

# THE VOLUNTEER STAR

*a monthly newsletter from your friends at the*



**KANSAS VOLUNTEER COMMISSION**  
KANSERVE.ORG

**MAY IS PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS  
MONTH!**



# amplify

## MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

### MAY IS PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

This month, we invite you to join us in advocating for our nation's young people's physical and mental health and well-being. We also encourage you to increase efforts on behalf of those growing up in and aging out of the foster system.

### IMPORTANT DATES

- **Teacher Appreciation Week: May 6 - 10**  
We are sending a huge THANK YOU to the teachers that invest in the future of our nation's young people this [#TeacherAppreciationWeek!](#) Learn how to support teachers in creating relationship-centered schools at [tinyurl.com/2zfu33h](https://tinyurl.com/2zfu33h) [#ThankATeacher](#) [#MentoringAmplifies](#).
- **Mental Health Action Day: May 16**  
Today is [#MentalHealthActionDay](#) & this is your reminder to not only check

in with the young people in your life but also to take a moment for yourself. You cannot pour from an empty cup. Check out [tinyurl.com/urvve2cd](https://tinyurl.com/urvve2cd) for more info. [#MentoringAmplifies](#)

- **International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, Biphobia: May 17**  
Everyone deserves access to safe spaces, regardless of gender or orientation. This [#IDAHOBIT2024](#), we elevate how [#MentoringAmplifies](#) inclusivity & acceptance. For more, visit [tinyurl.com/ynpjtu7](https://tinyurl.com/ynpjtu7) [@may17org](#)
- **Memorial Day: May 27**  
Join us as we remember and honor those who served and sacrificed. [#MemorialDay](#)



The Kansas Volunteer Commission professional development fund is for volunteer, mentor and/or AmeriCorps staff to access reimbursable professional development around volunteerism and mentoring. This opportunity is only available to individuals who work in Kansas for a Kansas-based organization focused on volunteerism, youth mentoring or AmeriCorps national service.

Interested individuals will fill out the **Professional Development Fund Request Form**. Request Forms must be submitted no later than two weeks before the professional development opportunity begins. Submission of this form does not constitute approval of the request. Applicants will receive an email, from the Commission, approving or disapproving the request within two business days.

Applicants may receive reimbursement for one professional development opportunity per calendar year. A maximum of two individuals will be reimbursed from each organization per professional development opportunity.

This is a cost-reimbursement fund. Approved participants will pay for their travel and registration costs up front. These expenses must be paid for with non-AmeriCorps funds. After the event, participants will submit receipts to the Commission for 50% reimbursement of SOME of their expenses. A check will be mailed within two weeks following the submission of receipts and shared learnings (see below).

Reimbursable expenses include:

- Airfare and baggage fee
- Car rental
- Ride share (Uber, Lyft) to and from airport
- Lodging
- Registration fees (CVA includes regular exam fee and renewal exam fee - Does not include retest fee)
- Materials (only applies to Volunteer Administration: Professional Practice textbook for CVA exam)

Reimbursable expenses DO NOT include mileage or per diem (no food cost covered) or any other expenses not specified above.

Only the following Professional Development opportunities may be reimbursed:

- 2024 Points of Light conference, June 11-14 in Houston, TX
- 2024 Certification in Volunteer Administration (CVA) Fall Exam, October 1-14 virtually
- 2025 National Mentor Summit, January 29-31 in Washington DC

The deadline to apply for these professional development opportunities is as follows:

- 2024 Points of Light is May 28, 2024.
- 2024 Certification in Volunteer Administration fall exam is September 17, 2024
- 2025 National Mentor Summit is January 15, 2025



Following the professional development opportunity, participants will be required to share what they have learned with the Commission. These remarks, along with any submitted photos, may be used in newsletter and social media promotions.

If you have any questions, or need clarification, please reach out to [volunteer@ksde.org](mailto:volunteer@ksde.org)

## SOCIAL JUSTICE CAPACITY BUILDING MINI-GRANT OPPORTUNITY



### SOCIAL JUSTICE CAPACITY BUILDING MINI-GRANT OPPORTUNITY



**GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION AT**  
[www.kanserve.org](http://www.kanserve.org)  
Applications Due 5/28/2024



**KANSAS VOLUNTEER COMMISSION**  
KANSERVE.ORG

The Kansas Volunteer Commission strives to increase power, representation, and agency among historically marginalized communities. We believe in the fair treatment of all people in a society, including respect for the rights of and equitable distribution of resources among members of a community.

The Social Justice Capacity Building Mini-Grant focuses on initiatives or projects that support social justice. It is intended for volunteer and mentor organizations that want to build their capacity around social justice and addresses one of the following:

- Access, inclusion and participation in all programs, services, and opportunities;

- Empowerment of individuals/communities to voice what is most important to them and
- Action to recognize injustice and navigate differences of power, privilege, and oppression.

Examples of such projects but are not limited to:

- Coalition building or mobilizing residents to act on community-level change.
- Board and staff development, such as anti-bias trainings, workshops, and conferences.
- Leadership programs that identify, develop, and mobilize new community leaders.
- Supporting youth engagement or coalition building.
- Technology improvements for advocacy and campaign development.
- Raise awareness of racial justice, LGBTQIA+, and disability rights.
- Community arts projects focused on social justice.
- Activities that foster inclusive communities of belonging.
- Partnership building with new organizations.
- Addressing poverty, homelessness, and food insecurity.
- Early literacy programs that focus on social justice (book drives, tutoring).

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Apply Now: [kanserve.org](https://kanserve.org) (link to apply directly on the homepage)  
Questions? Email: [volunteer@ksde.org](mailto:volunteer@ksde.org)

## 2024 CIVIC ENGAGEMENT CONFERENCE RECAP



Keynote speaker Juan Sepúlveda captivated the audience at the 2024 Civic Engagement Conference.

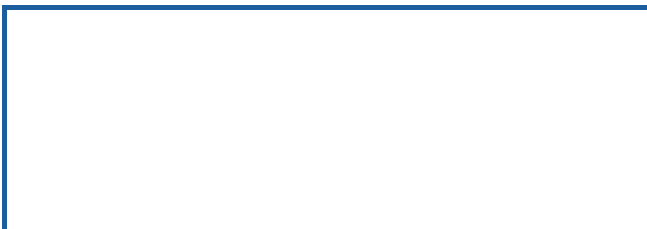
## 2024 Civic Engagement Conference at Emporia State University in Emporia, Kansas Recap

The Civic Engagement conference held at Emporia State University in Emporia, Kansas, drew in more than 160 enthusiastic attendees from various backgrounds. The energy and passion that filled the event was truly inspiring as individuals came together to discuss and explore ways to positively impact their communities. The conference was an opportunity for networking, sharing ideas, and fostering a sense of unity towards creating a better future for all. Though immeasurable, this conference's dedication, commitment, and impact will be in everyone's minds and hearts for the foreseeable future.

The conference was a resounding success, with 96% of attendees expressing their enjoyment and ability to apply what they had learned. The sessions were well-received, boasting an average rating of 3.4 out of 4.



Attendees including Commissioner, Carolyn Campbell, front and center.







Left: Commission staff Haley Matherly, CVA

Right: Cross-Lines Community Outreach staff Rachel Russell Leads a Service Project during our conference.





## GIVE BACK KANSAS CHALLENGE UNDERWAY



The Give Back Kansas Challenge is an eight-week challenge that engages Kansans in employer-supported volunteering, both during and outside the workday. The Kansas Volunteer Commission and Volunteer Kansas are excited to co-partner in this challenge because much research shows the connection between employer-supported volunteering and improved employee engagement, employee wellness, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and retention. There is also research connecting employee engagement with increased profitability and productivity.

There is no cost to participate, and the challenge is open to ANY employer in Kansas (for-profit, non-profit, education system, and government).

This year's participants are:

- All For Moms Foundation
- Arvest Bank-Greater Kansas City Area (MO/Kansas)
- Bethel Life Center
- Breakthrough/Episcopal Social Services
- Community Health Center of Southeast Kansas
- City of Derby
- County of Cloud
- Cowley County Historical Society Museum
- Flint Hills Volunteer Center
- Kansas State Department of Education
- Medical Loan Closet
- Pfizer
- Schenker Family Farms, Inc
- Smoky Hill Museum
- Tanganyika Wildlife Park
- TGC Group
- The Treehouse
- United Way of Kaw Valley
- Volunteers In Action

- Wichita Festivals Inc
- Wichita Habitat for Humanity

[Leaderboard](#) Updated Each Week!

Follow the progress of the challenge each week on our social media!

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

## STAFF & COMMISSIONER SPOTLIGHT



Dorsey and Nelson travel to Madrid to interview prospects for the Visiting

## International Teachers Program

Dr. Jessica Dorsey, Executive Director of Kansas Volunteer Commission, and Sarah Nelson, Training and Engagement Coordinator of Kansas Volunteer Commission, are back in the United States after a weeklong trip to Madrid, Spain.

Dorsey and Nelson traveled Sunday, April 14, arriving in Madrid early Monday morning through Sunday, April 21, interviewing potential candidates for the Visiting International Teachers program. After interviewing 12 prospective teachers, nine will come to the U.S. for the 2024-2025 school year.

The Visiting International Teachers program allows certified teachers from Spain to teach in Kansas schools for one to five years. Teachers are hired to teach a variety of subjects at all levels, from Pre-K to 12th grade, such as art, math, science, Spanish, special education, etc.

Visiting teachers provide Kansas students with an exciting opportunity to learn about the world and other cultures. This exchange visitor program operates under the auspices of the Fulbright Hays Act. Districts match visiting teachers with a volunteer community mentor who helps them adjust to living in the United States for their short tenure. Through this program, many Kansans have made friends with people beyond our borders, which is the purpose of the Fulbright Hays Act.

KSDE transferred the program to the Kansas Volunteer Commission in August 2021.

Kansas was one of many states that participated in the interviews. Illinois, Massachusetts, Virginia, and even Alberta, Canada, were among the states/provinces there. When the pool of teachers arrived in the morning, they were sent to their prospective state's designated area, where interviews were conducted.

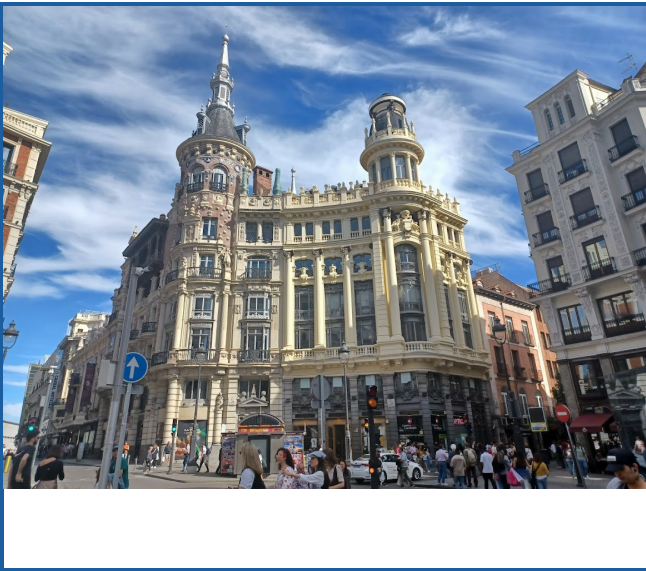
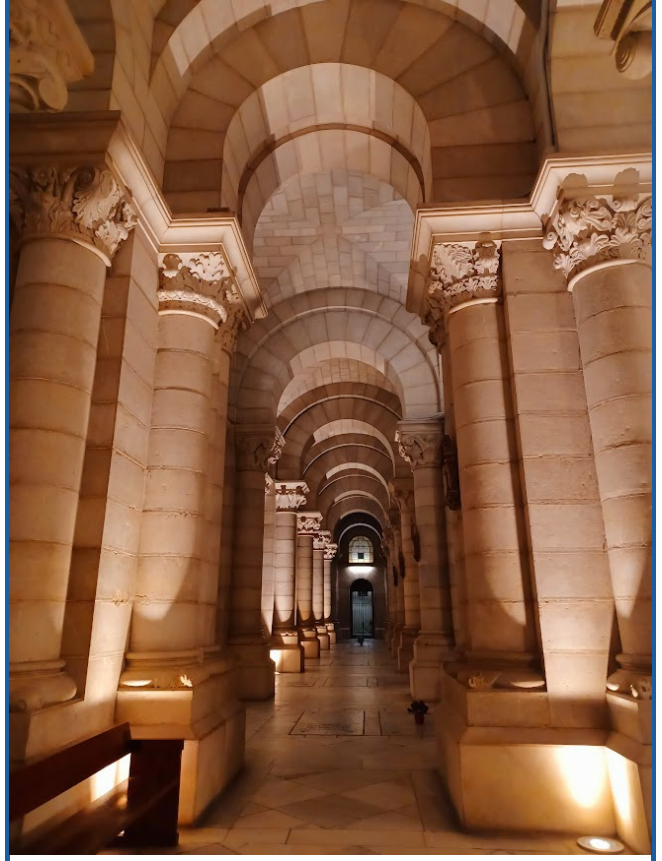
"Having an appreciation for people in another culture, seeing how their school system works, and being able to bring these highly qualified teachers over here to teach and expose the students here in Kansas to other cultures is just quite an opportunity," Nelson said.

Dorsey said the program is a cultural exchange rather than a solution to teacher vacancies. The participants not only traveled to Spain to interview prospective Visiting International Teachers but also experienced the country's culture.

The recently selected teachers will now interview with their prospective schools, which will offer them a job. Once job offers are accepted, KSDE will handle the paperwork, and orientation will be scheduled before the upcoming school year.

If you would like to know more about the program or volunteer to be connected to a family to help them navigate living in Kansas, contact Dorsey at [jdorsey@ksde.org](mailto:jdorsey@ksde.org) or Nelson at [snelson@ksde.org](mailto:snelson@ksde.org).









## 2024 MINI GRANT SERIES

# 2024 MINI GRANT SERIES

*Guidelines and Application release dates*

ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE FOR MENTORING

*Releases: 1/05/2024*

YOUTH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

*Releases: 2/09/2024*

JUNETEENTH NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE

*Releases: 3/22/2024*

SOCIAL JUSTICE CAPACITY BUILDING

*Releases: 4/26/2024*

RURAL & INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

*Releases: 5/31/2024*

9/11 NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE

*Releases: 7/05/2024*

MLK NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE

*Releases: 10/04/2024*



## UPCOMING EVENTS

The Mission of Managers of Volunteer Engagement (M.O.V.E.) is to build and engage a network of volunteer managers and cultivate a volunteerism culture.

### M.O.V.E.

Meets the Third Wednesday of Each Month

9:00 to 10:00 AM

To learn more, please visit [www.moveks.org](http://www.moveks.org).

Or reach out via [Facebook](#).

### M.O.V.E. Kansas

Statewide-Virtual

Meets the Fourth Thursday of Each Month

9:00 to 10:00 AM

To learn more, please email

[mpearson@uwkawvalley.org](mailto:mpearson@uwkawvalley.org)

**Volunteer Managers Network**



# United Way of the Plains

2023 Dates T.B.D.

12:00 to 1:00 PM

To learn more, please email Abel Frederic

[afrederic@unitedwayplains.org](mailto:afrederic@unitedwayplains.org)

## Volunteers United: Newton

Meets the Fourth Thursday of Each Month

12:00 to 1:00 PM

To learn more, please email Dalton Black

[director@harveyunitedway.org](mailto:director@harveyunitedway.org)

NOTE: The above dates, times, and locations are subject to change.

## CONNECT WITH OUR STAFF



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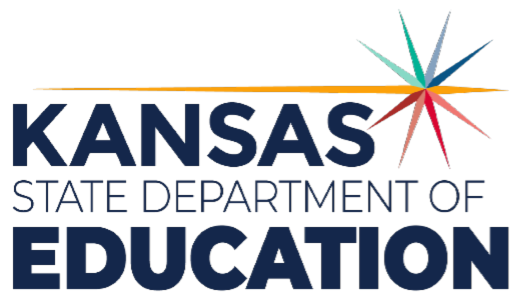
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