny thinks she has one of the best volunteer jobs at CJM because she has first-hand experience with the clients and shares that her favorite part of the job is listening to the stories of those CJM serves. "This is a population on the margins that need a lot of help and hearing the stories of determination and resiliency, you can't help but have admiration."

Ginny is a SLU undergraduate alum and has achieved a master's degree in biology from University of California. After her studies, Ginny moved back to her community of St. Louis and spent the next 30 years teaching in the Biology Department at St. Louis Community College-Meramec.

Over the years, Ginny has volunteered at a number of places that serve children, including BicycleWorks and St. Louis Public Schools. After retiring, she joined the Ignatian Volunteer Corps and chose CJM as her volunteer site.

Ginny spoke toward her interest in the population CJM serves, her enthusiasm toward the new experience and challenge of working with adults, while stating it doesn't hurt that the "staff is great!" Her volunteer work at CJM is a constant reminder to always be grateful.

CJM is the grateful one to have Ginny! Volunteering several days a week, her infectious smile and calming presence is a gift to all she encounters within the organization.



Staff Appreciation

CJM Partners with St. Louis Public Radio to Raise Awareness



Jerome Arnold, CJM Case Manager



We're excited to share that St. Louis Public Radio has published a new feature on Criminal Justice Ministry and the critical work we do to support individuals returning from incarceration.

The article highlights our Release to Rent program, which provides stable housing to those who need it most—because we know that a place to call home is the first step toward rebuilding a life, securing employment, accessing behavioral health services, maintaining sobriety, and truly thriving.

[Click Here to Read Full Article](#)

Welcome to the CJM Team! Case Manager Phillip Brooks



As new case manager at CJM, Phillip is committed to using both his lived and professional experience as his purpose for doing this work.

Phillip spent the last 10 years in the reentry space as a Community Health Worker serving the St. Louis City and County region. In that same time, Mr. Brooks has worked hand in hand with health, social service, and law enforcement agencies in the area to identify the needs of the community, create solutions and implement the changes that give our community members the best chance at a quality lifestyle.

He has a very dynamic skillset and understanding of the landscape that individuals from marginalized communities encounter especially those that are re-entering society after being involved with the criminal justice system. This gift has allowed him to live in his passion while helping others live in theirs.

Client Highlight: Terry L. Huey



CJM works tirelessly to help those we serve regain their own autonomy. Nothing pleases our organization more than hearing and sharing stories of clients' successes. Below is one of those amazing stories of resilience, rebuild and gratitude in the client Terry's own words.

Criminal Justice Ministry (CJM) has been a great blessing to me since I paroled out of the Missouri Department of Corrections on 8/1/24, into their transitional housing program for Veterans. After 17 years of incarceration, they have provided me, and continue to provide me, the transitional support and guidance I needed to again become a responsible, moral, law-abiding, productive person.

They assigned me a Case Manager, Carl Williams, who has been helping me from Day One, when he picked me up from the Greyhound Bus station, and he has not stopped assisting me since then. He's been invaluable to me. He spearheaded getting me everything I needed for my daily living, and he has also given me good guidance on other matters. I'm very thankful for Carl.

Today, just 7 months since I was released on Parole, I have: a good job, Social Security Retirement income, a 722 FICO Credit Score, 3 bank accounts, and 4 credit cards (which I maintain zero balances on). I also have a very comfortable apartment to live in, and plenty of food to eat and clothes to wear.

Yes, I count my blessings for CJM and Carl Williams. It hard to say, for sure, how my transition would have gone without them, but I know it's been a blessing from God to have their help and support. My sincere "Thank You" goes out to the entire CJM staff!

Please consider CJM's good works,
and consider donating

[Click to Donate](#)

Thank You for Your Ongoing Support!