

GENE GORDON

Gene Gordon is Founder and Executive Director of Descendants of American Slaves for Economic and Social Justice (<https://das4esj.org>), headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri.

Born and raised in St. Louis, Gene never attended college, nor did he end up in prison. Gene believes that people are measured by how close they are to the poor and the disenfranchised, and how well they help others overcome systemic challenges and barriers that prevent people from accomplishing their dreams and aspirations.

As President and Partner of Direct Source Maintenance, a Facility Service Management company, Gene and his team offer a broad range of services such as “green” cleaning, construction management, build outs, additions, and urban development. The company’s website, (<http://www.directsourcefsm.com>), provides more information on their full line of services.

Gene Gordon serves on the Board of Directors of the global Center for Economic and Social Justice (<https://www.cesj.org>) headquartered in Arlington, Virginia. CESJ is headed by Dr. Norman Kurland, a pioneer in expanded ownership institutions and laws. His accomplishments include designing the initial Federal ESOP laws for worker ownership and working with community leaders in Central Harlem in the late 1960s and in East St. Louis from 2000-2009 to introduce mechanisms for equal citizen ownership of community land.

Under Gene Gordon’s leadership and in partnership with CESJ, Descendants of American Slaves for Economic and Social Justice has launched **The Heart of America Project**. Gene and his CESJ colleagues convinced Missouri State Senator Karla May to introduce SB460, which would create a model for-profit Community Investment Corporation, a citizen-owned land development corporation, in St. Louis and surrounding areas. On March 4, 2021 Gene Gordon testified in support of the bill before the Missouri Senate Oversight Committee. This groundbreaking model would demonstrate at the community level how the **12 regional Federal Reserve Banks** (starting with the St. Louis Fed), commercial banks and private insurance companies could finance sustainable economic growth, while creating equal capital ownership opportunities for every citizen.

The Heart of America Project introduces a series of monetary and tax innovations targeting the systemic causes of poverty, racism and the growing gap in wealth, income and opportunity. If successful, this model will be replicated throughout the U.S.

