

# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Help Hazelwood Get Healthy campaign wins NCI Community Development Leadership Award

The Help Hazelwood Get Healthy public health campaign has been selected to receive a 2021 North County Incorporated Community Development Leadership Award. The campaign, which encourages people to wear masks, wash their hands, and practice social distancing, was launched by Hazelwood School District (HSD) in October of 2020 to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

At the start of the 2020-2021 school year, all HSD students were attending school virtually and COVID-19 infection rates were climbing throughout North St. Louis County. Under the guidance of Anthony Kiekow, Director of Communications, and Christian Bertel, Coordinator of Health Services, the campaign played a key role in the district being able to resume face-to-face instruction in March of 2021.

"The campaign being recognized by North County Incorporated is wonderful news, but what excites me the most, is the positive impact it has had on the health of our students, staff, faculty, parents, and community members," said Dr. Nettie Collins-Hart, Superintendent of HSD.

The campaign officially started with a free drive-thru resource event at Hazelwood Central High School. During the event, more than 5,000 resource kits, which included thermometers, disposable masks, and information pamphlets about COVID-19 symptoms/testing, were distributed to community members. Additional

campaign highlights include healthy billboard messages, contests to keep stakeholders engaged, and compelling radio and newspaper advertisements.

HSD students took on a leadership role throughout the campaign. Their voices were heard loud and clear in the public service announcement video, "Mask, Wash, Distance." The emotional video, which has been viewed more than 3,000 times across HSD communication platforms, features a call to action for all North County residents.

In early 2021, the campaign evolved to include COVID-19 vaccine education. To help HSD community members separate facts from myths, an in-depth interview about the COVID-19 vaccine was conducted with Dr. Matifadza Hlatshwayo Davis. The Washington University School of Medicine infectious diseases physician has been featured on major news outlets, including CNN, CBS, and BBC.

Finally, in March, the campaign partnered with the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis and the Missouri National Guard to vaccinate more than 700 district employees and program partners. The next phase of the Help Hazelwood Get Healthy campaign will focus on vaccination opportunities for eligible HSD students.

District representatives will accept the award at the NCI Annual Leadership Breakfast on Sept. 17.

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## 'TALENT' from cover

year is his last year with the program.

"I've performed all over the place – (in) metro St. Louis," added Staten. "And I have (gone) out of town and did performances for the Boys and Girls Club of America."

According to Staten, he chose "Not My Father's Son" by Cyndi Lauper, which is about facing hard times with a father, to connect with all listeners of his performance. He stated that he hoped he would win the competition, but he was more excited to see the other performers.

The teen who recalled his past self "eye-opening" performance as Michael Jackson's scarecrow role in the *Wiz*, cites some of his inspirations as Adele, Beyonce, Bruno Mars, and Stevie Wonder.

"They push and inspire me with their music to tell my story," shared Staten.

Staten was not the only winner from North County. Amani Goodson (Parkway North High School), Amiyah Harlan (Parkway Central High School), Amaiya Knuckles Johnson and Ravyn Stubblefield (Hazelwood Central High School), Amiyah McClure (University City High School) and Anijah Warlick (Cardinal Ritter College Prep) were third place winners of the \$4,000 scholarship award for their contemporary dance performance to 'Ultralight Beam' by Kanye West. The second place prize of a \$6,000 scholarship went to Aubory Bugg, Vocalist and Guitarist from Granite City High School.



*Photo courtesy ProPhotoSTL.com*

Troy Staten, a McCluer High School's 2021 graduate, recently took home an \$8,000 scholarship as an award for winning first place in this year's St. Louis Teen Talent Competition, which was pre-recorded at the Fox Theatre April 9-10 and aired on PBS May 24.

Staten's performance and the entire competition is available for online streaming at [ninepbs.org/teentalent](https://www.ninepbs.org/teentalent).

"I am still going forward with my dream – I will continue," states Staten. "My name will be world-wide soon and I am really confident in it."

Teens may now register for the 12th Annual St. Louis Teen Talent Competition at <https://www.foxpacf.org>.

- **Ravyn Stubblefield (Hazelwood Central High School)**
- **Amaiya Knuckles-Johnson (Hazelwood Central High School)**

**Third place winners of the \$4,000 scholarship award for their contemporary dance performance.**



## St. Louis natives to handle Olympic play-by-play duties for Tokyo Games



ST. LOUIS- Matt Winer, the Hazelwood West graduate and former local sportscaster at KSDK who went on to ESPN, and is currently with Turner Sports, was introduced Thursday as a play-by-play announcer for NBC's coverage of this summer's Olympic Games in Tokyo.

Winer, one of a handful of announcers for other networks who will be working the games, will call handball.

It is the first Olympic assignment for the University of Missouri alum.