

# RISING UP

AN UPDATE FROM TWIN CITIES R!SE

TWIN  
CITIES **R!SE**

## THE **2020 RISE** TO THE **OCCASION** VIRTUAL GALA

On October 11th, Twin Cities R!SE hosted our first ever virtual Gala. We had a great turnout, with over 330 households registered to attend this event, and over 117 people registering who were new to Twin Cities Rise. The virtual Gala was hosted by our CEO & President, Tom Streitz, alongside our Empowerment Institute's Training Manager, Nicole Pillow Johnson. It was an incredibly inspiring night. Tom and Nicole talked with program graduates Bridgette and Adarryl about their journeys to finding personal and career success with Twin Cities R!SE, and we listened to powerful and soulful songs from the talented Jamela Pettiford. Most importantly, we raised over \$225,000 to continue the work of empowering individuals to transform their lives and reach their career goals. Throughout this challenging year, Twin Cities R!SE supporters have shown up in new ways to ensure that the work we do continues. We are so grateful. If you missed this event, you are still able to view it at [www.twincitiesrise.org/gala](http://www.twincitiesrise.org/gala).



## Dear TCR Friends and Supporters,

As we close out 2020, this unforgettable year, and enter our nation's season of gratitude, I want to thank you for standing with Twin Cities RISE and supporting our mission.

Your support made it possible for low-income job seekers to receive career training, do internal social-emotional work through Personal Empowerment, and to start jobs that gave them financial stability in a tumultuous year, including a global pandemic. The Rise Together giving campaign allowed participants to receive Chromebooks and technology grants that made it possible for them to train and work remotely.

Our Empowerment Institute team has provided healing throughout communities around the state affected by the murder of George Floyd and the outcries in neighborhoods that followed this painful injustice. We were able to train with leaders of the Little Earth community, so that they could in turn help facilitate emotional unloading with community members that was critically needed.

Our partnerships with local employers continue to grow despite Covid-19, through our Career Pathways training program. We are currently offering a call center and customer service track, as well as a facilities and maintenance pathway.

In parting, the heart of TCR, our work to end generational poverty and help lift people into economic independence continues to provide hope in a troubled time. The beacon that is TCR will continue to shine whether in person, or virtually, to assist those with the most challenges to employment, while addressing the systemic and personal barriers to success. I am deeply grateful and humbled for all your support to transform lives and further our important mission. Let us work and look to brighter, more hopeful days ahead.



## Bridgett's Story

Bridgett came to Twin Cities RISE, as an empty nester, receiving unemployment benefits and living in Section 8 housing. She had raised her daughter to adulthood, and was unsure of what was next. Idle time had led to some poor decisions, and created new hurdles for her to overcome, in regard to her background and driving record.

**“Even though I had two Associate Degrees, I was still stuck thinking I was only able to earn \$12-\$14 per hour. I was afraid of job titles and education requirements. By working with TCR staff on utilizing my work experience and educational background, and practicing interviews, I was able to learn how to search and apply for the bigger opportunities,”** — shared Bridgett

### How has your life changed since coming to TCR?

*Well, I've started a career position as a Family Navigator with Northside Achievement Zone. Six months after beginning this position, I was able to move off of Section 8, and begin paying market rent, all while maintaining my bill payments and repairing my credit. And next month in January, I will be celebrating one-year as a first-time home buyer!!*

### What did you gain from Personal Empowerment training?

*Personal Empowerment allowed me to see my weaknesses and turn them into strengths. I was able to learn how to build and maintain healthy relationships, both in the workplace and in my personal life.*

### What would you like to say to the donors that make Twin Cities RISE possible?

*TCR is an organization that gives a person the opportunity to rediscover themselves, and develop a take-charge attitude, while setting goals. When you give to TCR, it creates a ripple effect, and changes not just one person's life, but a family and a community. Thank you.*



Tom Streitz,  
CEO and President

To learn more about the impact that your gifts make, visit [twincitiesrise.org](https://twincitiesrise.org).



## SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

# DONZEL LEGGETT

Donzel A. Leggett, Vice President, Global Manufacturing Excellence, Global Platforms and ASLA Supply Chain with General Mills, Inc., will serve as Twin Cities R!SE's newest Board Chair. He has been a board member and supporter of Twin Cities R!SE since 2016.

### How did you come to be a supporter and board member of Twin Cities R!SE?

"Steve Rothschild, former General Mills Vice President, and TCR Founder and Board Chair Emeritus, came over and told me the story about how he decided to make a difference in generational poverty. And I was very inspired by him. Steve took a year off to immerse himself in North Minneapolis, and learn deeply about the problem and issues that many faced. He shared how TCR is the only organization in the state to receive funding through the accountability bill, Pay for Performance. He also told me that the average wage that participants earned after graduating from Twin Cities R!SE would literally lift them out of poverty and place them in living wage jobs. I said, this feels like the kind of organization that I want to be a part of, one that is really doing something for the right reasons, and actually making an impact."

Donzel believes that it is the right thing to do, helping people who no one else wants to help, people who have had trouble in their lives.

### What other organizations do you support?

Donzel also sits on the board of Launch Ministry, a local nonprofit, located in Chaska, Minnesota, that assists young adults from challenging backgrounds with life skills to help them achieve stable housing, jobs, and the skills necessary to successfully "adult". "This organization sees the value in inclusion and diversity, and recognizes that as a community, we have to do everything that we can to help all of our young people to be successful," shares Donzel.

In October, sparked by the murder of George Floyd, Donzel also started his own non-profit called the Anti-Racism Commitment Coalition (ARCC). "I felt like I needed to do something to actively eradicate racism and hate in our communities, our country, and in the world. It's time to break down the structural and systemic racism in our society, whether it's laws, whether it's issues, or whether it's property ownership, all the things that we know as barriers at Twin Cities R!SE," said Donzel.

### What would you say to those thinking about supporting Twin Cities R!SE?

"It is one of the best investments that you can make with your money for societal change that exists today. It's that simple. We are one of the very few organizations that is focusing on societal change. Twin Cities R!SE literally measures the direct impact that we are making, not only with the people that we serve, but to society in general, whether it's the City of Minneapolis, the City of St. Paul, or the state of Minnesota, we can literally show you that for every dollar you give us the return on that investment is significantly significant. **It's safer than the stock market.**

I am very proud of Twin Cities R!SE. I think that it is a very unique place. TCR is a true success and an example of what can be done and what is possible in this country, when you have the right people focused on a positive objective. It is definitely a honor to serve as only the third chair ever for this organization."

*Donzel will begin his term as Board Chair with Twin Cities R!SE in January 2021.*

# TWIN CITIES R!SE

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## New Tools, New Career!

Recently, Lowe's Home Improvement and the Minnesota Multi-Housing Association (MHA) partnered with Twin Cities R!SE to gift brand new tool kits to our Facilities & Maintenance participant trainees.

Deondre picked up his toolkit this week, just in time to begin his new job with RE!! We share in Deondre's excitement of starting a new career job, in spite of the pandemic and just before the holidays! "This is the best job I have ever had and it will make it possible to have a great Christmas this year!, said Deondre. Because of his training with TCR, Deondre was able to more than double his annual earnings, and begin a job with full benefits.

Thank you Lowe's and MHA for your partnership.



Did you know that you can support Twin Cities R!SE while you shop for holiday gifts?!

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You shop. Amazon gives. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. Simply begin your shopping at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), and select Twin Cities R!SE as your charity of choice.