



Media Advisory
October 4, 2017

For more information:
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(ST LOUIS, Mo)..... **"Persisting and Organizing to Win"** is the theme of Empower Missouri's 2017 annual conference, scheduled for the Sheraton Clayton Plaza Hotel on October 5 and 6. Empower Missouri will be joined by a diverse list of religious, labor and community organizations in exploring current working conditions and ways that advocates can secure public policy change for the sake of healthy families.

The conference begins at 10 a.m. on Thursday, October 5, and ends at noon on Friday, October 6. Keynote speakers scheduled to appear include:

- **Nancy Cross**, Missouri Director/Vice President of SEIU Local 1
- Rev. **Traci Blackmon**, Executive Minister of Justice and Witness Ministries in the United Church of Christ and pastor at Christ the King United Church of Christ, Florissant
- Rabbi **Susan Talve**, founding rabbi of Central Reform Congregation and a pioneer in building community between Christians, Jews and Muslim
- **Tiffany Dena Loftin**, Senior Program Specialist in Community Advocacy and Partnership Engagement (CAPE), Center for Social Justice at the National Education Association

Jeanette Mott Oxford, Empower Missouri executive director said, "Missouri has very high rates of food and housing insecurity among working families. This conference allows us to explore causes and to discuss evidence-driven solutions."

In addition to educational programming, the conference includes a Thursday evening awards banquet, headlined by Rev. Blackmon and Rabbi Talve. Awards for outstanding community service and advocacy will be presented to Rev. Martin Rafanan, Sen. Jill Schupp, John Chasoff, Chris Grant, Jamie Rehmann, and Sayer Johnson.

Founded in 1901 as the Missouri Conference on Charities and Corrections, Empower Missouri (www.EmpowerMissouri.org) advocates for the well-being of all Missourians through civic leadership, education, and research. Empower Missouri's work focuses especially on basic human needs and issues of access and equity.

Co-sponsors for the annual conference include Missouri Conference, NAACP; Missouri Faith Voices; Women's Voices Raised for Social Justice; Vision for Children at Risk; Places for People; AFL-CIO; Communication Workers of America Local 6355; Organization for Black Struggle; National Council of Jewish Women-St. Louis; Missouri Budget Project; the Clark-Fox Policy Institute; SEIU, Local 1; Missouri Jobs with Justice; the Workers Education Society; the Missouri Trial Attorneys Association; Ameren; the St. Louis Labor Council; Dowd Bennett, LLP; and Schuchat, Cook, and Werner.

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