



**Dr. John S. Gaal,
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**Director, Worker Wellness
Missouri Works Initiative
Ballwin, Missouri**

At the end of January 2019, after 40 years of service, Dr. Gaal retired as the director of training and workforce development for the St. Louis-Kansas City Carpenters Regional Council. In March 2021, he accepted the newly created position of director for the Missouri AFL-CIO's Missouri Works Initiative Worker Wellness Program. As a labor representative, he continues to serve on the St. Louis County Workforce Development Board, the International Vocational Education and Training Association Board of Directors (past-president) and the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans Mental Health and Addictions Expert Panel. Dr. Gaal completed a union apprenticeship in carpentry over 40 years ago and has since earned an associate degree in construction management, a bachelor's degree in architecture, a master's degree in international business and a doctorate degree in organizational leadership. In addition, he completed post-doctoral projects at Harvard University (trade union leadership in 2009) and University of Florida (marketing and management in 2014). Dr. Gaal was honored with two Fulbright Specialist scholarships in labor and industrial relations (Tokyo, Japan in 2010 and Toronto, Canada in 2015). He has published numerous articles in peer-reviewed and professional journals on issues related to various aspects of workforce development. Since 2018, John has completed the Mental Health First Aid Train-the-Trainer course, NAMI Family-to-Family teacher training course, Missouri Certified Peer Specialist certification, NWI Certified Wellness Practitioner certification, QPR Train-the-Trainer course, Missouri Community Health Worker certification, ASIST training course, CALM Train-the-Trainer course and AFSP Bereavement Support Group Facilitator course. In addition, he recently earned the LAP-C designation. Dr. Gaal has been married for 39 years, has four children and is in his 28th year as an adjunct professor at Webster University.