



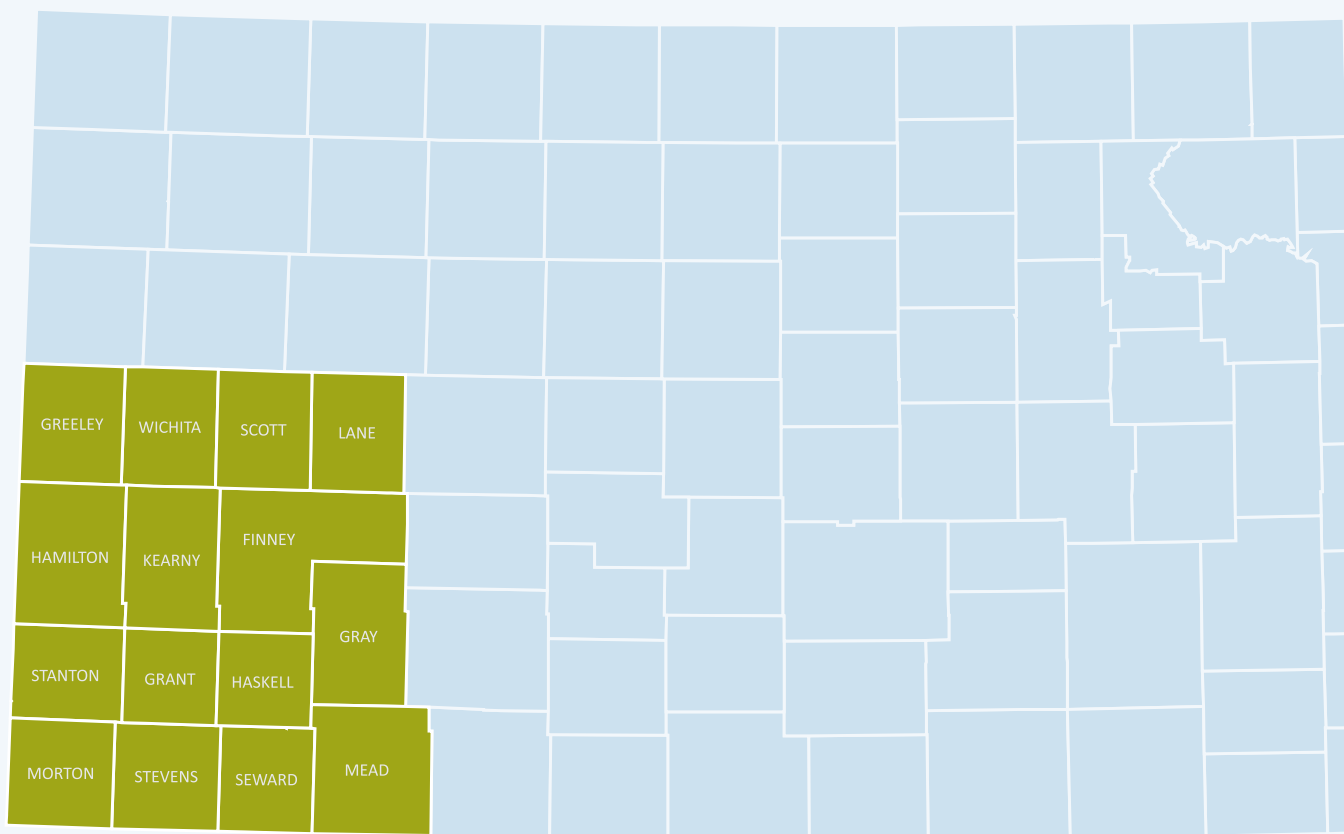
Amplifying Impact

25 Years of the Western Kansas
Community Foundation

Amplifying Impact

25 Years of the Western Kansas
Community Foundation





WKCF SERVICE AREA

Finney County

Grant County

Gray County

Greeley County

Hamilton County

Haskell County

Kearny County

Lane County

Mead County

Morton County

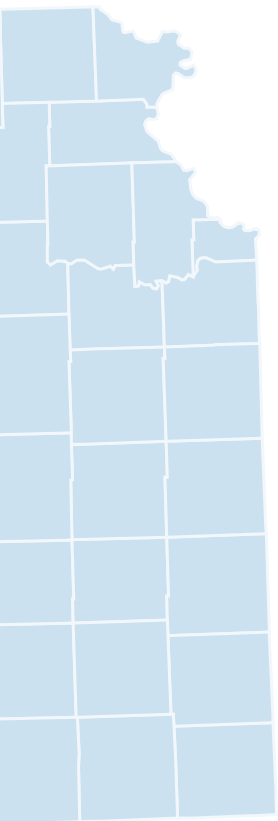
Scott County

Seward County

Stanton County

Stevens County

Wichita County



Introduction

For the past 25 years, the Western Kansas Community Foundation (WKCF) has been working to improve the quality of life in the 15 counties of southwest Kansas.

There is much to celebrate. From 1996-2020, WKCF distributed over **\$15 MILLION** in grants across the region, most of which were donor directed¹: scholarships given, programs developed, organizations supported. As the community has evolved, so has the work of WKCF. WKCF is now at a turning point, moving from a model of transactional philanthropy to a model of strategic impact.² This shift is based on lessons learned over the years, namely that the most lasting change happens through coordinated collaborations rather than through isolated interventions and one-time donations. The main objectives of *Amplifying Impact* are to celebrate the past work of the Foundation, to pay attention to the current state of the region on a variety of social and economic indicators, and to point to future areas of focus.

Amplifying Impact has been compiled by the Thriving Cities Group (TCG), a non-profit organization based in Charlottesville, Virginia that seeks to transform communities through civic design. TCG believes that communities are more than just machines, but that they are vibrant, diverse, and complex, like the people who live in them. TCG’s work in communities centers around three fundamental questions: What does it mean to thrive? What does it take to thrive? And lastly, what social arrangements make thriving possible, equitable, and sustainable?

To understand the cultural landscape of southwest Kansas, to illuminate the nature of thriving across the region, and to explore how WKCF might be poised to strategically support nonprofit organizations in the years to come, this report examines six overlapping areas of interest:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| ONE
Community Life | THREE
Health | FIVE
Arts & Culture |
| TWO
Educational Opportunity | FOUR
Economic Security | SIX
Philanthropy & Social Services |

Based upon this investigation of the data, an analysis of WKCF’s historic priorities, and a board strategic planning process, the report concludes with a vision for how the community might approach the next phase of the work in improving the quality of life in southwest Kansas, casting a vision for the future.



Table of Contents

5 Welcome

6 WKCF History

10 The State of the Region

11 Community Life

14 Educational Opportunity

16 Health

19 Economic Security

23 Arts & Culture

24 Philanthropy & Social Services

25 Lessons Learned & Next Steps

26 Prioritize

28 Monitor

29 Sustain

30 Words from the Director

31 2021 Leadership Team

32 Endnotes



Welcome

On May 22nd, 1996 Western Kansas Community Foundation was incorporated in the State of Kansas. Its charitable mission was defined as providing an ongoing source of funds to enhance the well-being of the population in Western Kansas.

At the time, there were only five community foundations in the state. Today Kansas counts well over 100 community foundations, more than any other state in the nation. This report traces the history of 25 years of community philanthropy in Garden City and beyond, and WKCF's impact on the region.

WKCF's silver anniversary is a milestone that provides an excellent opportunity to celebrate, reflect, and develop future strategic directions. WKCF invests more than \$1 million in the local communities each year, which is possible thanks to the vision of our founding members and the many individual donors, families and businesses that have partnered with us over the years. We wouldn't be here without you!

This report by Thriving Cities Group maps 25 years of donor services and grantmaking; it also looks ahead, suggesting a more strategic direction. In past years, WKCF has taken a transactional approach to community philanthropy. We accepted donor money, invested it, and distributed a portion of the earnings through granting. Most of these grants were donor directed while some of the disbursements were made at the discretion of the WKCF board.

We have learned that, as grant makers, we can't simply respond to conditions in the world around us. Our actions must be grounded in an understanding of the root causes of community issues, whether it is poverty, lack of educational attainment, or affordable housing, to address them effectively. If we truly hope to improve the well-being of all people in southwest Kansas, we must put diversity, equity and inclusion at the center of our work.

This report will help us take a critical look at ourselves as stewards of community assets with an impact mindset, rather than as the community's savings account.

Conny Bogaard, PhD.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WKCF



WKCF History

A Short Overview of the Western Kansas Community Foundation

WKCF serves the southwest Kansas region made up of Finney, Grant, Gray, Greeley, Hamilton, Haskell, Kearny, Lane, Meade, Morton, Scott, Seward, Stanton, Stevens, and Wichita counties. Garden City is the county seat of Finney County and largest city in the area, serving as a major urban hub for the region. While there is a small presence in the outlying counties, much of the Foundation's work to date has taken place in Garden City and Finney County.

Founded in 1996, the Western Kansas Community Foundation (WKCF) was designed to accommodate donor wishes, special concerns and interests, and it has been governed and administered by a volunteer board of directors. In addition to grants made from donor funds, the Foundation's pool of unrestricted funds is granted on a quarterly basis and used to award competitive, high-impact grants to support nonprofit organizations and charitable entities. Through generous support and passionate leadership, WKCF's assets are now over **\$48 MILLION**.³

Representing broad charitable interests, WKCF supports a variety of programs ranging from arts, education, development, youth, and abuse prevention, to addressing immediate needs for families.

Timeline

1996

—

MAY 22

Western Kansas Community Foundation is incorporated in the State of Kansas.

—

Local individuals, families and businesses give their first gifts, forming the WKCF's Founders Fund, which is still in place as an operating reserve fund.

1999

—

First scholarship fund established.

2000

—

The Kansas Health Foundation invites WKCF to participate in a community health improvement initiative called GROW (Giving Resources to Our World), to increase philanthropy in Kansas, improve the health of children, and develop a network of local long-term partners.

2003

—

Launch of Legacy Society, consisting of donors who have named WKCF in their will or trust as the recipient of charitable donations. Endowment funds have grown to \$2,000,000.

2006

—

By WKCF's 10th anniversary, a total of over \$1,000,000 in grants has been given.

2008

—

In November 2008, WKCF is confirmed in compliance with National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations.

FOUNDERS

Bank of America, N.A.

Brookover Company

Dr. & Mrs. Bill Clement

Dr. William & Jean Clifford

Commerce Bank

John & Mona Crump

Bill & Mary Cummings

Phil & Sheryl Dick

Dan & Chris Fankhauser

Helen Fankhauser

Dr. Luther & Ardis Fry

Dale J. & Carole Corley Gabel

Garden City COOP

Garden City Company

Garden City Telegram

Jerry Gigot & Family

Mr. & Mrs. Henry Hall

Dr. & Mrs. Michael Harris

Katherine Hart

Clifford & Dolores Hope

Steve & Kay Irsik

Taylor & Katherine Jones

Kearny County Bank

James Keller

Leo & Eldora Kleysteuber

Lee Construction, Inc.

Lewis, Hooper & Dick, LLC

Bryan & Geneen Love

Max & Marianne Miller

Martin & Judy Nusser

Merelyn Lee Reeve

Lee & Brenda Reeve

Archie & Judith Rooney

St. Catherine Hospital

Elizabeth Scheopner

Southwestern Bell Telephone

Judy & David Stanard

Dr. Don & Shirley Tillotson

Western State Bank

James & Rose White

Glen & Mary Ellen Woods



2009

—

The Kansas Health Foundation (KHF) begins GROW II, helping WKCF build more permanent resources, measurably improving the health of local residents, and supporting collaboration among community foundations to ensure a well-managed and self-sufficient community foundation field in Kansas.

—

The Women of Purpose Fund is created to support women's causes in southwest Kansas.

2010

—

WKCF adds two affiliate organizations, Wichita County Community Foundation and Grant County Community Foundation that use WKCF as their back office.

2012

—

The Kansas Association of Community Foundations (KACF) launches the Keep 5 in Kansas campaign encouraging people to leave 5% of their estate to their local community foundations to support charitable causes.

2016

—

After the success of GROW I and GROW II, the WKCF board starts focusing on a comprehensive fundraising strategy to build the Foundation's long-term assets.

The *I Promise* campaign is unveiled, and WKCF celebrates its 20th anniversary with mini anniversary grants, a grant writers' workshop, and a scholarship reception.

2017

—

WKCF successfully hosts its inaugural MatchDay to support local nonprofits. The fundraiser blends endowment building and operating money, which serves the dual mission of long-term investment and relieving immediate needs.





WKCF co-founders,
Martin and Judy Nusser



2016
Image from the
I Promise campaign.

2019

WKCF Holdings, LLC is established to own and operate local farmland.

2020

WKCF responds to the COVID-19 pandemic by establishing the Urgent Needs Fund that allocates dollars to relieving crisis situations and urgent community needs.

WKCF receives the Berniece Fry legacy gift consisting of farm ground and invested assets which represents the largest gift to date.

The Community Development Fund is established.

2021

LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

One way to understand the increased importance and impact of WKCF in the western Kansas community over the past 25 years is to look at their year-by-year grant totals. Following the great recession caused by the housing crisis of the late 2000s, WKCF's grant totals skyrocketed. Before 2010 they had been granting less than half a million dollars per year, but since 2010 they have been consistently giving more than a million annually.



The State of the Region

The snapshot presented here offers a picture of how the southwest Kansas region is faring on a number of outcomes, including summaries of six key areas of the region's community wealth and wellbeing: Community Life, Education, Health, Economic Security, Arts & Culture, and Philanthropy & Social Services.

COMMUNITY LIFE



EDUCATION



HEALTH



ECONOMIC SECURITY



ARTS & CULTURE



PHILANTHROPY & SOCIAL SERVICES



These overlapping areas and associated indicators were chosen based on key components of a thriving community, as well as the variety of areas in which WKCF has invested over the years.⁴

While data cannot fully capture progress, these data offer a pulse-check. Leading indicators of thriving for each area were based on the following criteria: they are generally accessible from reputable public sources, they are compiled at multiple geographic locations including local and state levels, they are available on a regular basis in order to make comparisons over time, and each remains relevant to the ongoing work of WKCF. One purpose of this report is to better understand the people and organizations that are left behind, despite progress in a number of areas over the years. With this in mind, data is disaggregated by racial and ethnic groups where meaningful relationships are hypothesized.



ONE

Community Life

Demographic Diversity

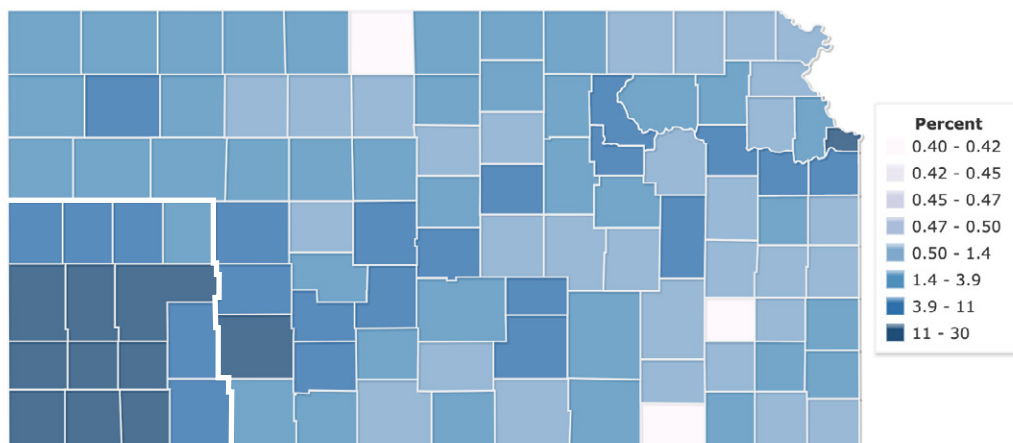
The 15 counties of southwest Kansas are each unique. Together, they make up a diverse region in terms of community life, demographics, and rurality. The **TOTAL POPULATION IN 2019** of the **15 COUNTIES** combined was **107,506**.⁵ Finney and Seward counties are the largest in terms of total population, with 36,750 and 22,349 respectively. Garden City was home to over 26,000 people alone in 2019.

There is a surprising and well-documented demographic diversity to the region as a whole and specifically to Finney County.⁶ Home to a sizable immigrant community including Hispanics/Latinos, Asians, and Africans, there are at least **27 LANGUAGES SPOKEN** because of the meat packing industry and the diverse makeup of the workforce.⁷ Nine of the top ten counties in the state for percentage of foreign born population, are counties served by WKCF. All of the 15 counties except for one, Lane County, have larger foreign born populations as a share of the whole population than the Kansas state average of 7.1%.⁸

Kansas Foreign Born Population by County

2019

*This material was
published by IndexMundi
with data from the
American Community
Survey, 2014–18.*



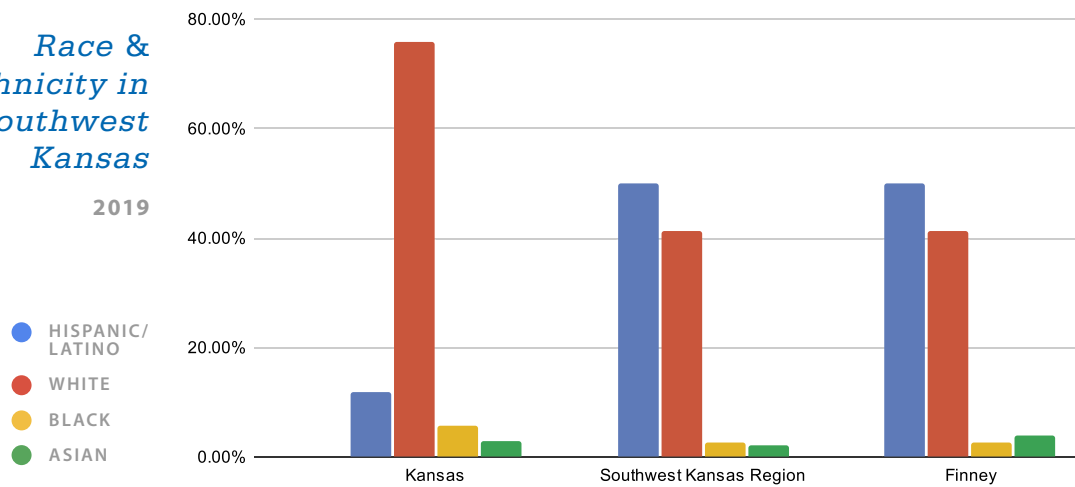
HISPANICS/LATINOS made up **HALF OF THE POPULATION OF FINNEY COUNTY** in 2019, compared to comprising only 12% of the state's population. In fact, with the exception of Lane County, each of the 15 counties have a higher percentage of Hispanic/Latino residents than the state average, many by a substantial margin (60% in Seward County).



Section No. 1

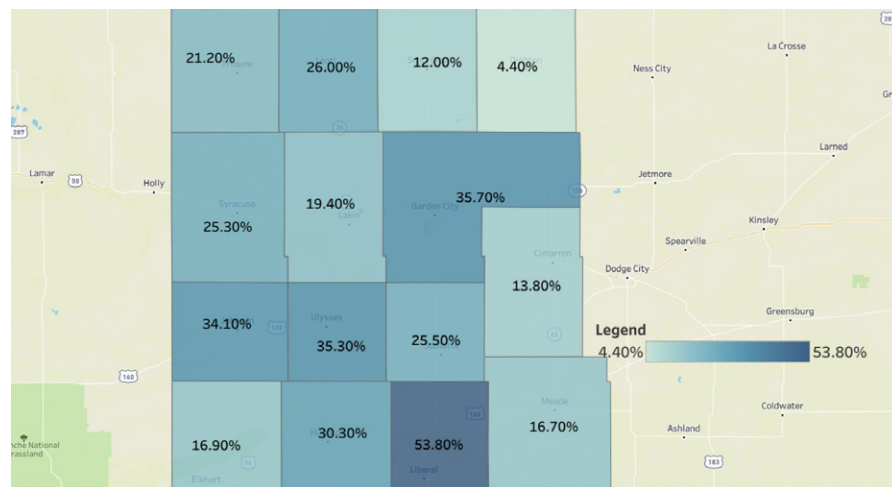
Race & Ethnicity in Southwest Kansas

2019



Primary Language Spoken at Home: Spanish

2019



In **SEWARD COUNTY**, over half of the population reported that Spanish was the primary language spoken at home. This was higher even than Garden City, where **39.5%** of residents reported Spanish as the primary language.⁹

WKCF IMPACT

WKCF has taken the lead in language translation efforts, especially during the community fundraiser, MatchDay.



Screencapture from
Strangers in Town film.



Harvesting from the
Community Garden.

— WKCF IMPACT

WKCF has contributed to numerous programs that support the immigrant and Hispanic/Latino populations, with **REAL MEN LEADERS** and the **PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH COMMUNITY GARDEN** as notable examples.

Real Men Leaders

Real Men Real Leaders is a mentorship-type program for young boys, mostly of Hispanic/Latino backgrounds. The program takes place outside of school hours with several adult male leaders (primarily of Hispanic/Latino background as well) working with the boys on skill building and life lesson activities. They also often take the boys to events or fun activities that they might not normally experience, and involve them in community service projects. The program has the ability to track the boys academically from the point they age out of the program through high school in order to continue supporting them in becoming successful individuals.

Presbyterian Church Community Garden

In 2018, the Presbyterian Church of Garden City utilized a portion of its property to create eight 10'x12' garden plots, and has since expanded to 32 plots, which were quickly rented out all by word of mouth primarily among the Burmese community. These plots allow members of the immigrant community to plant beyond the capacity of container gardens in their apartment complexes, and to provide for their immediate and extended families, as well as socialize with members of the community.



TWO

Educational Opportunity

School Districts & Colleges

The educational landscape in the southwest Kansas region is deeply intertwined with its economic and financial viability. One of the challenges for rural communities like southwest Kansas is what's known as "brain drain," when young people leave the region in search of educational or economic opportunities.¹⁰ While there are **24 PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS** that serve the **15-COUNTY REGION**, with at least one district per county, there are fewer opportunities for educational and economic advancement upon graduation. The notable exception is Garden City Community College (GCCC), a public two-year institution that enrolls approximately 1800 students per year.¹¹ GCCC was one of the first community colleges established in the state, opening its doors in 1920. Fort Hays State University (FHSU) is the closest four-year institution serving the region. It has a newly established relationship with GCCC, including a transfer program that helps GCCC students continue their education at FHSU.¹²

High School Diploma & Higher Education

Compared with the state as a whole, with few exceptions, the southwest Kansas region lags behind in terms of high school diploma attainment as well as bachelor's degree attainment. In 2019, only **74% OF RESIDENTS** across the 15-county region had at least a **HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA**, compared with 91% of Kansas residents as a whole. In the same year, only **16.6%** of southwest Kansas residents on average reported having a **BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER**, compared with 33.4% of Kansas residents. Finney and Seward counties in particular have low rates of educational attainment, with only 70-71% of eligible residents reporting having at least a high school diploma as their highest educational attainment.¹³ Additionally, there is a notable difference between the White and Hispanic/Latino population on both measures of educational attainment. This relatively low attainment is due, in part, to the number of available jobs in the area that do not require higher levels of schooling.

High School Diploma or Higher

2019

● WHITE
● HISPANIC/
LATINO

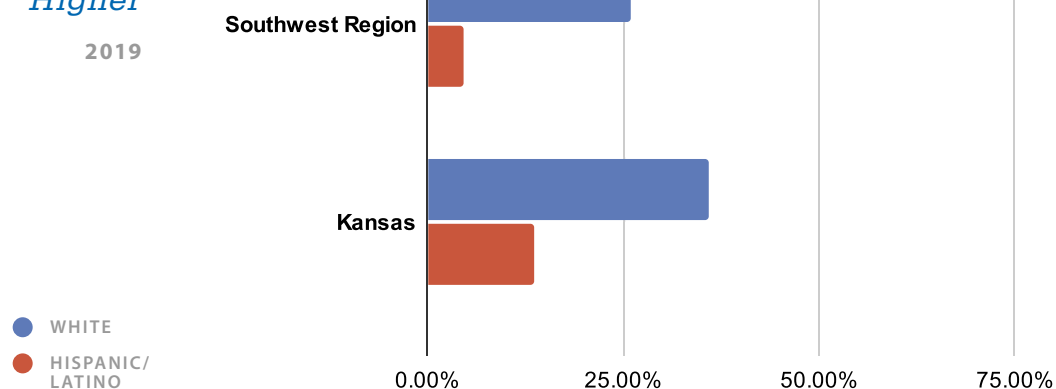
Southwest Region

Kansas

0.00% 25.00% 50.00% 75.00%

Bachelor's Degree or Higher

2019



Foreign-Born Population

There are also notable disparities between the foreign-born population in Finney County and the rest of the region on educational attainment outcomes. Only 35.8% of Finney County foreign-born residents had at least a high school diploma (compared with 65.6% in Kansas), and only 4.1% of foreign-born residents in Finney County held a bachelor's degree (compared with 27.4% of foreign-born Kansas residents).

Transition from School to Work

The transition from education to work can be challenging, especially in rural communities where opportunities and resources might be limited. According to the American Community Survey of the U.S. Census Bureau, over 15% of young adults, ages 20 to 24, in Stanton, Stevens, and Haskell counties were actively looking for a job, but were unable to find employment. These rates stand out in particular when compared with the southwest region (7%) and all of Kansas (7.6%). Even youth in a more urban area like Garden City struggled to find employment (11.8 %).

WKCF IMPACT

WKCF has worked hard to combat some of these challenges by promoting higher education opportunities with the help of passionate donors. WKCF holds many scholarships for students who desire to further their education once they graduate from high school. Since 2003, WKCF has given close to **600 SCHOLARSHIPS**, totaling **\$1,832,502 IN FUNDS DISTRIBUTED**.¹⁴



THREE

Health

As a core area of community wellbeing, health has been central to the work of WKCF since its inception. The Western Kansas Community Foundation has received support from the Kansas Health Foundation (KHF) to work towards bettering health outcomes in the community, with many of WKCF'S initiatives made possible through multiple phases of the GROW (Giving Resources to Our World) initiative of KHF.¹⁵ Addressing healthy behaviors and access to healthcare have been priorities of the Kansas Health Foundation and in turn, remain focus areas of the Western Kansas Community Foundation.

While there are a number of indicators related to health that are of interest, including things like socioeconomic makeup and social circumstances, healthy behaviors and clinical care are two domains that are integral to a person's capacity to remain healthy over time. Understanding health outcomes in the region can help guide the creation of pathways to better health for those who need it most.

Mentally Unhealthy Days

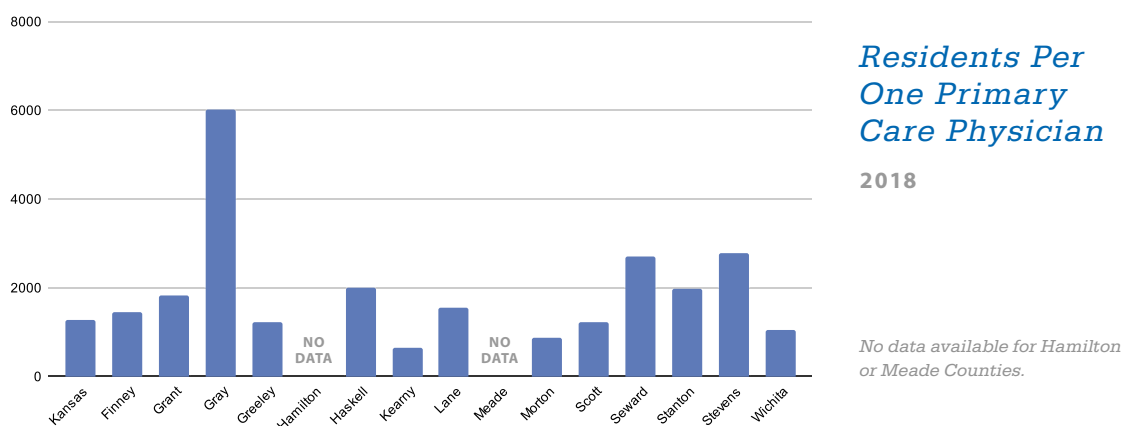
Calculated by asking the respondents the following question: *Now thinking about your mental health, which includes stress, depression, and problems with emotions, for how many days during the past 30 days was your mental health not good?*

Mental Health

Surveying residents about their mental health is one part of measuring health-related quality of life in a community. In one recent survey, western Kansans reported a range of 3.8 (Wichita County) to 4.7 (Kearny County) mentally unhealthy days in one month.¹⁶

Obesity

The increasing prevalence of obesity is a nationwide issue, and one that significantly affects the quality of life of many in southwest Kansas. At last reliable measure in 2017, Kansas's adult prevalence of obesity was 35.2%, and obesity rates in the 15 counties served by WKCF ranged from 32-40% in the same period. Obesity is costly; obese Americans spent on average \$1429 more on healthcare annually than non-obese people. It is also serious, significantly associated with type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke and some types of cancer, the leading causes of premature death in the United States.¹⁷



Healthcare Access

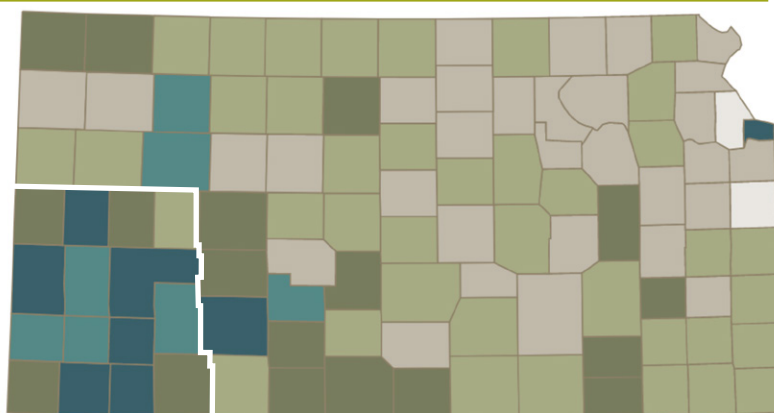
The presence of physicians and health insurance are key indicators of healthcare access. In Gray County there is one primary care physician for the entire county (1:6030 in 2018 according to the County Health Rankings).¹⁸ Stevens and Seward counties also have a lack of primary care physicians with one physician serving over 2,700 people in each community. Comparatively, the state of Kansas has one physician for every 1,280 residents.

Uninsured Kansans

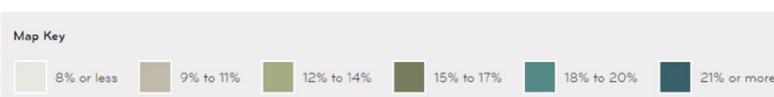
This issue of access and affordability is further exacerbated by the number of adults under 65 who lack health insurance coverage. According to the County Health Rankings, 20% of adults under 65 in the southwest Kansas region lack health insurance. Some have hypothesized that particularly for those places with a large immigrant population, this could be due to certain categories of non-US citizens failing to qualify for insurance through the Affordable Care Act.¹⁹

Uninsured Kansans

2018

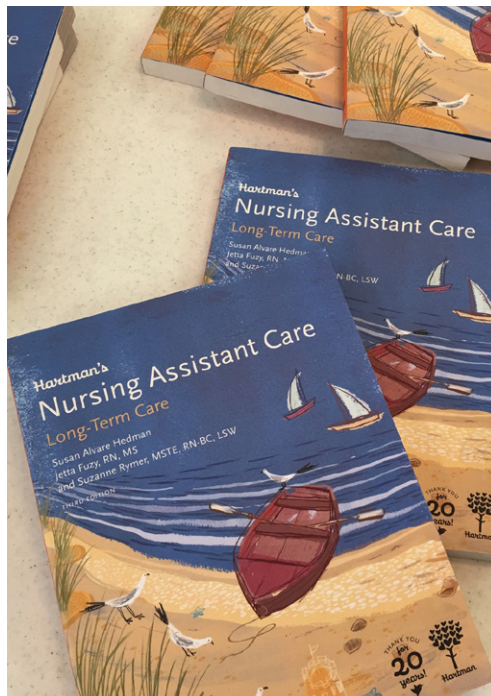


Map published by the Kansas Health Foundation, using data from the 2021 County Health Ranking Report. kansashealth.org/our-work/access-to-care



Broadband Access

Since the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, access to broadband has emerged as a source of health access disparity. In $\frac{1}{3}$ of the counties served by WKCF (Hamilton, Kearny, Morton, Stanton, and Stevens Counties), more than 25% of residents reported not having access to broadband internet in 2019.²⁰ Adequate access to the internet, which goes beyond broadband to measure high-speed internet access and device availability, was an even greater challenge across southwest Kansas. More than 40% of residents in most counties reported inadequate access.²¹



WKCF IMPACT

WKCF has funded many health initiatives through granting, and through distributions from donor advised funds, with the Kansas Health Foundation offering matching dollars to support health initiatives. Some grants and donor advised funds have been focused

on promoting affordable health care such as Genesis Family Health or to promote healthy behaviors through efforts such as LiveWell Finney County. Recently, WKCF funded a suicide prevention program through Genesis to address rising mental health concerns.



FOUR

Economic Security

Just as with health, it is difficult to talk about improving the quality of life in southwest Kansas without talking about the financial and economic situation of the region. While well-being is about more than money, economic prosperity remains a critical building block of a thriving community. Below are a few measures that are direct indicators of that material security, like income and poverty, as well as indirect measures of a person's ability to thrive financially, such as housing, childcare, and employment.



In the southwest Kansas region, the median household income is comparable to the state as a whole, with an average across the 15 counties standing at \$60,953 and Kansas's median household income is \$62,000.²² Some disparities emerge across racial and ethnic lines, with Hispanics/Latinos on average reporting household income of approximately \$14,000 lower than White households on average. This is likely related to the differences in educational attainment levels.



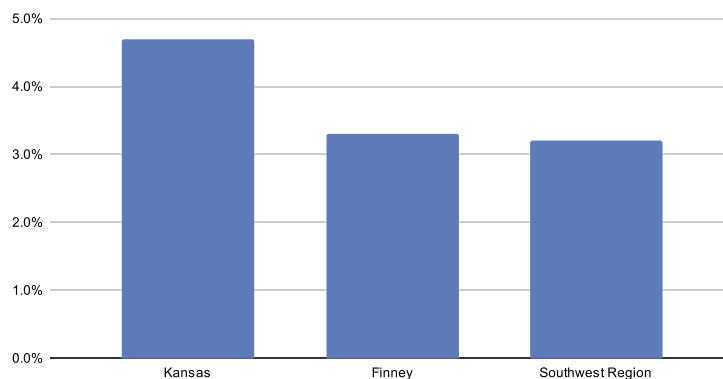
Child Poverty in Southwest Kansas 2019

LOCATION	% OF CHILDREN UNDER 18
Stanton	32.7%
Stevens	30.8%
Kearny	27.9%
Lane	23.0%
Seward	21.5%
Hamilton	16.5%
Finney	15.5%
Kansas	14.9%
Greeley	13.3%
Grant	12.8%
Haskell	12.6%
Morton	10.6%
Meade	9.7%
Gray	8.0%
Scott	3.0%
Wichita	2.8%

Child Poverty

The child poverty rate is on par with the state as a whole, hovering around 17% in 2019 compared to Kansas’s rate of 14.9%.²³ There are a few places where it is substantially lower which is to be celebrated. In Scott County, for example, the child poverty rate is only 3%. In other parts of the region, child poverty is a bigger concern, with Stanton and Stevens Counties experiencing high levels of child poverty (>30%).

Unemployment JULY, 2021



Employment

On average, the unemployment rate for the region is lower than the state average. This is likely due to the high number of low-wage, but relatively stable jobs in the meatpacking industry. This pattern held steady despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the state still reporting a higher unemployment rate than the regional average as late as this past summer.²⁴

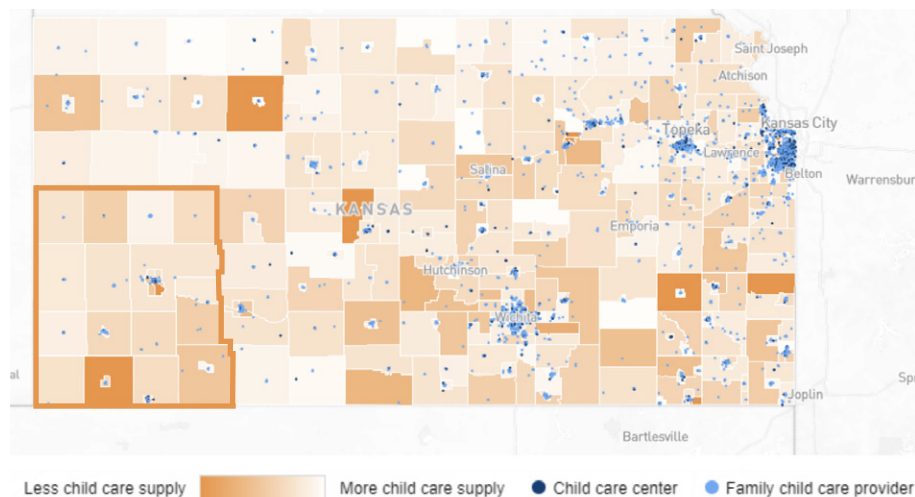
WKCF IMPACT

WKCF has addressed economic security in a variety of ways through funding for food pantries, school meal initiatives, and homeless shelters. In response to economic issues in the wake of COVID-19, WKCF created the Urgent Needs Fund. The Urgent Needs Fund provides assistance to eligible non-profit organizations that struggle with immediate lost revenue,

non-recoverable expenses, and/or increased programming due to the COVID-19 crisis or any future emergency situations. Some critical services that will continue to be funded through this effort include food distribution, shelter, mental and physical healthcare, education, and economic assistance.

Childcare Scarcity in Kansas

This material was published by the Center for American Progress.
www.americanprogress.org



Childcare

Nationally, issues of childcare access and affordability have come to the forefront during the COVID-19 pandemic, with closures and instability creating a situation that made it difficult for working parents to fulfill their job responsibilities. The Center for American Progress conducted a study on childcare scarcity in the US in 2020, using a methodology developed by the University of Minnesota.²⁵ The study estimated the location of families with at least one child under the age of 5, and used available information on childcare locations and capacities in the region to determine scarcity. According to the Center for American Progress's data map, Hamilton, Finney, Haskell, Lane, Seward, Stevens, and Wichita Counties have a "scarce" childcare supply, representing 7 of the 15 counties served.

WKCF IMPACT

While the quantity of child-care centers has emerged as a recent conversation, the quality of childcare centers is equally as important. WKCF has been involved in child-care initiatives, most recently with the Grow & Learn Day-care Center in Leoti, KS that is building a new facility. In order to support this initiative, WKCF provided a letter of credit to help them secure a \$200,000 loan at 0% interest to build the Center.



Housing

Lack of affordable housing causes a number of social concerns, not least of which is a challenge to pay bills, or families living in overcrowded housing. The region carries below the state average eviction rates and rates of **RENT BURDEN** despite having roughly similar median income levels.²⁶ Twenty-one percent of households in the region were burdened by "Excessive Housing Cost,"²⁷ which means that whether renting or paying a mortgage, these households were spending more than 30% of their income on housing. Despite the presence of a high number of low paying jobs, this housing burden was lower than the rate for the state of Kansas (25%).

Rent Burden

The percentage of households that spend more than 30% of their income on rent.

WKCF IMPACT

WKCF established the Affordable Housing Fund in 2018 with remaining assets that came from the local Habitat for Humanity that was closing. These funds were made available with the stipulation that 25% of 7 still active mortgages would be paid back to WKCF and added to the fund. The Emmaus House, a homeless shelter in Garden City that provides roughly 250 people with housing at one time or another each year, receives annual distributions from an endowment fund with WKCF.²⁸ Currently, Emmaus House is one of the top earners of WKCF's annual MatchDay events.



FIVE

Arts & Culture

A vibrant arts scene and accessible entertainment are an essential part of a thriving community. Its existence makes a place livable, beautiful, and enjoyable, as well as safer and more productive.²⁹ Yet, the impact of the arts can be challenging to measure, and often seems less important than things like housing or healthcare access. Because of that, art centers are hard to prioritize in many communities. More than just mere amenities, art centers are actually vital components of social infrastructure.

The Data Arts Project at Southern Methodist University ranked counties by their Arts Vibrancy. Each county was assigned an overall arts vibrancy score measured by analyzing four measures under each of three main rubrics: supply, demand, and public support for arts and culture on a per capita basis. Supply is gauged by investigating total arts providers, demand with measures of total nonprofit arts dollars in the community, and public support as state and federal arts funding. All but two of the counties in the southwest Kansas region, Seward and Stevens, ranked in the bottom 50% of U.S. counties for their Arts Vibrancy.³⁰

COUNTY	SCORE	Arts Vibrancy Score
Greeley	<10	
Hamilton	<10	2020
Haskell	<10	
Kearny	<10	
Stanton	<10	
Wichita	<10	
Grant	10-19	
Lane	10-19	
Gray	20-29	
Finney	30-39	
Meade	40-49	
Morton	40-49	<i>The range represents percentiles. If a county has a score of 20, it means it scored better than 20% of communities measured.³¹</i>
Scott	40-49	
Seward	50-59	
Stevens	50-59	

WKCF IMPACT

WKCF has granted funds to various arts initiatives, notably Garden City Arts, in order to improve access to more art and cultural spaces. Garden City Arts curates monthly art exhibits at four downtown venues in order to showcase the talent of multiple artists. It also provides monthly film viewings, annual cultural programs, and art classes for both children and adults.





SIX

Philanthropy & Social Services

A rich nonprofit sector is critical for a thriving community, and WKCF is pleased to support nonprofits in the region through **PHILANTHROPY**, **LEADERSHIP**, and **COLLABORATION**. According to GuideStar, a philanthropic research database, Garden City alone has 156 nonprofit organizations.³²

Nonprofit organizations often provide important services, programs, and infrastructure that funnel resources and services to residents, usually driven by their moral values and missions. In this way, nonprofit and related philanthropic endeavors are not merely providing economic support, but they also help point the community towards providing for the common good in a coordinated way. WKCF has provided funding to 466 unique nonprofit organizations since its inception.³³

In addition to financial support, WKCF offers nonprofit workshops (recent topics include grant writing, financial fundamentals, and endowment building) and other opportunities to build the capacity of nonprofits. A recent example is a partnership established with Network for Good that offers a year-long 1:1 coaching program to eligible nonprofits. For two years now, WKCF has provided the funding for several nonprofits to benefit from this opportunity at no cost to their organizations.

By 2025, across the 15 counties in southwest Kansas there will be an estimated \$2.9 billion of wealth transferred from one generation to the next. If philanthropic organizations captured just 5% of that pie, it would result in close to \$150 million for the 15-county region.³⁴

CURRENT WKCF ENDOWMENT

\$37,092,460
Invested³⁶

WKCF IMPACT

Since 2012, WKCF has participated in the **KEEP 5 IN KANSAS** campaign, a larger effort established by the Kansas Association of Community Foundations.³⁵ The goal of the campaign is to support community foundation endowments that would provide a permanent source of funding for local organizations and causes that donors care about.

Lessons Learned & Next Steps

Emerging Areas of Focus **PRIORITIZE • MONITOR • SUSTAIN**

Over the past 25 years, WKCF has paid attention to what kinds of programs and initiatives work well when attempting to address the quality of life in the southwest Kansas region.

As the Foundation's primary role is to serve donors and to connect those donors to the community, WKCF will continue granting based on donor wishes and expressed community and organizational needs. Moving forward, however, WKCF also wants to bring people together to be a part of regional solutions through specific strategies put to work in specific areas of interest. Below are strategies for investment and propose areas of priority to that end. Based on organizational strategic planning, as well as investigation into community data of the southwest Kansas region, WKCF has moved towards a strategic grant-making framework around key community challenges.

Across the key areas named in this report, some challenges require new or increased investment and collaborative effort, some require active attention, data tracking, and conversation around areas of partnership and growth, and others should be maintained to enhance the good work already being done.

Moving forward, WKCF will address these emergent priorities:

ONE

Bring people together to be a part of regional solutions.

TWO

Build larger unrestricted funds to promote community development.

THREE

Cultivate the education pipeline.

Additionally, WKCF will monitor how best to ensure access to healthcare across the community, and sustain its efforts to address critical needs as they arise.



Prioritize

Working Together

Strategies for aligning organizational efforts, addressing community inequities, and amplifying collective impact.

FINANCIALLY SUPPORT areas and interventions where there are shared expressed commitments.

BUILD CAPACITY to support nonprofit flexibility for collaborative efforts around shared priority areas.

PROMOTE LEADERSHIP by convening key stake-holders and community members around pressing challenges.

UTILIZE DATA and **MEASUREMENT** to support decision making across the community.

EMBRACE A DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION LENS for understanding and solving community issues.

Asset-Building

Leveraging resources into key areas of work and working through proven strategies of social change.

A narrowing of focus is needed for the next 25 years, both in terms of outcomes and in terms of strategy. This refocusing is needed to increase positive outcomes for the southwest Kansas region.

With this shift comes a critical need for more unrestricted, endowed funds that can provide long-term resources for the region. Currently, WKCF is lacking large, unrestricted funds to tackle some of the region's most pressing issues.



The Education Pipeline

Intentionally draw people back to the community by restructuring grants and scholarships for greater impact, and attend to workforce development for young adults.

Building on its investments in scholarships and youth leadership programs, WKCF hopes to begin collaborative conversations around the topic of *Education to Work* across the community. WKCF has a long history of granting scholarships to high school graduates that promote better educational outcomes for southwest Kansas residents. Despite not having a four-year degree granting institution, the community must explore how to create scholarships in such a way that they draw people back to the community, not away from it, and consider offering specific scholarships for Hispanic/Latino students in order to encourage college matriculation and graduation.

According to Jobs for the Future, a national nonprofit focused on the American workforce and education system, “Youth unemployment costs society—through the loss of talent and costs of social supports and subsidies. Jobless young people are more vulnerable to a range of challenges, including the ills already plaguing their communities: high rates of unplanned pregnancy, unstable housing, substance abuse, and crime.”³⁷ WKCF has begun to address this concern through programs like “Real Men Real Leaders,” but the region should support youth workforce development in a comprehensive fashion so that there is a pathway to education or work for all southwest Kansas youth.

Scholarship recipients.





Monitor

Access to Healthcare

Not only does the data show that access to healthcare is a major need in the community, but that health issues are shared concerns across the community.

Access to care is a stated priority for individual counties according to a number of county-based Community Health Needs Assessments (e.g. Finney County, 2016; Seward County, 2019; Stanton County, 2013). While there are a number of county-based initiatives (e.g. Live Well Finney County) related to increasing access to healthcare, there may be an opportunity for a coordinated collaboration or working group across the 15-county region. Additionally, WKCF may monitor the ways in which the **SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH** are affecting health outcomes across the region.

According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, addressing the social determinants of health is one way of addressing disparities in health outcomes.³⁸ For example, housing cost indirectly affects community health; when families have to spend a substantial portion of their income on housing, paying for healthy food or healthcare can be a major challenge, leaving them at greater risk for health concerns. Addressing social concerns like affordable housing helps people have a home, but also indirectly affects their health outcomes.

Social Determinants of Health



Social Determinants of Health
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 Healthy People 2030

Healthy People 2030, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Retrieved October 15, 2021, from <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/social-determinants-health>

Sustain

Meeting Critical Needs

Unexpected needs always arise.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic will persist and other acute challenges will emerge. The community should be prepared to pivot towards those crises that are unplanned as well as problems that become visible through crisis (e.g. broadband, childcare, etc.). Beyond the pandemic, WKCF aims to meet the highest and most urgent needs in the community and it is important to have unrestricted flexible funds to address them. As recovery from the pandemic continues and life begins to return to normal, the Urgent Needs Fund will play a large role in assisting rural communities to do so.

In addition to acute, urgent needs such as a meal, or help with rent, there are also community-wide systemic needs, like **CHILDCARE** or **BROADBAND ACCESS**.

According to the Center for American Progress, the developing and expanding childcare crisis is likely to have a greater impact on low- and middle-income communities, minority families, and rural families.³⁹ In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the region should prioritize understanding the needs of both childcare providers as well as the needs of working parents.

According to the Kansas Health Foundation, broadband access is an issue of health equity. The Foundation's February 2021 report notes, "There is an increasing need for adequate internet access, which is required for telehealth, education, business and social services. Without proper access to the internet, it's hard for these individuals to receive the proper care, education or social activities needed to succeed."⁴⁰

Supporting Donor-Driven Efforts

Aligning donors with programs and charities.

WKCF will continue granting based on donor wishes as the Foundation's primary role is to serve donors and to connect those donors to the community and the organizations they care about.



Words from the Director

WKCF wants to build a community-wide collaborative to create innovative approaches that tackle some of today's greatest challenges, leading us all to a brighter future.

We believe this effort can be accomplished by prioritizing these 3 key areas:

ONE

Bringing people together for, or to be a part of, regional solutions.

Following the release of this report, WKCF will launch a media campaign inviting area residents to engage in four carefully designed 'challenges' in the key areas of affordable housing, access to health care, community daycare and educational attainment. Within each of these four challenges, we offer options to engage, by donating time, money and other resources. WKCF will continue to convene community members to collaboratively build and maintain strong, safe and dynamic communities. These community meetings will be designed to generate new ideas, inspire bold solutions, and cultivate relationships and collaborations to improve our communities, region-wide. The goal is to have people of all ages, from all walks of life and socio-economic circumstances,

participate in substantive conversations, with the option to stay even more connected to the conversations through social media.

TWO

Building larger unrestricted funds to promote community development.

The goal for WKCF's Community Development Fund is to reach \$2 million by 2025, which allows us to make larger grants for greater community impact, especially in key areas of affordable housing, access to health care, community daycare and educational attainment.

THREE

Cultivating the education pipeline.

By working with donors collaboratively, WKCF is inviting donors to lead the Foundation's efforts in creating scholarships to draw people back to the community.

While WKCF's mission statement of 'enriching western Kansas life through philanthropy, leadership and collaboration' still holds true after 25 years, we believe shifting from a donor-central to a participatory, inclusive philanthropy is necessary in developing new initiatives that leave a lasting impact in the 15 counties we serve. This is more than a mind shift, it is also a call to action to prioritize the people who need our support the most.

As Maya Angelou put it: **"Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better."** I invite others to join WKCF in the work of transforming ourselves to transform the people and the communities we serve.

2021 Leadership Team

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Conny Bogaard, PhD. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Stacie Hahn PROGRAM & MARKETING DIRECTOR	Liz Sosa OPERATIONS DIRECTOR
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How to Contribute

Give a General Donation by Check

For Western Kansas Community Foundation, no gift is too small. A gift of \$25 or \$100 to any fund can make a difference. If you need help deciding on which funds to support, please don't hesitate to contact us by emailing WKCF@WKCF.ORG, visiting WKCF.ORG, or by calling today at (620) 271-9484. We can help match your charitable interests with the appropriate fund.

*Please make your check payable to **WESTERN KANSAS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION** with the name of the fund to which you are donating written on the check's memo line.*

Mail a General Check Donation

Western Kansas
Community Foundation
402 N. Main Street
Garden City, Ks 67846



Endnotes

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The Thriving Cities paradigm emerged out of an initiative of the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture at the University of Virginia. It builds upon a “human ecology” framework, which sees cities as complex, asymmetric, and dynamic social systems that both empower and constrain the ways of life, and life chances of their residents. The Thriving Cities Group uses a multi-disciplinary approach that brings together decades of research, training, community organizing and technology.

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For more information about the Thriving Cities Group, please visit **ThrivingCitiesGroup.com**



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