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## **More Than \$400,000 Raised to Support St. Louis Area At-Risk Youth in “Evening of Hope”**

**St. Louis – October 28, 2014** – This past Friday, at the Palladium in downtown St. Louis, more than \$400,000 was raised to provide much-needed support and resources for dozens of the St. Louis area’s academically capable children-in-need as part of the annual [Boys Hope Girls Hope of St. Louis](#) “Evening of Hope” celebration. Boys Hope Girls Hope, a St. Louis-based nonprofit organization, is a youth development program for at-risk youth who demonstrate the drive and ability to succeed in and outside of the classroom. The funds raised through the event will sustain the annual operations of the nationally recognized program, which currently helps nearly 75 young people through its residential and non-residentially based college preparatory, access and completion services.

“At Boys Hope Girls Hope, we are committed to helping children-in-need overcome disadvantages and embark on lives of academic attainment, career productivity and servant leadership,” says executive Director Brian Hipp. “It is through the generosity of our donors and supporters that we are able to invest in these future leaders of our community and provide a safe and nurturing environment to position them for success.”

Several of the St. Louis area’s most prominent business organizations and leaders joined in to demonstrate their support for the organization, including title sponsor, Emerson, whose CEO, David Farr, announced a \$450,000 pledge to assist the organization in its expansion efforts as he received the Fr. Paul Sheridan Reflection of Hope award, named in the spirit of the program’s founder.

“Emerson is committed to Boys Hope Girls Hope because it changes the lives of young people and has strong and deep commitment of its staff, leadership and board,” says Farr. “I have to say, in the environment we face in St. Louis today, given the national attention to issues that have risen from recent tragic events, more attention ought to be paid to the work that is happening here. Boys Hope Girls Hope is a unique model that works”

Also honored at the event were John and Joan Vatterott, who were bestowed the “Heart of Hope” award, given for heroic and invaluable service and generosity to the mission and in recognition of the 37 years of support they have provided for the program.

But the event was not just about honoring donors and supporters, but sharing and celebrating the success of the program, as Boys Hope Girls Hope alumnus and event keynote speaker Larry Phillips explained: “The Boys Hope Girls Hope program served as a safe haven; a place

that provided a positive atmosphere that shielded me from the negative influences of my neighborhood – the constant drive-by shootings, immense amount of drug activity, and the general lack of effort and concern amongst my peers in regard to academics.”

Phillips went on to graduate from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with his B.A. in Risk Management and Insurance and now is a Production Account Executive at Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. and works in its Public Entity and Scholastic Division. However, he was quick to point out that while he was proud of his personal accomplishments, there was still more to be done.

“I’m privileged and blessed to have had Boys Hope in my life and having had the once in a lifetime experiences,” said Phillips. “However, those experiences don’t begin and end with me. There are dozens of bright children waiting to pick up where I left off.”

With the support of other event sponsors that include Bryan Cave, Community Wholesale Tire, Edward Jones, and von Briesen and Roper, Attorneys at Law, Boys Hope Girls Hope will be able to provide such integral operational support to its scholars as school tuition and supplies, extracurricular and summer activities, leadership, service learning and college prep programming, as well as all expenses to support both Boys Hope and Girls Hope residential facilities for the coming year.

For more information about Boys Hope Girls Hope, including information about how others can get involved or donate, visit [www.boyshopegirlshopestl.org](http://www.boyshopegirlshopestl.org).

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### **About Boys Hope Girls Hope of St. Louis**

Headquartered in Creve Coeur, Missouri, Boys Hope Girls Hope of St. Louis helps academically capable and motivated children-in-need to meet their full potential and become men and women for others by providing value-centered, family-like homes, opportunities and education through college. The local program currently serves 14 middle and high school students in residence and 50 in the non-residential Hope Prep Academy in the Ferguson-Florissant School District as well as eight collegians.

Founded in St. Louis in 1977, Boys Hope Girls Hope has affiliates in 14 other U.S. cities and four other countries. Since 1991, every Boys Hope Girls Hope scholar has gone on to postsecondary education and 74 percent of scholars have completed college or are on the road to completion. Alumni lead productive careers and serve their local communities in various capacities, including volunteerism as Boys Hope Girls Hope board and committee members and scholar tutors and mentors. For more information, visit [www.boyshopegirlshopestl.org](http://www.boyshopegirlshopestl.org).