

Join us to honor the 2019 Regional Leadership Award recipients on June 14.  
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# 23RD ANNUAL REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

## MID-AMERICA REGIONAL COUNCIL

**Friday, June 14, 2019**

11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

Westin Kansas City at Crown Center  
1 East Pershing Road  
Kansas City, Missouri 64108



## 2019 Regional Leadership Award Recipients

Join us as we honor the 2019 Regional Leadership Award recipients who have advanced a vision of a strong, healthy region, demonstrated commitment to its growth, and encouraged others to support and work towards that vision.



**MARIA MEYERS**

Founder, KCSOURCELINK, and Vice Provost and Executive Director, UMKC Innovation Center

Maria Meyers helped put the Kansas City region on the map as a place where entrepreneurs can thrive and where innovation is encouraged. When she founded KCSOURCELINK in 2003, Maria built an entrepreneurial infrastructure from the ground up. Today, KCSOURCELINK is a national model that serves 3,000 entrepreneurs every year, connecting them to the resources they need, when they need them. Under her leadership, the UMKC Innovation Center has built a network of programs that support startups at every stage, from proof of concept to maturity.



**DAVID SLATER**

Mayor, City of Pleasant Valley

Pleasant Valley is a small city — population 3,043 — but Mayor David Slater has a statewide sphere of influence. He has chaired the Missouri Metro Mayors caucus for six years, building a coalition of mayors who work with their counterparts in the St. Louis metro and across the state to influence state legislation. David is also a strong advocate for transportation in the Kansas City region, leading efforts to build consensus around key projects such as the new Buck O'Neil Bridge and new KCI airport terminal. He believes a thriving region is essential for cities like his to thrive.



### **DESIREE MONIZE**

Executive Director, Avenue of Life

As the founder and executive director of Avenue of Life, a faith-based nonprofit organization created in 2013, Desiree Monize is a strong believer in the collective impact model, where organizations mobilize around a common agenda, working together to solve complex community problems. Under her leadership, Avenue of Life built a program that recycles 10,000 mattresses a year and provides jobs and skills training for hard-to-employ individuals. She also partnered with KCK public schools to address homelessness with a holistic approach that has reduced the number of homeless students by 50 percent since 2015.



### **WEST CENTRAL MISSOURI COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY**

Serving a nine-county area that overlaps with the MARC region, West Central Missouri Community Action Agency has been on the front lines of the war on poverty for 53 years. West Central not only offers a range of services for people in crisis, including a food pantry, housing assistance and help with utility bills, but also works to address the root causes of poverty, with education, job training and goal-setting programs that empower people and families to become more self-sufficient. In 2017, West Central launched a community development corporation called New Growth to help grow rural economies and strengthen communities. With 330 employees at 34 locations, West Central is fostering positive, lasting change.

### **Distinguished Board Service**

#### **RON SHAFFER**

Past MARC Board Chair and Johnson County Commissioner



The MARC Board of Directors will recognize Ron Shaffer for Distinguished Board Service. Ron served on the MARC Board from 2001 to 2018, including a two-year term as chair in 2005-2006. During his tenure he also represented MARC on the National Association of Regional Councils, serving as its president in 2016-2017. Ron's long career in public service included 10 years on the Prairie Village city council, 16 years as mayor of Prairie Village, and four years on the Johnson County Board of Commissioners, along with leadership roles in numerous civic organizations.

## **Keynote Speaker**

**"The Imperative of Public Service: Regional Action with National Impact"**

**Thomas W. Ross** is president of the Volcker Alliance, a nonprofit working to advance effective management of government agencies and helping governments achieve results that matter to citizens. Ross served as president of the University of North Carolina system from 2011 to 2016 and continues to serve as president emeritus.



Ross' presentation will focus on the future of public service and strategies for regional collaboration, including:

- **Building strong partnerships across sectors** – aligning public agencies, nonprofits and civic leadership to find effective solutions community problems.
- **Winning the race for talent** – creating strong collaborations between government agencies and universities to cultivate a talent pipeline for the public sector workforce.
- **Getting results that matter** – working together on a common agenda and across boundaries to achieve results that make a difference in people's lives.

[Register online>>](#)

\$50 per person • \$450 per table of 10 • Price includes lunch and parking



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