



## **Game On! St. Louis to Host National Esports *League of Legends* Tournament**

*Gateway Legends Collegiate Invitational to feature in-person gaming, live music and much more*

**ST. LOUIS (June 22, 2021)** —Building on St. Louis' reputation as a celebrated sports town while showcasing the city as one of the most vibrant technology hubs in the U.S., St. Louis will host the inaugural Gateway Legends Collegiate Invitational. The national esports tournament is being produced by the Fair St. Louis Foundation and will take place July 2, 3 & 4 at host site Ballpark Village in downtown St. Louis. It will feature the top collegiate teams in the country competing in League of Legends, an action-packed, team game that is one of the world's largest esports.

Gateway Legends is the first in-person, collegiate esports tournament of 2021. A billion-dollar industry, esports is currently one of the fastest-growing sports in the world. The Gateway Legends Collegiate Invitational is sponsored by The Centene Charitable Foundation. Nerd Street Gamers will oversee tournament operations, and Riot Games is the developer of League of Legends.

“As a corporate citizen of St. Louis, Riot Games is excited to see the tremendous growth in esports in the metropolitan area over the past few years,” said Bridgette Horack, Karma Ambassador at Riot Games. “Through this event, we hope that the community will learn more about the opportunities esports can provide students in high school and at the collegiate level in a non-traditional sport. We're looking forward to the Gateway Legends Collegiate Invitational and wish all the players the best of luck out on the Rift.”

Through a partnership with the Saint Louis Science Center, which launched an esports program in 2020, regional high school students will have the opportunity to take part in the live Gateway Legends Collegiate Invitational, contribute to in-game broadcasting and experience STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics) at work in esports with help from the Science Center's Youth Exploring Science (YES) program.

The Science Center will also host educational panels with high school and collegiate program leaders to discuss the benefits of school-based esports programs and help participants learn about esports careers and the industry through a professional lens.

In addition, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Missouri and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater St. Louis will bring their esports teams to the tournament to watch live gameplay.

### **Tournament Details**

At the Gateway Legends Collegiate Invitational, 16 of the top collegiate esports teams from St. Louis and across the country – including 3-time National Champion Maryville University, Saint Louis University and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign – will compete in League of Legends. The objective of League of Legends is to destroy the enemy base, known as the Nexus.

The round-robin tournament will take place live from Bally Sports Live! at Ballpark Village for a prize pool of \$10,000. The event will also feature celebrity casters, esports panels, educational sessions, live music and much more.

**Tournament schedule:**

Friday, July 2: 12-7:30 p.m.

Saturday, July 3: 12-7:30 p.m.

Sunday, July 4: 12-9:30 p.m.

**How to Watch Gateway Legends**

Gateway Legends will be streamed live via Nerd Street Gamers' Twitch channel at [twitch.tv/nerdstreetlol](https://www.twitch.tv/nerdstreetlol), and spectators can watch the action unfold live in-person at various locations throughout Ballpark Village. In addition to indoor seating, the 40,000-square-foot Together Credit Union Plaza at Ballpark Village will be open for spectators to watch the tournament outdoors on the expansive LED display above the stage. All seating is available on a first come, first served basis and attendance to the events is free.

Gateway Legends will adhere to health and safety guidelines set by the City of St. Louis Health Department, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Ballpark Village.

**Teams (seeding to be announced):**

- Aquinas College
- Arizona State University
- Bay State College
- Bethany Lutheran College
- Boise State University
- Grand View University
- Harrisburg University
- Illinois Wesleyan University
- Maryville University
- Miami University (Ohio)
- Purdue University
- Saint Louis University
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- University of St. Thomas Houston
- University of Texas at Dallas
- Winthrop University

**Live Music at Ballpark Village**

Ballpark Village will provide free musical entertainment during the Gateway Legends Collegiate Invitational weekend. Local and regional bands and DJs will perform outdoors on the Missouri Lottery Stage in the Together Credit Union Plaza at Ballpark Village:

**Friday, July 2**

- 7 p.m.: Fresh Produce STL Champions Beat Battle

**Saturday: July 3**

- 2-5 p.m.: WE ARE ROOT MOD
- 6-9 p.m.: JOE DIRT
- 9-11 p.m.: Live DJ entertainment

**Sunday, July 4**

- 11 a.m.-2 p.m.: Live DJ entertainment
- 3-5 p.m.: FIRE FOR EFFECT
- 6-9 p.m.: YACHT ROCKERS

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