

Celebrate the 90th Anniversary of JCI's First Local Organization!

by JCI World President Kevin Cullinane

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On October 13, 1915, a group of young people led by Henry "Hy" Giessenbier, Jr., established the forerunner of the organization currently known as JCI in St. Louis, Missouri. Born in St. Louis, JCI now spans the world!

Dear Fellow JCI Members,

A historic occasion is upon us! Let us celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the foundation of JCI's first Local Organization. Let us pay tribute to Henry Giessenbier and the other young people who, in 1915, laid the foundation from which we can create better leaders to create better societies. Let us honor also the many other JCI Members who, over the years, have contributed to taking the organization to where it is today.

The origin of JCI (Junior Chamber International) can be traced as far back as 1910 to the city of St. Louis, Missouri, USA, where a young man named Henry Giessenbier dared to dream "impossible dreams." Giessenbier was born June 26, 1892, and was raised in St. Louis, Missouri.

In 1910, Giessenbier and his friends first formed the Herculaneum Dance Club with the main objective of advancing the social standing of its members. That objective changed when Giessenbier realized how much more young people could accomplish for their communities and for themselves if, inspired by noble ideals, they worked together and developed themselves.

Five years later, encouraged by Colonel H.N. Morgan, a prominent St. Louis citizen, Giessenbier and 32 other young men formed the Young Men's Progressive Civic Association (YMPCA) on October 13, 1915. Giessenbier envisioned young people participating in the civic affairs of their communities to help and to benefit people of all ages. YMPCA grew to a membership of 750 in less than five months. The organization, currently known as JCI (Junior Chamber International), spread nationally and, later on, internationally.

Giessenbier wanted young people to make an impression early in life, so development of business and leadership skills was offered to members of the early movement. Those skills and other benefits are still offered today.

To achieve the success you deserve as current and future JCI leaders, please keep in mind the fundamental principles upon which our forbearers established this organization. They are still as relevant today as they were 90 years ago. Remembering that we are the heirs of that first revolution, continue working tirelessly to assure the success of our core principles and the foundation upon which our organization was born.

In the United States, October 13, known as "Mission Day," is usually observed with Membership drives and special meetings. I trust that Local Organizations worldwide will follow suit. What a better way to celebrate the foundation of JCI than to ensure JCI's growth and prosperity by offering its unique opportunities to an increasing number of young people?

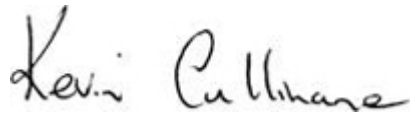
To celebrate the occasion, the JCI World Headquarters team is finally unveiling a project that has been in the works since 2004: [the JCI History webpage](http://www.jci.cc/members/history.php), <http://www.jci.cc/members/history.php>. A great deal of information has been compiled thanks to the generous contributions of past and current JCI Members and staff. A special note of gratitude is due to past JCI Presidents and Board Members,

as well as to former staff members, who made the effort and took the time to send information and photos.

JCI is the realization of Giessenbier's dream to empower young people by uniting them and by providing them with opportunities to take part in the business and civic affairs of their communities. It's a dream that has benefited, and continues to benefit, people of all ages the world over. Thousands of local, national and international leaders credit JCI for their success. Millions of lives have been enhanced by JCI Members' efforts.

Celebrate the fulfillment of Giessenbier's dream on the 90th Anniversary of JCI's First Local Organization. Become part of the history that will inspire future generations of JCI Members to take the organization to higher and higher levels of accomplishment.

Begin by raising a toast to the young people who gathered in St. Louis 90 years ago, and to all those who preceded us!



Kevin Cullinane
JCI President

About JCI

JCI (Junior Chamber International) is a worldwide federation of young leaders and entrepreneurs with nearly 200,000 active JCI members and millions of JCI alumni. JCI members contribute to the advancement of the global community by creating positive changes in over 5,000 communities in more than 100 nations worldwide.

JCI members lead projects in the areas of Business, Individual, Community, and International Development. They meet, learn and grow. By participating in various projects, meetings, seminars and events around the globe, JCI members grow personally and professionally, developing the entrepreneurial and leadership skills needed to generate positive changes in their communities, their countries, and the world.

For more information, please visit www.jci.cc.

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