

2015 MLK Spirit Awardee

Dr. John A. Wright

John A. Wright served on the University City Board of Education from 1976 - 1982 including a term as school board president. He is a native St. Louisian. After graduating from Sumner High School in the St. Louis Public School District, he earned a B.A. from Harris Teachers College (now Harris-Stowe State University) and a M.E.D. and Ph.D. from St. Louis University. In addition to being a Fulbright Scholar in India, his post-graduate studies include Harvard, Dartmouth College and Loyola University in Chicago, and as a trainee with the U.S. Department of Justice, Community Relations Division, in Washington, D.C.

His long and distinguished career as an academic leader includes interim superintendent of schools for St. Louis Public Schools and Normandy School District as well as assistant superintendent for Ferguson-Florissant School District.

Dr. Wright has been an engaged member of the education profession. He organized the first Teacher's and Principal's Academy for the Private School Federation in Bangkok, Thailand; established the first pre-teacher training program between a school district and St. Louis Community College (the first in the state); served as public hearing chairman for the Governor's Vocational Education Advisory Council; established the minority recruitment program for St. Louis County school districts; and organized the Missouri Education Policy Fellowship Program for the Institute of Educational Leadership, located in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Wright is an active member of the metropolitan St. Louis community and has served on numerous boards and committees. He presently serves on the boards of Webster University, St. Louis World Trade Center, Alliance Française of St. Louis, Regional Arts Commission; and the St. Louis, Missouri--Senegal Sister Cities Committee along with other professional and community affiliations and has received numerous awards.

Dr. Wright also is the author of 13 books about regional history, including:

- Kinloch: Missouri's First All Black Town (2000)
- The Ville, St. Louis, Missouri - Black America Series (2001)
- University City - Images of Missouri (2002)
- St. Louis: Disappearing Black Communities (2005)
- Extraordinary Black Missourians: Pioneers, Leaders, Performers, Athletes and Other Notables (2013)*

*co-authored by Sylvia A. Wright