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SAINT LOUIS

## COVER STORY

STL SUPPORT  
ASSISTANCE LEAGUE OF ST. LOUIS  
by stephanie wallace

**IN THE LAST YEAR**, the Assistance League of St. Louis and its members logged more than 65,550 volunteer hours, serving more than 27,000 St. Louisans. Those numbers represent a strong commitment to transforming lives. For almost 40 years, the nonprofit has used its programs to make a tangible impact on the region. One of the largest chapters in the national Assistance League organization, it is dedicated to uplifting the St. Louis community. “Our mission is to invest in the success of local students while offering support for families in crisis,” president Sandy Brody says.

The Assistance League has an extensive list of services. Operation School Bell provides school uniforms for kids as well as maintaining in-school closets that provide students with year-round access to items like coats, underwear, socks, hats, gloves and toiletries. Another key component of the Assistance League’s services is literacy. The Books From Friends program provides age-appropriate books to thousands of children each year. It also helps inspire a love of reading by hosting book festivals in local schools. “Our members dress up as book characters and hold a parade,” Brody says. “We bring in authors to meet with older students, and every child gets to pick two or three books to take home.”

Project ROSE supports women in crisis, providing clothing and personal care items to women in shelters and to victims of sexual assault. In partnership with St. Louis Community College, the Assistance League also offers scholarships, with 41 recipients in 2025 alone. Working with multiple social

workers and other agencies, the nonprofit operates an outreach program to provide families with much needed items, such as beds and kitchen supplies. “We provided support for many victims of the May 16 tornado,” Brody notes. “We like to say that all it takes is a little assistance. Sometimes people just need a hand up to help them get to the next step in life.”

The Assistance League is operated entirely by volunteers, and it’s evident the league’s members are dedicated. As well as making its programming possible and working behind the scenes, volunteers also staff the nonprofit’s upscale resale shop in Creve Coeur, Fantastic Finds. “We have 450 members who support our mission in a variety of ways,” Brody explains. “We have volunteers with experience in fields, such as business, event planning and education. It takes all kinds of skills to make our programs possible, and no matter their background, our members help make St. Louis better.”

In addition to corporate and individual donors, the Assistance League has four major avenues to raise money: grants, Fantastic Finds, an Authors Brunch in the spring and its largest event, the fall gala. This year, the Casino Royale Gala is Nov. 1 at the DoubleTree by Hilton, Chesterfield. The event’s theme will offer guests the chance to try their hand at casino games while also enjoying a luxury auction helmed by Rene Knott. “The gala plays an important role in making our mission possible,” Brody says. “It also helps us make connections and raise awareness. Working together, we can make an impact in the St. Louis community.”

Completely run by volunteers, the Assistance League of St. Louis puts caring and commitment into action through community-based, philanthropic programs. Its Casino Royale Gala is Nov. 1 at DoubleTree by Hilton, Chesterfield. Pictured on the cover: Assistance League president Sandy Brody and St. Louis Public Schools principal Angel Nave (seated) with students Journee, Trashaun, William and Akira. For more information, call 636.227.6200 or visit [alstl.org](http://alstl.org).