



## A Message from the St. Louis Convention & Visitors Commission

With the grand jury announcement, a series of demonstrations have begun as people voice their opinions on the decision. We remain hopeful these demonstrations remain respectful to the important issues of social justice and equality that have been raised during the past few months. This is the democratic process of our country at work, and we fully respect everyone's right to peacefully assemble and exercise their rights to free speech.

As you may have seen in news reports, the announcement also prompted unfortunate criminal activities in Ferguson and nearby communities. These activities are not reflective of our community and are not productive in moving the discussion forward to make real lasting change. Local law enforcement is taking the necessary steps to deal with those individuals responsible for criminal activity. As in any major metropolitan area, improvements can and must be made in equality; there are many initiatives already underway in this regard and additional efforts will be forthcoming. For more information on some these efforts, we encourage you to visit [www.STLForward.com](http://www.STLForward.com) and the Web site of the newly established Ferguson Commission [www.stlpositivechange.org](http://www.stlpositivechange.org).

As a visitor to our region, you may have concerns about the effect these events are having on the region as a whole. Please be assured that hotels, visitor attractions, restaurants, parks, transportation companies and other components of the tourism infrastructure in our region are open for business. Visitors continue to arrive by air, by train or by car, they use the MetroLink light rail or travel the four interstates that connect the region with the rest of the country. There is no negative impact in getting to, from or around the metropolitan area. The St. Louis region has hosted hundreds of conferences and events for hundreds of thousands of attendees in the last 100-plus days. These have all been met with great success and enjoyment for the participants.

Our hospitality community looks forward to welcoming you.