

Deanna Finch, Recognized By Influential Women, Advances Early Childhood Systems Through Visionary Nonprofit Leadership

ST LOUIS, MO, UNITED STATES, August 7, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Executive Director of United 4 Children Champions Equity, Collaboration, and Community-Driven Solutions to Support Children and Families

Deanna Finch is a visionary nonprofit executive dedicated to strengthening early childhood systems and creating meaningful opportunities for children and families throughout Missouri. As Executive Director of United 4 Children, she leads with a collaborative, people-centered approach focused on transformational change, equitable access to quality care, and sustainable solutions that positively impact communities.



With more than a decade of nonprofit leadership experience, Deanna has developed a reputation for combining strategic vision, adaptive problem-solving, and inclusive leadership to advance organizational growth. Her work includes scaling programs, managing complex budgets, developing cross-sector partnerships, and building systems that empower communities to better serve children and families.

Deanna's journey with United 4 Children began as a board member before she transitioned into development leadership and eventually became Executive Director in 2019. Prior to entering the nonprofit sector, she built her professional foundation in business development within the engineering industry, where she gained valuable experience in relationship-building, strategic growth, and organizational advancement. These skills have continued to shape her leadership approach and ability to create strong partnerships across sectors.

Throughout her tenure with United 4 Children, Deanna has remained focused on improving early childhood education systems and expanding access to resources that support children, educators, and families. She believes lasting change requires collaboration among community organizations, policymakers, educators, and families, and she works to create partnerships that address challenges while building stronger futures.

Beyond her role at United 4 Children, Deanna remains actively engaged in community impact initiatives. She serves on the board of Empower Missouri and participates in leadership development opportunities through Focus St. Louis. Through these efforts, she continues to contribute to important conversations surrounding early childhood policy, workforce development, nonprofit sustainability, and equitable community solutions.

Deanna's leadership philosophy is rooted in curiosity, inclusivity, and the belief that meaningful progress comes from listening to and learning from others. She attributes much of her success to the strong support system of people who believe in her, as well as her ability to approach challenges through thoughtful scenario planning and inclusive decision-making.

One of Deanna's greatest strengths is her ability to see multiple perspectives within a situation. She believes that understanding different experiences and viewpoints leads to stronger strategies and more effective solutions. As an inclusive leader, she intentionally brings others into the decision-making process, ensuring that people feel heard, respected, and valued. This collaborative approach has helped her build teams and partnerships centered on trust, shared responsibility, and collective problem-solving.

The most important career advice Deanna has received is to actively pursue work and opportunities that align with personal passions rather than waiting for opportunities to appear. She believes individuals must be intentional about creating their own paths, seeking meaningful experiences, and taking initiative to make the impact they want to achieve.

For women entering nonprofit leadership and related fields, Deanna emphasizes the importance of confidence and self-advocacy. One of the messages she shares most often is the importance of stopping the habit of saying "sorry" unnecessarily. She encourages women to stop apologizing for taking up space, sharing their ideas, expressing their opinions, or pursuing ambitious goals.

Deanna believes many women have been conditioned to minimize themselves by apologizing for actions that do not require an apology, whether asking for space, contributing a perspective, or participating in important conversations. She believes that constantly seeking permission to be present can unintentionally diminish the value of the skills and experiences women bring to leadership. Instead, she encourages women to recognize their strengths, embrace their voices, and confidently contribute to the organizations and communities they serve.

When discussing challenges within nonprofit work, Deanna recognizes the unique obstacles faced by early-career professionals entering the field. Based on her experience in the Greater St.

Louis region, she notes that many individuals choose nonprofit careers knowing that compensation may not always compare to opportunities in the corporate sector. While nonprofit work offers meaningful opportunities to create change, she believes stronger mentorship networks are needed to help emerging professionals navigate their careers.

Deanna believes programs such as Focus St. Louis provide valuable leadership development opportunities, but she also sees the importance of informal mentorship where experienced professionals intentionally support and guide those beginning their careers. Reflecting on her own journey, she recognizes that networking played a significant role in her success, while also understanding that building those connections can feel overwhelming for individuals who are just starting.

She also acknowledges the challenges women often face when balancing professional growth, community involvement, and family responsibilities. Deanna recognizes that building a career while starting a family can be especially challenging, particularly due to the lack of consistent, high-quality, and affordable childcare. She believes these issues impact families, workplaces, and communities by limiting opportunities for individuals to fully contribute and thrive.

The values that guide Deanna in both her professional and personal life are curiosity and continuous learning. She considers herself a lifelong learner and believes that remaining open to new ideas, experiences, and perspectives is essential for effective leadership. Her commitment to growth allows her to continue evolving as a leader while gaining deeper insight into the people, communities, and challenges she serves.

Through her dedication to collaboration, equity, and innovation, Deanna Finch continues to strengthen early childhood systems and advance solutions that create lasting impact for children and families across Missouri.

Learn More about Deanna Finch:

Through her Influential Women profile, <https://influentialwomen.com/connect/Deanna-Finch> or through her profile on United 4 Children, <https://united4children.org/u4cteam/>

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