

# Harlan B. Hodge

CEO & President

Imagine Services

**Born:**  
St. Louis, MO

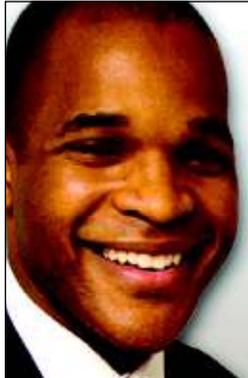
**Education:**  
High School: Parkway North

**College & Degree(s):**  
Tennessee State University,  
UM-St. Louis, BSW  
Brown School at  
Washington University,  
MSW

**Member of the following:**  
• St. Louis Business  
Diversity Initiative Fellow

*Region. I lead inspirational leadership workshops for students. I coach Chess throughout the country. I consult non-profits and schools on working with at-risk youth. I counsel juvenile offenders in Restorative Justice. In addition, I employ young professionals as interns at Imagine Services, my communications company headquartered in St. Louis since 2003, to help them understand the power of sharing stories.*

*How does what you've learned earning your Masters degree in Social Work and Social and Economic Development help you in your professional career?*  
Every day, I help my clients and the students we serve understand the importance of personal connections. There is a



concept we study in Social Work called The Ecological Perspective. In short, it's the idea that we are all connected to systems. I believe that to understand people best, we must consider what they have experienced in their system. In other words, to understand who I am, you need to know some of my stories. So, we share stories and connect with people.

*At age 17 you began volunteering at Walbridge Elementary and the Walnut Park neighborhood. What lessons did you learn from those 8+ years?*

I worked with Gary Hayes and some amazing folks in Walnut Park. Those teachers, kids, parents and volunteers taught me everything, but two things in particular. First, a community's strength is in the people who live there. When you've got good people, you've got a good community. Secondly, kids (and adults) need to know you care before they care what you know. Once I developed a relationship with the school and the community, then we began to work together to solve problems.

*What inspires you?*

My wife and son inspire me. Life is tough. My wife, Pamela Westbrooks-Hodge, makes it happen anyway. She works late and wakes up early every day. She helps everyone who needs it. She does it all and rarely complains. I'm inspired by her dedication and discipline to be her best. My son, Brylan Mason Hodge, is the reason I do what I do. I am trying to make a better world for him to live in. He's 10 years old and time is ticking away.

*How has the St. Louis Business Diversity Initiative's Fellows Program helped you in your professional life?*

As a social entrepreneur, my primary interest has been in improving the lives of young people. The St. Louis Business Diversity Initiative's Fellows Program has given me an opportunity to develop relationships with other professionals who have challenged me to expand my vision and purpose. People like Mark Smith and Jamillah Boyd have challenged me to "develop people." Now, in addition to enhancing the lives of young people, I help adults develop lives of young people. As a result, we have expanded our ability to reach a wider audience. The program has helped me connect with a group of like-minded people dedicated to developing themselves for service to others.

*Over the past 15 years, I have given myself in service to the St. Louis*

EXPERIENCE

K W A M E



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AND THE ENTIRE ST. LOUIS AMERICAN  
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