In early 2023, K-State Research and Extension was tasked by the Kansas PRIDE, Inc. Board of Directors to rebrand the program. In May 2023, the K-State Research and Extension PRIDE Program officially rebranded as Kansas Community Empowerment.

The Kansas Community Empowerment program is a volunteer, grassroots effort to improve the quality of life in local communities. Kansas communities share a common bond: a rich heritage based on self-reliance and community pride. Since 1970, the program has assisted and encouraged more than 400 communities. Through the program, local communities identify what they would like to preserve, create, or improve for their future. Volunteers pull together to create that ideal future, working with the program’s resources.

The Kansas Community Empowerment program strives to maximize community and economic development efforts by encouraging groups to coordinate and work collaboratively for community empowerment and betterment.

For details on how to become a Kansas Community Empowerment community, including benefits, participating community map, grant and award offerings, and sponsorship information, visit: kce.k-state.edu

**Thank you to our sponsors who make recognition and funding opportunities possible**

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All sponsorship funds raised by Kansas PRIDE, Inc., a 501(c)3 organization, go directly to Kansas communities through project grants, educational opportunities, and recognition. Overhead and staff expenses are provided by K-State Research and Extension and the Kansas Department of Commerce.

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director of K-State Research and Extension, Kansas State University, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts.

August 2023

kcce@k-state.edu | 785-532-5840
2022 23 Community Awards

PROJECT EXCELLENCE

2023 Social Capital Award
Alton – “Ladies Night Out”

“Girls Just Wanna Have Fun,” the theme for Alton PRIDE’s 2022 Ladies Night Out, aptly sums up why this annual night out on the town has been around for 30 years and is still going strong. Social culture, available 24/7 at one’s fingertips, leaves a void that can only be filled with face to face “food, folks and fun” (to borrow an old McDonald’s commercial). Alton PRIDE plans to keep on keeping this annual tradition alive on every third week in March: a night out on the town with food, folks and fun!

2023 Cultural Capital Award
Alton – Alton Summer Jubilee

The Alton Summer Jubilee, held the fourth Saturday in August, is Alton PRIDE’s crown jewel in their full calendar of annual events. Think food: choices abound; folks: from far and wide; and fun: for all ages! Plus, worshiping together on Sunday morning!

RISING STAR

The Rising Star Award is an opportunity for recognition to community members or partner organizations that go above and beyond for their communities. This year, the following were recognized:

COMMUNITY OF EXCELLENCE
Provided through Kansas PRIDE, Inc.

Alton
– Housing/Cleanup Initiative – Phase I

Blue Rapids
– Sunflower Mural and Blue Rapids Square Sound System

Columbus
– Planter Boxes

Delia
– Community Center Roof Project

Highland
– Summer Snow Cone Series

COMMUNITY OF ACTION

Alton
– Ginger Howell

Arlington
– KG Medical, LLC

Blue Rapids
– Jerry and Janet Zayas

Potwin
– Melvina Jones

Silver Lake
– Melinda Field

COMMUNITY OF GROWTH

Silver Lake
– Community Signage

The following grants are provided through our partnership with the Kansas Masons:

COMMUNITY PROMOTION

Blue Rapids
– Blue Rapids Road Ramble

Erie
– Helping Visitors Find Main Attractions: Wayfaring Directional Signage

Highland
– Welcome Bags

Silver Lake
– Signs for Ball Association/We Are Silver Lake (Mobile Signs)

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY

Conway Springs
– Community Center Preservation

Silver Lake
– Memorial Tree Replacement

K-State Research and Extension’s partnership with the Dane G. Hansen Foundation continued to provide support to northwest Kansas communities’ important improvement efforts. The foundation’s funding supported 19 volunteer groups affiliated with Kansas Community Empowerment; seven communities and organizations received customized grant assistance; four communities were supported in their First Impressions assessments; and a staff position to support these programs.

K-State Research and Extension provides technical assistance and evidence-based programs to citizens working to help their communities thrive and prosper. Since 2016, more than 2,000 people have attended K-State Research and Extension’s in-person and online grant writing workshops resulting in $38 million in successful grants to communities to fund childcare, technology, education, arts, parks and more.

The First Impressions community assessment program has given 130 Kansas towns an opportunity to identify areas to preserve, create, or improve to boost the overall quality of life and develop sense of place. Community facilitation and local business support resources are also available to communities, free of charge. For more information on these and other programs, visit: ksre.k-state.edu/community.