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**Dr. William Danforth, Frankie Muse Freeman, Jane Robert & The St. Louis Mosaic Project to be honored by St. Louis Language Immersion Schools**

**Saint Louis, MO (February 20, 2014)** St. Louis Language Immersion Schools is pleased to announce their 2014 Honorees, to be recognized on May 8<sup>th</sup> at their annual fundraiser, Night of Celebration: Little Hands, Big Dreams. "2014 is truly a milestone year for St. Louis Language Immersion Schools. We are proud to honor those who have made an impact on the past, present and future of the St. Louis community. The legacy of their leadership serves as an example to every child in our schools," says Rhonda Broussard, Founder and President of St. Louis Language Immersion Schools.

The SLLIS Night of Celebration will honor:

**Social Equity Award: Dr. William Danforth & The Honorable Frankie Muse Freeman  
Love of Language Award: Jane Robert**

**Global Understanding Award: The St. Louis Mosaic Project (to be accepted by Betsy Cohen)**

Dr. William Danforth, former chancellor of Washington University and Frankie Muse Freeman, attorney and civil rights leader, worked together to end legal racial discrimination both locally and nationally. "I am honored to share the Social Equity Award with Frankie Freeman. Quality education is very important to achieving social equity. SLLIS provides a first rate education coupled with proficiency in a foreign language - two important parts for a well-rounded education and preparation for greater social equity in the modern world," Dr. Danforth states of the award. Both honorees have previously been named St. Louis' Citizen of the Year – Dr. Danforth in 1977 and Ms. Freeman in 2011.

The Love of Language Award honors Jane Robert for her commitment to and passion for French language and culture. A founding board member of SLLIS and active in the Francophile community, Robert emphasizes "Congratulations to all the families, teachers and support systems of SLLIS for offering the opportunity of new languages to our students. For them, we open not only doors to walk through and windows to see farther, we offer them the world." In 2002 the government of France awarded Robert its highest distinction: the French Legion of Honor.

St. Louis Mosaic Project is recognized with the Global Understanding Award. Betsy Cohen, director of the St. Louis Mosaic Project, says "The St. Louis region is among the fastest growing major metropolitan area for immigration. Together, with strong community partners like SLLIS, we aspire to inspire St. Louis to be more welcoming for foreign born, while building civic pride and regional prosperity for us all."

All Honorees will receive their awards at The Night of Celebration: Little Hands, Big Dreams on Thursday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at the Palladium St. Louis, located at 1400 Park Place. The annual event, co-chaired by Edward Monser IV & Lee Marshall, includes cocktail hour, student performances, dinner and

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live auction. St. Louis Language Immersion Schools plans to raise \$250,000 through this fundraiser. All proceeds support the schools' ongoing capital expansion & preserve the students' curricular experience. Event sponsorships, tables and tickets are available. See contact information above to make reservations.

### **About St. Louis Language Immersion Schools**

St. Louis Language Immersion Schools (SLLIS) is a network of tuition free, public, charter elementary schools in the city of St. Louis, offering immersion education in Mandarin, Spanish and French for kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. SLLIS currently serves 875 students from 44 different zip codes – 12% of whom live outside St. Louis City. These full day language immersion programs also use the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme curricular framework to position students as investigators and establish learning through their natural sense of curiosity. The Spanish School & The French School were authorized as International Baccalaureate World Schools in Fall 2013 and The Chinese School is a candidate for 2016 authorization. In Fall 2015, the SLLIS network will expand to include the International School – a secondary program serving students in grades 6 through 12. When SLLIS graduates its founding class in 2021, students will be bilingual and bi-literate, proficient in a third language, earning a Missouri state high school diploma and an International Baccalaureate diploma.

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