

# St. Louis Business Leaders Help Raise \$700,000 At Independence Center's 15th Annual Dancing With The St. Louis Stars Event

by Stephanie LaChance  
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ST. LOUIS - St. Louis Business leaders and one Independence Center member put their dancing shoes on and raised over \$700,000 for Independence Center at this year's Dancing with the St. Louis Stars.

The 15th annual event benefits Independence Center, a St. Louis nonprofit committed to restoring the lives of adults with severe and persistent mental illness. Proceeds from Dancing with the St. Louis Stars allow Independence Center to provide a comprehensive system of high-quality programs and services to people with serious and persistent mental illnesses. Independence Center's goal is to help people live and work in the community, independently and with dignity.

“We feel so fortunate that our Dancing with the St. Louis Stars event helps shine a light on some of the mental health issues happening right in our community,” said Independence Center Executive Director Trish Holmes. “Independence Center's success relies on the proceeds raised at this event each year and we are so proud and amazed at how generous our donors are. It's wonderful to see the support from people in St. Louis and see just how important our mission is to them.”

This year's dancers include Dan Guirl, President and Owner of GAT Finishing Systems, Nick Ragone, Chief Marketing Officer for Ascension and his wife Tyan Ragone, Tyler Johns, Principal of Branch and Region Development of Edward Jones, Barbara Archer, Partner at Hightower Wealth Advisors and Danielle Rose, Independence Center member dancer.

Dancers campaigned for votes (1 vote = \$10) via the [www.dancingwiththestlouisstars.org](http://www.dancingwiththestlouisstars.org) website and the couple that raised the most votes was crowned Dance Champions. Danielle Rose received Dance Champion and Judge's Choice award; Nick Ragone received Crowd Favorite Award. Dan Guirl received the MVP Award, individually raising over \$200,000.

GAT Finishing Systems was this year's leaderboard sponsor. Additional sponsors included Emerson, Husch Blackwell, Edward Jones, Technology Partners, McKelvey Homes, Vogel Law Office, Hightower Wealth Advisors, Friendship Village Senior Services, Bethesda Health Group, Daugherty Business Solutions, Michelle and Joe Buck, RubinBrown, PwC, the St. Louis Cardinals, Cigna and BJC HealthCare, St. Louis Pharmacy, and SSM Health.

Independence Center's mission is to provide all the services and resources a person with a serious and persistent mental illness needs to manage their symptoms, find belonging and purpose and gain the independence to live a healthy, quality life. For more information about Independence Center, or to learn more about their services, go to [www.independencecenter.org](http://www.independencecenter.org) or call 314.533.4245.