

# INVEST IN PEOPLE

It's 2040 and St. Joseph has the top-rated school system in Missouri and the highest concentration of skilled workers with post-high school training in the state. When you visit our early childhood centers you see children not only getting an academic head start but working together and solving problems. Missouri Western State University is an internationally-recognized institution focusing on future-shaping programs related to population health and biotechnology, attracting students from around the world. The percentage of families living in poverty has been sliced in half because St. Joseph has addressed access to basic needs like transportation, food and safe housing and placed health care specialists in the field to help those who need help, and hope. In St. Joseph, we don't just say "everyone belongs," we live it by ensuring that those on the margins who need the most help get it in the most innovative ways possible.

## 2040 GOALS

By 2040, our reputation as a community that values and invests in education helps all people connect to resources for a better future. It creates a quality of life that residents and visitors alike embrace, making St. Joseph a place where people want to live:

- St. Joseph realizes that ensuring all children have access to early learning activities is the key to a successful educational system. Working with business, educators and social service agencies, the community adopts a program that offers all children an opportunity for early learning and discovery.
- Our award-winning public and private schools focus on career-based skills, post-secondary preparation and alignment with current and future jobs. The program builds on the future approach of incorporating stackable credentials beginning in high school and through post-secondary education.
- St. Joseph creates a culture that values education at all levels and accepts responsibility of ensuring all students are prepared for success. This begins with the importance of regular school attendance and continues with the understanding that all high school freshmen complete their senior year and graduate with at least 10 career experiences. Students are prepared and ready to continue post-secondary training and education. The result is that St. Joseph has the highest rate of educational attainment in Missouri.
- The community understands the importance of investing in local education and builds a case to fund the local School District at levels that create innovative learning environments and provide instructional resources that lead to awarding-winning schools.

- Our public, private and nonprofit sectors are recognized nationally for their success in collaboratively addressing poverty. Focus includes both generational poverty and situational poverty. Agencies work together on shared goals, shared metrics, and shared accountability, resulting in our poverty rate being cut in half.
- MWSU focuses on community involvement and engagement, leading St. Joseph to be considered a "university town" and providing an environment that inspires innovation and attracts sought-after talent.
- St. Joseph has one of the top hospitals and medical practices in the country in Mosaic Life Care. Ensuring that Mosaic can attract and retain a quality workforce is a community priority. The community working with Mosaic identifies issues related to educational programs, talent attraction and quality of life amenities that serve to attract and retain the best and brightest in the medical profession to St. Joseph. Mosaic Life Care is considered a top hospital in the country.
- Working with our local health care providers, the community creates an early intervention program for those individuals challenged with mental health issues and addiction. The program is designed to offer individuals and families support that leads to self-sufficiency and stability.
- Learning from other communities, St. Joseph develops worker training and housing programs aimed at those experiencing homelessness, addressing both the short- and long-term causes.
- Career readiness requires a robust education continuum that includes primary/secondary education and two and four year degrees. St. Joseph creates this continuum through public and private investment and collaboration with our local educational partners.
- Local health care providers, the faith-based community and the private sector engage the elderly population to understand challenges and needs and establish programs that allow this growing population to access services and assistance. This allows the elderly to maintain an independent lifestyle in a supportive community environment.

### What “positive disruptions” would increase our performance in this area?

- An anonymous donor or group of donors creates a scholarship program that provides funding of training and education beyond high school. Modeled after the Kalamazoo Promise, the program provides full tuition for post-secondary education for any graduate of St. Joseph high schools.
- A coalition of investors, local developers, and planners work together with the City to address access issues associated with grocery stores, safe and affordable housing and to offer better access to jobs for residents who have transportation challenges.
- The community approves a multi-million dollar bond issue to provide the resources to update educational infrastructure in St. Joseph.
- The School District, in partnership with MCC and MWSU creates a post-secondary campus at Hillyard Technical Center to include a new building that provides further instruction and training.
- The community receives a federal grant that provides the resources to implement a new model of addressing mental health and addiction needs in St. Joseph.