



BUSINESS UNWIND

After hours gets
an upgrade

GO TOPEKA

Earns acclaimed
accreditation

DOWNTOWN PLAZA UPDATE

The countdown to
March 2022 is on

Foulston Siefkin LLP welcomes **LISA BROWN**



Health care lawyer | Young leader | Committed Topeka citizen

Foulston Siefkin LLP is pleased to announce Lisa Brown joined the firm's Topeka office March 12. As a member of Foulston's health law team, Ms. Brown will focus her practice on health care law and related matters. Her experience includes representing hospitals, health systems, and other health care providers with a wide array of issues, including health care licensing and regulatory matters, provider reimbursement, health care contracts, transactions and financing, and insurance and medical malpractice defense.

Ms. Brown, a graduate of Washburn University School of Law, is a member of the Kansas Association of Defense Counsel, Sam A. Crow American Inn of Court, Kansas Bar Association, Women Attorneys Association of Topeka, and the Kansas Women Attorneys Association. She also serves as an adjunct professor at Washburn University School of Law.

Ms. Brown was named one of Topeka's Top 20 Under 40 for 2017 by the Jayhawk Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America. A 2017 graduate of Leadership Topeka, she serves on the board of Let's Help, Inc., the Topeka Performing Arts Center, and the Community Leadership and Development Council for the Kansas Children's Service League.

Lisa M. Brown | lbrown@foulston.com | 785.354.9414 | www.foulston.com

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ATTORNEYS AT LAW

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COMMUNICATE
EFFECTIVELY,
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POWER of TRAVEL TOPEKA

TOURISM
SPENDING
SUPPORTS

3,482
JOBS

5

PERCENT

REPRESENTS 5% OF
ALL EMPLOYMENT IN
SHAWNEE COUNTY.

LODGING SPENDING REPRESENTS
16.2 CENTS OF EVERY DOLLAR
SPENT IN SHAWNEE COUNTY.

HOTEL

TOURISM ACTIVITY
BRINGS IN

\$56+
MILLION
IN TAX REVENUES.

\$33.5 MILLION WAS
ACCRUED TO STATE AND
LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

2016

VISITOR SPENDING
INCREASED BY **\$18**
MILLION BETWEEN
2015 AND 2016

**VISITOR
SPENDING**

GROWTH IN
SHAWNEE COUNTY
OUTPERFORMED

**ENTIRE STATE IN
2016**

\$341+
MILLION

TOTAL
**ECONOMIC
IMPACT**

**\$650 PER
MINUTE**

SPENT BY VISITORS!



Source: Tourism Economics, calendar year data 2016
For the complete report, go to TravelKS.com/Industry

MEMBER RENEWALS

Aboud's Catering
 Absolute Design by Brenda
 ActionCOACH Business Coaching
 Advantaged Home Care, Inc
 Advisors Excel
 Aldridge, Brandon Insurance Agency - State Farm
 Alpha Media (AM 580, 94.5 Country, Country Legends 106.9)
 American Cancer Society, Inc.
 Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.
 Architect One
 Autos, Inc.
 Batis Development
 Bettis Asphalt & Construction, Inc
 Big O Tires-Tryon Automotive Inc
 Jack H. Brier
 Brown V. Board - National Park Service
 The Burger Stand
 Canada Drug of Topeka
 Capital Area Gymnastics
 Capitol Federal
 Carpet One
 Carpet Plus
 CBIZ MHM, LLC
 Central National Bank
 Community Action, Inc
 Community Blood Center
 CryoX
 David's Jewelers
 Denison State Bank - Topeka Branch
 Envista Credit Union

Events Unique LLC
 Express Employment Professionals
 Fidelity State Bank & Trust Co
 Gage Center Bowl/ReKat Recreation Inc
 Gage Center Dental Group
 Girl Scouts of NE Kansas & NW Missouri
 Gizmo Pictures
 Goodcents Deli Fresh Subs - 21st St
 Hanover Pancake House
 Historic Harley-Davidson of Topeka
 Jenny Craig Inc (Angel Fire Inc)
 K1 REALTY, LLC
 Kansas Turnpike Authority
 Key Staffing
 La Casa Grande Apartments
 Legal Shield - Alden R. Hickman
 Legend Senior Living
 Logan Business Machines
 Luminous Neon, Inc
 Madison Government Affairs
 McAlister's Deli
 McCrite Plaza Retirement Community
 McPherson Contractors, Inc
 Mechanical Contractors Association of Kansas
 Midwest Float, LLC
 Mize Houser & Company P.A.
 Penny Morgan Financial Service
 Brad Noller - American Family Insurance
 Oasis Family Medicine Associates, LLC
 OFG Financial
 P1 Group, Inc

Performance Tire & Wheel
 Prairie Glass Art
 Quality Copy & Scanning Service, Inc.
 Roger Underwood
 Scott HR (Human Resources)
 SERC Physical Therapy (North Topeka)
 Shawnee County Parks + Recreation Foundation
 Shawnee County Sheriff's Office
 Shawnee Heights USD 450
 Stephen Smith Images
 Stubbs Development Co, LLC
 TBS Electronics, Inc
 The Brownstone, LLC
 Topeka Collegiate School
 Topeka Event Center
 Topeka High "The Coffee Hall"
 Topeka Public Schools Foundation
 Topeka Public Schools, USD 501
 Topeka Rescue Mission
 Umbrella
 Union Pacific Railroad
 Urbom Law Offices Chartered
 Washburn Rural High School Bank & Common Grounds
 Washburn University Foundation
 West Ridge Mall
 Westar Energy
 WTI Topeka

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Aflac/Quality of Life, Inc.
 Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate
 Wostal Realty
 Elemental Roofing, LLC

Force One Security and Consulting, LLC
 Jerry Shelor
 Muckenthaler Inc.
 Network Computer Solutions

Phoenix Homecare and Hospice
 Pinnacle Staffing Group
 Sola Salon Studios
 TDC Learning Centers, Inc



WORD OF THE MONTH

honesty

1. the quality or fact of being honest; uprightness and fairness.
2. truthfulness, sincerity, or frankness.

APRIL



WORD OF THE MONTH

positivity

1. the state or character of being positive : a positivity that accepts the world as it is.

MAY

MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES (MARCH - JUNE)

45 Years

The Robb Company

40 Years

Community Action, Inc
DL Smith Electric
Lawyers Title Of Topeka, Inc

35 Years

American Red Cross-Kansas Capital Area Chapter
Carpet One
CBIZ MHM, LLC
Hanover Pancake House
Old Prairie Town at Ward Meade Historic Site
YWCA

30 Years

Lutz, Larry - Berkshire Hathaway
HomeServices First, REALTORS
Walmart Supercenter #1802

20 Years

Johnson, Jeanette - Berkshire Hathaway
HomeServices First, REALTORS
MB Piland Advertising & Marketing
Topeka Landscape, Inc

15 Years

Azura Credit Union - Highway 24
Community Bank

Envista Credit Union
Herman's Meat & Smokehouse
Kaw Valley Bank
Nexlynx, Inc
Schendel Pest Services
Sertoma Great Topeka Duck Race
Westside Stamp and Awards,

10 Years

Brookfield Village Apartments
The Lofts at College Hill
Topeka Youth Project, Inc.

5 Years

Beckley Chiropractic Clinic
Dean Ferrell
GNB Mortgage Company (Branch GNB)
Knox Signs & Graphics
Stephen Smith Images
Sutherlands
The Floor Project
Wolfe's Landscape & Irrigation, Inc

1 Year

Ad Veritas
Billy Volle - Farm Bureau Financial Services
CoreFirst Bank & Trust - Croco
CoreFirst Bank & Trust - Dillons East
CoreFirst Bank & Trust - Dillons West
CoreFirst Bank & Trust - Downtown
CoreFirst Bank & Trust - Fleming Place
CoreFirst Bank & Trust - Hunters Ridge

CoreFirst Bank & Trust - North Plaza
CoreFirst Bank & Trust - Southwest
CoreFirst Bank & Trust - Wanamaker
CoreFirst Bank & Trust - West
El Centro of Topeka
Elem Technologies
Falk Architects Inc.
Gentry Strategy Group
Heinbach, Larkin, Heck D.D.S.
Kansas Insurance Inc.
Keynundrum
Mid Star Lab, Inc.
Pizzeria Via Family Dining
Powered by WebLinkCONNECT
Prairie Band, LLC
Renaissance Management and Training Solutions, LLP
Renew Medical Aesthetics
Select 1 Solution Inc.
The Mays Group, Inc.
Tradesmen International
U.S. Bank - 21st Street
U.S. Bank - 5th and Jackson
U.S. Bank - Fleming Place
U.S. Bank - Pioneer Square
U.S. Bank - Rossville
U.S. Bank - Silver Lake
U.S. Bank - Wanamaker
U.S. Bank - White Lakes
UniFirst Corporation

RIBBON CUTTINGS

Adventure Vision and Dental
Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate Wostal Realty
Cornerstone
East Topeka Learning Center
FHLBank

Oshnik Yoga
Platform 785
The Dirty Dog Daycare
Topeka Home Show
Trails Market



WORD OF THE MONTH

trustworthiness

1. gaining the confidence of others by demonstrating reliability.

JUNE



WORD OF THE MONTH

Greatfulness

1. warmly or deeply appreciative of kindness or benefits received.

JULY

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



We believe that, in addition to providing many unique services and products, each Greater Topeka Partnership member has its own unique story that deserves to be shared. Take a minute to learn more about these diverse new GTP members.



Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate – Wostal Realty

With almost 20 years of real estate experience between the two, Wade and Abbey Wostal are committed to supporting you during what might be one of your most important decisions in your life. Let Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate – Wostal Realty help guide you during the home buying or selling process.

In 2017, Wostal Realty partnered with Better Homes and Gardens to better serve their shared mission of providing the residents of Northeast Kansas with quality home realty.

Better Homes and Gardens offers various resources to its clients. Buyers can benefit from downloading the Better Homes and Gardens Wostal Realty app, which allows the user to see a live stream of homes recently put on the market. This app updates every 15 minutes, so you never miss a thing. Sellers have easy access to Better Homes and Gardens marketing materials, both digital and print media.

Better Homes and Gardens also offers hands-on DIY workshops to the public for different occasions, such as how to build equity or how to lay tile. Home buyer workshops are also available.



Force One Security and Consulting

Force One Security and Consulting is unlike many other security guard service in Northeast Kansas because it is owned and operated by police officers. Owner Lamont Semien has 20 years of experience in law enforcement and currently serves as a police officer full-time at the Mission, KS and part-time at Westwood, KS. As this experience has made him well qualified and certified in areas of law enforcement and personal security, Lamont is adamant that his security officers possess professional backgrounds with a police department, military or in another field of security service. Force One's mission is to provide the best security information and physical security to protect its clients' best interests and assets. Services include on-site surveillance, coverage at private parties, personal body guards, security training and awareness, risk and vulnerability audits, and more.

Force One Security and Consulting delivers on quality professionals, independent security services, security program management services, and unbiased security vulnerability assessments and threat analysis.



MidWest Barber College

MidWest Barber College is Topeka's leading educational center for barbers. The school originally opened in 2011 and reopened in 2015 under the ownership of Lucy Opit, a seasoned haircare professional, barber and business owner. Accredited by the Kansas Board of Regents, MidWest Barber College offers a 1,500 credit hour program that provides students training in the field of barbering and further prepares them for licensure. MidWest's curriculum is diversified and

includes textbook and theory coursework as well as hands-on labs. In addition to up-to-date classrooms and lab rooms, the college's facilities provide state of the art equipment as well as several special features to help cultivate the learning experience. These include a simulated barbershop, in which students are exposed to all the components of operating or owning your own business, dealing with everything from chair- rental to filing taxes.

MidWest Barber College also currently offers an industry related crossover program to those licensed in cosmetology in which candidates need to complete 500 credit hours to received certification. As it is a small school, MidWest faculty and staff work closely with students to ensure each individual's academic and professional success.



Pinnacle Staffing Group

Pinnacle Staffing Group is a full-service staffing, recruiting and payroll firm with an emphasis on delivering outstanding customer service. This locally owned business is committed to providing the resources you need to help grow and sustain your business potential. With more than 50 years of combined experience in the staffing, recruiting and payroll fields, Pinnacle Staffing's goal is to customize a comprehensive solution that best benefits your organization.

If you need a solution for payroll, HR, or benefits administration or need additional employees for a few hours or a few days, Pinnacle Staffing Group is ready to assist.



Muckenthaler Inc.

From cutlery, to counter and catering equipment, and everything in between, Muckenthaler guarantees to meet your kitchen equipment needs. Serving the food service industry since 1970, this family owned business strives to meet the needs of its various clients, including schools, hospitals, restaurants and bars. Muckenthaler services include equipment delivery, installation and set up. Also, its knowledgeable staff is eager to share valuable advice and provide equipment at a fair price.

With a head office in Emporia and an additional branch in Topeka, Muckenthaler is one of the leading commercial kitchen equipment and restaurant suppliers in Northeast Kansas.



Robert Faught: Aflac/Quality of Life, Inc.

Robert (Bob) Faught holds two distinct roles within his joint career as the district sales coordinator for Aflac and president and co-founder of Quality of Life, Inc. He is both an advocate

and an educator. After spending nearly 35 years experiencing and resolving joint pain, Bob was inspired to write a book about his experience, entitled *Our Joint Decisions: A Patient's Perspective to Successfully Manage Joint Pain, Surgeries & Replacements*. Although the book chronicles Bob's path to healing, focusing on a "mind over body" outlook, he asserts that this approach can be applied to any struggle in one's life. Inspired by the role of education in quality of life, Bob and his wife, Leah, set out to create their non-profit, Quality of Life, Inc., in 2009. His motivational speaking career has followed with the advocate and author visiting many schools, senior organizations and other programs to educate and motivate individuals on taking control of their bodies and lives.

In addition to educational opportunities, Quality of Life, Inc. offers a special program for aspiring motivational writers. The "I Care to Share" program is designed for individuals who are looking to share their powerful stories of self-improvement. Approved authors will receive mentorship from Bob during the writing and editing process and advice in finding the right publisher for their work.

In 2013, Bob became the district sales director for Aflac – a position well suited for his passion for education and promotion of quality of life. Aflac provides supplemental insurance for individuals and groups to help pay benefits major medical insurance doesn't cover.



Young Living Essential Oils – Aimee Kosmala

Young Living Essential Oils is a renowned global essential oil supplier. While the company is known for its quality oils, its overall mission is to provide methods to live a cleaner life. For Topeka Young Living representative, Aimee Kosmala, there is no doubt that what we put in and around our bodies affects our wellbeing.

"For me," says Kosmala, "health is a lifestyle. I turned to Young Living after having suffered from chronic migraines. And after slowly substituting many of my household products for Young Living's more natural alternatives, I can honestly say I haven't had a migraine since."

Aimee's passion for health and fitness led her to share Young Living's message and products with others. Young Living provides essential oils that can be used aromatically, topically and internally. In addition to its individual oils, the organization supplies various essential oil-based home and health products, including: toothpaste, multipurpose cleaner, shampoo and conditioner, moisturizers, face cleansers, laundry necessities and more. Not only can Aimee supply you with your favorite essential oils but also provide you with tips on how to improve your health through Young Living Essential Oils. Her team also offers classes about toxins, use of essential oils, pets and oils, and kids and oils.

GREATER TOPEKA PARTNERSHIP AMBASSADORS

It was announced February 26 at a special meeting held for Greater Topeka Partnership volunteer Ambassadors and Diplomats that the two would merge into one select group. Adopting the name Ambassadors as a collective, the new group set out to tackle a combined set of responsibilities on the behalf of the GTP. With the majority of duties revolving around member relations, Ambassadors not only participate in and lead important member events, such as ribbon cuttings, they play a crucial role in the member onboarding process and act as a communicative link between members and the Partnership.

Along with new responsibilities, the new Ambassadors program offers additional benefits to volunteers, including opportunities to work more closely with Partnership members and creating additional business contacts.

"We have many passionate volunteers, and this collaboration offers them opportunities to get involved in a lot of different ways," says Greater Topeka Partnership Vice President of Resource Development Kim Redeker.

"In addition to working alongside a great group of people, you are able make new business contacts, build a close relationship with the GTP and gain access to more fun volunteer opportunities."

Redeker adds that bringing both groups together will not only take the volunteer committee in a clearer direction but will also make the Partnership a stronger organization moving forward.

"Ambassadors have a significant role in the Partnership and its connection with the public. Think of them as a lifeline - helping educate everyone on the Partnership's endeavors, goals and overall vision."

Training sessions and outlined expectations will be provided to Ambassadors upon admittance to the group. The Ambassadors program is open to the public. Those especially active in the business community are encouraged to join.

For more information about this volunteer group, contact Kim Redeker at 785.234.1030 or **Kim.Redeker@TopekaPartnership.com**.



CONGRATULATIONS AMBASSADORS

GTP Ambassadors are an invaluable asset to the Partnership and our business members. We hope the opportunity for recognition will serve not only as an enjoyable way to encourage participation in the Ambassadors, but as a way for the GTP to show our appreciation. In addition to the Ambassador Recognition Program, we will also share your accomplishments and our thanks on the GTP's social media platforms and e-news.



**AMBASSADOR
OF THE MONTH**
JANUARY



IRENE HAWS
Dynamic Computer
Solutions of Topeka



**AMBASSADOR
OF THE MONTH**
FEBRUARY



MIKE BRAUM
Retired



**AMBASSADOR
OF THE MONTH**
MARCH



ERIC ENNS
Canada Drug of
Topeka



**AMBASSADOR
OF THE QUARTER**
FIRST QTR



ERIC ENNS
Canada Drug of
Topeka



BUSINESS AFTER HOURS IS NOW

BUSINESS UNWIND

BUSINESS AFTER HOURS GETS AN UPGRADE



#BizUnwind

TopekaChamber.org/BusinessUnwind

One of your favorite GTP events is undergoing a bit of a change. But don't worry - it's still going to be a blast.

As of April 2018, the monthly networking event known as Business After Hours has upgraded its name to Business Unwind. Despite the change, the purpose of the event remains the same: kick back, enjoy some refreshments and fun, learn more about the hosting organization, and network with other Partnership members.

"Expect a great time," says GTP Corporate Events Manager Ashlee Spring. "The name tells it all - Business Unwind is your time to loosen your tie, enjoy yourself, and meet other outgoing and passionate people in the business community."

If your business would like to host a Business Unwind, contact Ashlee Spring at 785.234.1030 or ASpring@VisitTopeka.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 16	190th ARW Kansas Air National Guard
June 12	FHLBank
July 26	Heartland Motorsports Park
August 7	Topeka Zoo
September 25	Kansas Children's Discovery Center
October 23	Ramada Topeka Downtown
November 15	WIBW
December 11	Vearus Aviation Hanger

STATE OF THE COMMUNITY

The Greater Topeka Partnership hosted the annual State of the Community luncheon on April 19. Attendees heard updates regarding the state of health care, education, budgets, crime and other important topics from Michelle De La Isla, Mayor of Topeka, and Kevin Cook, County Commissioner for Shawnee County.

Focus was given to a "new" Topeka & Shawnee County, and Veronica Byrd moderated a panel of new leadership in Topeka. City Manager Brent Trout, Police Chief Bill Cochran, Fire Chief Craig Duke, Assistant District Attorney Charles Kitt took questions from the crowd and through Twitter. The panel was informative and helpful answering questions posed to them from community members about issues important to them.

State of the Community events are a vital piece of encouraging open discussions about topics that affect members of the community. The GTP would like to thank Presenting Sponsor, Westar Energy for its support.



MINI
CAMPAIGN
BOOK

2018



GTP SPONSORSHIP & ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

Be a sponsor! The Greater Topeka Partnership offers many events and opportunities to sponsor and promote your business throughout the year. Visit TopekaChamber.org/Marketing to review our numerous advertisement options and choose which sponsorship opportunities best align with your organization.

TOP 10 REASONS TO BECOME A GTP MEMBER

Membership with the Greater Topeka Partnership brings many benefits that are constantly evolving to better serve and fit the needs of local businesses. Call us today to learn more about what joining the GTP could mean for your business.

1

MARKETING STARTER KIT

Gather all the tools you need to start up or reinvigorate your next marketing campaign.

2

ABILITY FOR FREE MONEY

Don't overlook available resources that can help your business succeed. Grants, incentives and other options are within your reach.

3

NETWORKING

Exchange information and ideas with the business and community leaders that frequent our many events.

4

FREE EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Uncover free educational opportunities that will help your company to grow and flourish within the community.

5

EVENT PARTICIPATION

Put yourself out there by either hosting, sponsoring or volunteering at one of our many events.

6

ADVOCACY

Come together on the issues affecting all businesses in the area and create a unified voice within the community.

7

ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

Advertise with us. We offer many options for your organization to advertise in our multiple publications and events.

8

RESEARCH AND DATA MINING AND ANALYSIS

Work with our full-time researcher to measure your business' economic impact and track growth compared to regional and national trends and collect on data resources.

9

COMMUNICATIONS COACHING

Let our communications staff provide you with helpful tips on producing effective forms of communication.

10

REFERRALS

Find more opportunities to collaborate with other members to ensure a strong community.

STAFF UPDATES

THE GREATER TOPEKA PARTNERSHIP HIRED SEVERAL NEW STAFF MEMBERS THIS QUARTER AND IS THRILLED TO WELCOME EACH OF THEM.



Kim Redeker

Kim Redeker joined the organization in mid-February as Vice President of Resource Development and is tasked with leading the resource development team, which consists of membership, member relations, sponsorship sales and special campaigns. Kim comes to the organization from Payless where she was the Corporate Sales SR Analyst/Program Manager. In the past, Kim had been heavily involved in the Chamber of Commerce serving as a volunteer Diplomat and was a member of Fast Forward, the young professional network now known as Forge.

"I am very excited for Kim to join our team. Her career has proven she has a fundamental understanding that developing strong relationships is the key to success."

- Brett Oetting
President - Visit Topeka



Jessica Schenkel

Visit Topeka hired Jessica Schenkel as Tourism Sales Manager in February. Jessica comes from the Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes, which works with students and educators across diverse academic disciplines to develop history projects that highlight role models who demonstrate courage, compassion and respect. In addition, Jessica previously worked for the Ft. Scott Chamber of Commerce in the tourism role. Jessica is a Topekan who decided to move back home with her husband and help the Greater Topeka Partnership tell its story.

"Jessica is a great addition to our team. Her strengths lie in customer service and communications, and I know she'll utilize those skillsets to build and maintain strong relationships."

- Mike Bell
VP - Sales



Liz Sage

Elizabeth Sage has been hired as our Member Relations Manager. Liz will be responsible for driving revenue generation through membership sales and retention. She was previously a substitute teacher for USD #501 and a relief manager for the Ronald McDonald House. Liz is currently a Board Member for Topeka Parents as Teachers. She joined the team in March.

"We're thrilled to have Liz join our team. Her background in sales and customer service will provide a great experience for new members."

- Brett Oetting
President - Visit Topeka



VIP BOX FEATURES LOCAL ITEMS

With Love #TopCity: The Greater Topeka Partnership has developed a new product that can help you – and our community – make a great first impression on VIP guests. As you or your company invite special guests into Topeka, greet them with a branded box of locally produced items.

Providing the box to a VIP is simple:

1. Choose the box tier and make your selections.
2. Let us know when your VIP arrives and where they are staying in Topeka or Shawnee County.
3. A member of our team will work with hotel staff to ensure the With Love, #TopCity box is waiting for your VIP.

To make arrangements for a box sample or to schedule your first delivery, visit TopekaChamber.org/VIPBox

GTP RESPONSE TO RECENT MEDIA ARTICLE ON TOPEKA'S VIOLENT CRIME

The Greater Topeka Partnership would like to issue a statement regarding recent news articles reporting Topeka as one of the most violent cities in the nation.

We were disappointed by the use of outdated statistics as well as citing sources that describe their own lists as “not complete”. By using these sources without factoring in the bigger picture including what size of cities they included, who did or didn’t provide crime data, and current local initiatives and statistics, it can make for inaccurate headlines. Also provided by the source is a caution against ranking stating that “comparisons lead to simplistic and/or incomplete analyses that often create misleading perceptions adversely affecting communities and their residents”.

The FBI’s Uniform Crime Report data is voluntarily submitted by police forces and not every city provides data. Further, it only includes cities with populations over 100,000 people. In Kansas, only three out of six-hundred cities participated in reporting crime data. Those cities are Olathe, Overland Park, and Topeka. An internal study provided contrasting information with these findings when every city in Kansas is included in the crime reporting data, dropping Topeka in the rankings considerably.

Stories like the one we’re addressing today can have a far reaching and long lasting impact such as damaging the city’s ability to be successful in economic development and

community growth, key goals outlined in Momentum 2022. It is important to keep in mind that 2017 was a difficult year nationwide regarding violent crime, not just in Topeka or Kansas.

While we acknowledge that there is certainly crime in Topeka, and many of the crimes reported are violent in nature, reporting that Topeka is one of the most violent cities in the nation is incorrect. Through the Topeka Police Department and Momentum 2022 initiatives, Topeka is working hard to reverse the trend and is making great strides towards lowering not just violent crime, but crime in general. Community partners such as the YWCA’s Center for Safety and Empowerment, CrimeStoppers, and the newly formed Community Outreach Bureau at TPD are dedicated to the future and safety of Topeka’s residents.

Topeka’s Police Department chooses to report crime data to the FBI to promote transparency, and per the department, violent crimes has seen a 37% decrease from the first quarter of 2018 compared to the first quarter of 2017.

We at the Greater Topeka Partnership want to reiterate our support of the efforts that the City of Topeka, the Police Department and the District Attorney’s office have taken in the last 12 months to combat violent crime. Shawnee County is still a great place to raise a family, start a business, and visit.



TOP TANK TOPEKA

Several business leaders in Topeka partnered with The Topeka Capital-Journal to create Top Tank Topeka, a celebration of the entrepreneurial spirit that founded Topeka. The idea was to provide Topekans with an opportunity to pitch their ideas to strengthen Downtown Topeka's economy by awarding one entrepreneur a grand prize of \$100,000 to open a new business.

The investors who founded Top Tank had the task of narrowing it down from nearly sixty applicants to one winner. After several months of work and difficult rounds of elimination, "The Brew Bank" was announced as the winner of Top Tank.

The Brew Bank is a self-serve brewery that will feature unique-to-Kansas beers with digital tap technology. One wall of taps will feature microbrewed beer from across Kansas and the rest will come from across the country.

In a surprise announcement at the awards ceremony, Top Tank investors also awarded \$50,000 in a second-place prize to launch G's Cheesecake and More.

Because of Top Tank, its investors and Topeka's entrepreneurs, community members will have two new businesses to enjoy in Downtown Topeka.

INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT

Whether you're looking for a mani-pedi, a new haircut or a soothing massage, these Greater Topeka Partnership members will help you relax and ready for summer.

Essentia Salon & Spa was created to serve those hardworking individuals in need of luxury services at an affordable price. Essentia's service professionals are exceptional individuals with extensive salon and spa experience. Signature services include cut and color, relaxers and perms, mani-pedi, facials, makeup application, threading and waxing and various forms of massage therapy, including Swedish, deep tissue, hot stone, couples and more. Whatever amenity you're after, Essentia prides itself on making sure you leave with a relaxing experience that will make it all worth the money spent and have you looking and feeling your best.

Stop by to take a tour of the salon and pre-book your next appointment to receive a 20percent discount off your first visit to Essentia Salon & Spa.

5900 SW Huntoon St
(785) 783-7130
EssentiaSalonAndSpa.com



Sola Salon Studios is a leading innovator in the concept of salon suites. Sola allows business owners to pursue their craft and find success without many of the risks and challenges of owning a conventional salon. When you lease your studio space with Sola, you have the freedom to customize your own studio, set your own schedule, and manage your own clientele. Each available salon suite is move-in ready and comes complete with daylight lights, soundproof doors, tool cabinets, and supplementary equipment crucial to your salon and spa needs. In addition to utilizing Sola's leading-edge facilities, business owners also receive quality support and service from its onsite building managers.

The Topeka location currently accommodates hairdressers, skincare professionals, nail technicians, makeup artists, facial waxing experts and professional masseuses.

2727 SW Wanamaker Rd
(785) 760-3361
Solasalons.com/Topeka

FINDI YOUR

We've all heard about how Topeka's the TOPs: TopCity, TopTank, TopMagazine. And in the wave that is TOP enthusiasm, we've been asking ourselves: what happened to the EKA? What is EKA anyways? Well, we've come to the conclusion that if TOP is Topeka at its best, then EKA is Topeka at its happiest.

We think many would agree that sometimes it's the little things that make us the happiest. The local hole-in-wall establishments, the close-knit communities and little-known facts are all underlying factors - or hidden gems, if you will - that bring a lot of joy to those who live, work or explore Topeka. So, it's time to share the EKA and spread the word on the little-known wonders at play in Topeka, Kansas.

Topeka History Geeks

Topeka is home to many passionate communities, and none are quite so enthusiastic about Topeka's past as Topeka History Geeks. This Facebook group, organized by Oddfellow's Fine Books and Collectables, is excited about sharing the history that is Topeka.

When you visit this group's page, it's not uncommon to see remnants of a Topeka that only a select few may

remember: review the ludicrously cheap prices offered in a 1950s Woolworth's menu; watch a 1980s news broadcast chronicling the final days of Boyles Joyland Amusement Park; enjoy an early snapshot of Americana in a black and white photo of the classic Topper Drive-In.

Have you ever wondered what dance clubs were open in Topeka in the early 1940s? Are you looking for the colloquial term for roundabouts used in the 1950s-60s? Ask the History Geeks! Everyone is welcome to post their questions on the group's page. With more than 20,000 members, chances are good that this group can help you with any historical questions you have. Members are also encouraged to share historical photos and finds. From local history to family history, the Topeka History Geeks are eager to learn it all.

While the city grows and reinvents itself, these historical devotees are always on the hunt for the deliciously nostalgic tidbits that make up our city's past.

Share you "Eka!" Suggest a feature for a future edition of Top Magazine by contacting Jensen Moore at **JMoore@TopekaChamber.org**

ING EKA



Franklin D. Roosevelt gives a speech titled "A Restored and Rehabilitated Agriculture" on the campaign trail in Topeka, Sept. 14, 1932.

Photo Courtesy Wichita Eagle



Montgomery Ward downtown, 1972. Now the Law Enforcement Center.
Photo Courtesy of Dave Mathias > Topeka History Geeks > Facebook.com



1916 Topeka Auto Parade

Photo Courtesy of Emily Wilkes > Topeka History Geeks > Facebook.com

MB PILAND 20TH ANNIVERSARY INVITES OTHERS TO HELP LAUNCH A GRATITUDE TIDAL WAVE

MB Piland Advertising + Marketing, a Topeka-based branding and marketing firm, celebrated 20 years in business on April 1 with a 20 Years, 20,000 Thanks initiative that is propelling waves of gratitude messages out to the world.

Designed to touch thousands of people with uplifting messages of encouragement and thanks, the firm has created a special edition set of postcards with original art, poetry and photography—all centered on gratitude. “We’re sharing them with clients, partners and friends and challenging them to send out messages of appreciation and love to people who have been a force for good in their lives,” says firm president + CEO Martha Bartlett Piland.

MB Piland’s purpose is to improve the health and well-being of people and communities.

“When we thought about how we wanted to celebrate this milestone anniversary, we knew we wanted to do something much more

special than a cocktail party,” says Bartlett Piland. “There are many people in the past 20 years who have helped us be successful. We wanted to express our appreciation in a way that takes on far greater significance, with a longer lasting effect than a one-day party.”

There are 20,000 postcards, packaged in sets of 10. “If everyone uses all the cards we give them, we can propel 20,000 messages of thanks out into the world. Add in a social media hashtag and the fact that we have clients and friends all over the world and the multiple can be even greater than our 20,000 starting point,” says Bartlett Piland.

Dozens of studies on gratitude show that being thankful and expressing thanks can improve a person’s health, well-being and overall happiness. MB Piland is encouraging people everywhere to think about all the things they have to celebrate, then act by surprising someone with heartfelt messages of thanks.

TOPEKA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS

More than 80 scholarship recipients (students representing high schools from throughout Shawnee County) were honored at a reception on Tuesday, April 17 at the Topeka County Club.

“We are pleased to announce that we will be awarding more than \$100,000.00 in scholarships in 2018,” said Marsha Pope, Topeka Community Foundation president.

“While a number of scholarships are awarded to students pursuing their education in a specific field of study, many others provide general financial assistance to the recipients. The reception is a great opportunity not only to recognize outstanding students in our community

– but to connect our scholarship donors with the recipients.”

The Foundation, with more than \$70 million in assets, manages more than 395 separate funds, including scholarship funds and funds for individuals, businesses and charitable organizations.

The mission of the Topeka Community Foundation is to connect donors with their interests and community needs, increase charitable giving in the community, provide leadership on key community issues and ensure stewardship and accountability for effective community investment of donor dollars.



\$4.7 MILLION ESTATE GIFT ENTRUSTED TO TOPEKA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Topekans Dr. Phillip and Betty Sisk will continue to support the organizations they cared about – even after their deaths in 2002 and 2016, respectively. A \$4.7 million gift from their estate has been bequeathed to the Topeka Community Foundation, the single largest estate gift in the organization's 34-year history. Native Iowans, Betty and Phil were married in 1954. He was a physician in Topeka for 35 years. Betty was a homemaker and in addition to her love for baking desserts, enjoyed music and theater with her family.

The Sisk's thorough and well-planned vision will provide annual distributions to EasterSeals

Capper Foundation, First Lutheran Church, Topeka Civic Theatre and Academy, Topeka Community Foundation, Topeka Rescue Mission, Topeka Symphony Society and SLI Topeka.

With more than \$70 million in assets, the mission of the Topeka Community Foundation is to connect donors with their interests and community needs, increase charitable giving in the community, provide leadership on key community issues, and ensure stewardship and accountability for effective community investment of donor dollars.

FOULSTON SIEFKIN LLP ADDS HEALTH CARE ATTORNEY LISA BROWN

Law firm Foulston Siefkin LLP has added attorney Lisa Brown to the firm's health law team. Brown, an associate based in the firm's Topeka office, will focus her practice on health care law and related matters. Her experience includes representing hospitals, health systems, and other health care providers with a wide array of issues including health care licensing and regulatory matters, provider reimbursement, health care contracts, transactions and financing, and insurance and medical malpractice defense.

Brown earned her Juris Doctor degree from Washburn University School of Law and has been in private practice prior to joining Foulston Siefkin. She graduated magna cum laude from Wichita State University with a Bachelor of Arts in English. Her professional affiliations include the Kansas Association of Hospital Attorneys, American Health Lawyers' Association, Kansas Association of Defense Counsel, the Sam A. Crow American Inn

of Court, and the Kansas and Topeka Bar Associations. In 2016, she was honored as the Kansas Association of Defense Counsel's Horizon Award recipient for outstanding young lawyer and in April was recognized by the Topeka Bar Association as 2018 Outstanding Young Lawyer.

Actively engaged in the community, Brown was named to the 2017 class of Leadership Greater Topeka. She currently serves on the boards of Let's Help, Inc., the Topeka Performing Arts Center, and the community leadership and development council of Kansas Children's Service League. She has also been honored as one of Topeka's Top 20 Under 40 by the Jayhawk Area Council Boy Scouts.

Foulston Siefkin LLP is the largest law firm in Kansas with nearly 90 attorneys, and offices in Topeka, Wichita and Overland Park. Visit **Foulston.com** for more information.

GREATER TOPEKA CHAMBER UPDATE

INSIDE THE 2018 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

This year's legislature has been preoccupied with developing a response to the Supreme Court's ruling last year that the current school finance formula is unconstitutional. The court more or less threatened to close public K-12 schools unless lawmakers delivered a revised formula that adequately and equitably funds schools. Some estimate complying with the court's ruling could cost as much as \$600 million in new spending. For that reason, any other matters that entail state spending, such as Medicaid Expansion, have been put on the back-burner.

The court's ruling is premised on a study the legislature itself commissioned in 2002. That study represents the main evidence of how much an adequate education should cost in Kansas. The 2018 legislature has commissioned a new study of what it takes to fund schools. The study was made public in mid-March. Now, legislators have a new number they can present to the court, along with their plan to fund schools accordingly.

While school finance has been the eclipsing issue of the session, the Chamber has followed a number of other important topics. A bill to empower cities to reclaim long-abandoned and blighted houses and put them in the hands of groups who will restore them is likely on the road to passage after many years of debate. The Chamber also supported the Top Tank winner, Brew Bank, by testifying in favor of a bill to allow self-serve beer dispensers in Kansas. Since wine can already be sold this way, adding beer ought to be a simple change. Amending liquor laws in Kansas, though, is never simple. So the Chamber and the Brew Bank team are ready to go the distance to bring Kansas law into line with the 45 other states that allow this new technology in taverns and restaurants.

MANHATTAN, EMPLORIA, TOPEKA LAWRENCE. A COALITION OF LOCAL CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE (METL)

Four communities in Northeast Kansas have banded together to speak with a stronger voice in the Kansas Statehouse. Discussions between the Chambers of Commerce in Manhattan, Emporia, Topeka and Lawrence had been ongoing for a number of years. In 2017, the four groups formed the new coalition called METL. METL's objective is to draw attention to issues of special importance to our region and to encourage the 28 legislators who represent our collective area to work together for our common benefit.

In late-2017, the coalition held a luncheon that brought many of those legislators into the same room along with business leaders from each community. This was their opportunity to see firsthand the breadth of the region and to glimpse the influence that could come if they worked in concert. In 2018, the group disseminated its legislative agenda, which focused on preserving economic development incentives, funding highways in Northeast Kansas, getting Kansas students ready to work, and expanding Medicaid. By March, METL had held its Mid-Session review, where it treated members to lunch at the historic Dillon House, heard updates from legislators about these issues, and engaged in dialogue about the best way to tackle them going forward so as to further open the door for economic development and growth in Northeast Kansas. In coming years, METL will become a formidable voice in the Statehouse.

METL

Manhattan • Emporia • Topeka • Lawrence

A coalition of local Chambers of Commerce



Military Relations Council (MRC)

The Chamber's Military Relations Council was formed in late-2016 to raise mutual awareness between the civilian and military sectors in our community and to help service members transition back into the civilian workforce. The group enjoyed a very successful 2017 with special luncheon guests such as Maj. General Vic Braden, who Skyped in from overseas to tell an MRC audience about life on deployment, and Senator Jerry Moran, who paid special tribute to our men and women in the armed forces.

Now that the group has entered its second full year of operation, the MRC is refining its focus. The MRC's newly-formed Workforce Team is busy developing program ideas to offer assistance to veterans and current service members so they are better able to explain to civilian recruiters the skills they have acquired in the military. Employers across Shawnee County are eager to find talented employees and many of the men and women who have served our country are now ready to embark on private careers or upgrade to jobs commensurate with their true skills. By working with human resources professionals and military personnel, the MRC hopes to develop a bridge to bring together, these two engines of economic growth.

The MRC's Community Appreciation Task Force will spend the year looking for ways Topeka & Shawnee County can truly express gratitude to those who have served. Look for events and programs that highlight military members, veterans and their families. Of course, the MRC luncheons are still an important part of the program. By moving from quarterly luncheons to one in the Spring and one in the Fall, the group will be able to dedicate its resources more effectively to make each a special opportunity to celebrate Topeka as a military community .



Visit
TopekaChamber.org
to learn
more about
MRC events.



2018 SMALL BUSINESS AWARDS

Each year the Greater Topeka Partnership recognizes small businesses that have made significant contributions to the Topeka community through demonstrated excellence and one small business advocate in an award ceremony. This year's event accepted nominations through March and the winners will be announced at a luncheon on May 15 at the Maner Conference Center, Capitol Plaza Hotel.

Award categories include:

Capital City Business of Distinction - An individual who owns 51 percent of a small business and is responsible for the principal operations of the small business.

Minority-Owned Business of Distinction - A minority-owned business is a business that is at least 51 percent owned and operated by one of the following: Native American, Hispanic/Latino, African-American, Asian/Pacific Islander or Subcontinent Asian.

Women-Owned Business of Distinction - The nominee must be a female who serves as a majority owner (51 percent or more) and operates or bears principal responsibility for operating a small business.

Nonprofit Award of Distinction - Must be legally formed as one of the following: 501(c)3, 501(c)4, 501(c)5 or 510(c)6.

Emerging Entrepreneur Award - A successful business owner who has been in business one to three years.

Small Business Advocate - An individual or organization that assists entrepreneurs through advocacy, technical assistance to small businesses, supports the development of entrepreneurs, or raises the awareness about the importance of small businesses to the community.

This event is sponsored by Envista Credit Union.

Last year's winners were:

- Emerging Entrepreneur of Distinction: **Norsemen Brewing Company**
- Non-profit Award of Distinction: **Topeka Rescue Mission**
- Minority and Women Business of Distinction: **Oasis Family Medicine Assoc., LLC**
- Capital City Business of Distinction: **HME, Inc.**
- Small Business Advocate: **Jenny Torrence**

2018 SMALL BUSINESS AWARDS

Finalists

Capital City Business of Distinction

Porterfield's Inc., David Porterfield
Schendel Lawn and Landscape, Brent Boles, Aaron Jones, Brandon Moore
Tarwater Farm & Home, Rich Tarwater

Minority Business of Distinction

Bowser Johnson Funeral Chapel, Dr. Harriett Johnson
Footprints Bookkeeping Services, LLC, Sylvia Hopper
Fragrance World of Topeka, Ronald Owens

Women Business of Distinction

Century Business Technologies, Inc., Dawna McCabe
Green Point, Ashley Bahm
HR Partners, LLC, Kristina Dietrick

Nonprofit of Distinction

Harvesters, Valerie Nicholson-Watson
Let's Help Inc., Linda Kehres
Valeo Behavioral Health Care, Inc., Bill Persinger, Jr.

Emerging Entrepreneur of Distinction

Ethan & Anna Children's Boutique, Kim Adair, Aimee Rosenow
Happy Bassett Brewing Company, Eric Craver
Red Door Home Store, LLC, Jesse Borjon

Small Business Advocate

Azura Credit Union, Jennifer Kirmse
Jennifer Kirmse
TK Business Magazine, Tara & Braden Dimick



2018 SPRING WOMEN'S FORUM AND PANEL DISCUSSION: “BECOMING A WOMAN OF VISION”

On March 8, both women and men gathered at the Capitol Plaza hotel to hear from speakers and panelists at the spring 2018 Women's Forum and Panel Discussion, "Becoming a Woman of Vision." This bi-annual event, presented by Entrepreneurial & Minority Business Development and Envista Credit Union, focuses on special topics related to women's issues. This forum, which coincided with International Women's Day, explored the challenges and obstacles facing women of vision and also spotlighted the local and global influence of female leadership.

The forum began with a special presentation by Dr. Beryl New, USD 501. Dr. New performed a reenactment of the story of Ann Davis Shattio, the first black landowner in Topeka.

Ann Davis Shattio was born to a free family in Palestine, Ill. in 1817. As a child, she was kidnapped by slave traders and taken to Missouri to be sold. After an unknown time of servitude, Ann managed to escape and meet the white fur

trapper Clement Shattio. Clement would go on to pay her redemption and later marry Ann. In 1852, the couple were the first settlers to homestead in the area which would come to be known as Topeka.

Keynote speaker Dr. Norma Juma, Washburn University, led the group in a presentation on the experiences of international women, many of whom inspired her vision. Imparting wisdom from impactful female leaders such as Kenyan activist Dr. Wangari Maathai, American writer Maya Angelou and South African activist Winnie Mandela, Dr. Juma discussed the difficult issues many aspiring leaders might be surprised to face. This included leaving opportunities for others to succeed, dreaming bigger and owning your own identity.

Following the keynote presentation, moderator Amanda Kiefer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Topeka, led the discussion among panelists on issues relating to female leadership.



Panelists were: Michelle De La Isla, Mayor of Topeka; Joan Wagnon, former Mayor of Topeka; Dr. Beryl New, USD 501; Janet Thompson Jackson, Washburn School of Law and KTWU; Angel Zimmerman, Zimmerman & Zimmerman; Tara Dimick, E2 Communications.

Panelists delved further into the topic of leaving opportunities for other female leaders to succeed, shared techniques for maintaining a vision when obstacles arise, and investigated the challenges facing female leadership.

Throughout the many topics covered, a central theme emerged: how women should strive to empower other women. What's more, by "leaving the ladder down" for other women to succeed, women are not only improving the lives of other women but also working to eliminate any animosity or discord that might arise in the work environment.

As Mayor De La Isla remarked, "One of the biggest failures of women being successful – especially in the business world – is women being catty to other women. We have to stop that[...] Be a champion for other women. Talk about your needs and talk about what's wrong because the system isn't going to change unless you talk about the issues that are happening. But we women have to support each other. And it's not about bashing men – that's not what this is about – it's about understanding that there is a disadvantage, and that we have to stick together, and we have to be kind to each other – because if we're not, we're no better than what we're criticizing."

Stay connected to the GTP's newsletter, as well as the following edition of Top Magazine to learn about the next Women's Forum coming up in November.



FORGE YOUR FUTURE

is a get-out-the-vote initiative focused on getting young people involved in the electoral process.

Forge You Future hosted its first Young Professionals Chat with Gubernatorial candidate Jim Barnett in February. Conversations were engaging, and topics were relevant to what YPs are looking for today. Forge has two more YP Chat events planned for the Spring. The group is also developing a web show to help citizens learn more about local government and challenges that impact Topeka.

Overall, Shawnee County saw an increase in participation during the election, but this bipartisan Forge group is still working on educating Topekans, letting them know what's at stake and what to expect on the ballot. The deadline to register to vote in the primaries is July 17 and the State Primary Election is August 7. Leading up to these deadlines, Forge will host a variety of activities to get people involved in the voter process. There are plans to replicate the Mayoral Forum Forge hosted in partnership with KSNT, in addition to holding a candidate forum prior to this year's election.

FYI:
The deadline
to register for
Primaries is
JULY 17

FYI:
State Primary
Election is
AUGUST 7

TOP CITY INTERNS

The TopCity Interns program is ramping up for its second year and Forge Young Professionals are expecting this year to bring more interns, more businesses and more fun.

TopCity Interns started in 2017 as a way to attract and retain young talent to Topeka and the Topeka business community. Last year, the interns arrived in Topeka at the beginning of June and were treated to top notch Topeka fun that lasted until the end of July. The program kicked off with a private party and a showcase at the Topeka Zoo. Throughout the summer, interns were able to attend educational classes, local festivals and even their own outdoor music concert.

“To grow Topeka, we need more young talent - we need more people and young professionals here in Topeka,” said Gabriel O’Shea, executive director of Forge.

Last year the program included 189 interns from 27 local companies. These interns came from 49 different universities in 23 states and six countries, and after last year’s success organizers anticipate that these numbers will continue to grow.

“This isn’t just a local program but more like national or even global,” said O’Shea.

This year, the program will have some similar features as last year but will also include more educational opportunities, volunteer opportunities and more specialized events just for the interns. Interns can expect another kick-off event as well as a recreational sports league, networking and social events and a new Munch & Learn series. The Munch & Learn series will feature speakers from area businesses and will focus on professional development and education. It will also give the interns a chance to ask questions to industry professionals.

The program will conclude with one last celebration for the interns. The downtown music concert will give the interns a final opportunity to gather with their friends and have a good time in Topeka. Interns will be able to listen to live music, enjoy cold drinks, and eat at some of the tastiest Topeka food trucks.

“We want the businesses to sell themselves to the interns as a place to work, and our job is to promote Topeka as a great place to live and play,” said O’Shea.

For more information about TopCity Interns or if you or your business would like to participate in the TopCity intern program, please contact Gabriel O’Shea at GOShea@GreaterTopeka.org.





GO TOPEKA EARNS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACCREDITATION

FIRST & ONLY IN KANSAS



**// Accreditation is confirmation that
GO Topeka is a leading authority
in economic related issues. //**

-Keith Warta

The Greater Topeka Partnership is proud to announce that GO Topeka has joined an elite group as one of 62 economic development organizations globally to earn Accredited Economic Development Organization (AEDO) status by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC).

"GO Topeka displays the professionalism, commitment, and technical expertise that is deserving of this honor," said IEDC President and CEO Jeff Finkle.

The AEDO program is a comprehensive peer review process that measures economic development organizations against commonly held standards and best practices in the profession. The program consists of two phases: a documentation review and an onsite visit. Both phases are designed to evaluate information about the structure, organization, funding, programs, and staff of the candidate economic development organization.

"Accreditation from the International Economic Development

Council is the pinnacle of validation that we are in exclusive company when it comes to economic development organizational expertise. We are proud to lead the way

as the first and only accredited economic development organization in the State of Kansas," says Matt Pivarnik, CEO & President of the Greater Topeka Partnership. "I attribute this accreditation to our volunteer leadership, elected leaders, JEDO, professional staff and many community partners."

**"We are proud to lead
the way as the first
and only accredited
economic development
organization in the
State of Kansas."**

-Matt Pivarnik

Maintenance of the AEDO status is required every three years and is accomplished through documentation submission and/or onsite visits by a team of the AEDO subcommittee.

"This is a measure of the best in the business," says GO Topeka Chair and Bartlett & West CEO Keith Warta, "Accreditation is confirmation that GO Topeka is a leading authority in economic related issues."

ONE OF 62 GLOBALLY



HEARTLAND VISIONING CONTINUES TO KEEP UP THE PACE BY FOCUSING ON MOVING FORWARD

The Management Committee has spent time recently and will continue to look at how we assure the community that Heartland Visioning remains the force that continues to drive change in the community and to be the safe place where members of the community can come, share their ideas and have their voices heard and respected. It will be a place/organization where change happens, and things will get done.

Our monthly meetings are now the Heartland Visioning Monthly Meetings. The goal of the meetings, and in all of the work that we do, is to have measurable increases in diversity, inclusion and participation.

"The goal of the meetings and in all of the work that we do is have measurable increases in diversity, inclusion and participation."

The meetings and our work will be exciting, empowering, educational and engaging. In 2018 and beyond, not only are we #Topeka Proud, we are a growing, prosperous, inclusive, dynamic and trusting community.

Our mission restated – Heartland Visioning is a community-wide convener that facilitates visioning, engagement, and the implementation of quality of life and quality of place initiatives that will stimulate economic prosperity for Topeka & Shawnee County.

Increased promotion of the meetings and Heartland Visioning activities through social

media will create widespread invites to say "come, and invite your friends and everyone you know."

Building on the strength and the capacity of the network teams will enable them to be flexible and action plan oriented as they work on the specific challenges facing Topeka and the recommendations of the Momentum 2022 strategy. The current network teams are diversity & inclusion, neighborhood revitalization, dynamic core and activate the river.

Initial plans are gearing up and the sub-committees are excited about the plans to activate the river. The activities sub-committee is planning to hold at least two "on the river" activities during the summer between May and August. There are also discussions and progress being made by the river access sub-committee. More details will be forthcoming.

The Momentum 2022 work groups, quality of life and community engagement, pride and service are developing year one priority checklists, timeliness and "quick win projects" for the Momentum 2022 recommendations that have been tasked to Heartland Visioning for 2018.

The collaboration of the Momentum 2022 work groups and the Heartland Visioning network teams will result in decreased duplication and an increase in the impact of their efforts, such as river access and activities, sustained neighborhood revitalization and beautification. These are truly exciting examples of how we will increase the quality of life and place while enhancing economic prosperity in our community.

Membership of these work groups and network teams continues to include visionary volunteers from both the public and private sector of our community.

Community members interested in being a part of these fun and exciting plans are welcomed to attend the Heartland Visioning meeting held every second Friday of the month at the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, 8 – 9:30 a.m. You may RSVP to Liz Cornish at LCornish@HeartlandVisioning.com.

"Our mission restated – Heartland Visioning is a community-wide convener that facilitates visioning, engagement and the implementation of quality of life and quality of place initiatives that will stimulate economic prosperity for Topeka & Shawnee County."

"The Collaboration of the Momentum 2022 work groups and the Heartland Visioning network teams will also result in decreased duplication and an increase in the impact of their efforts..."

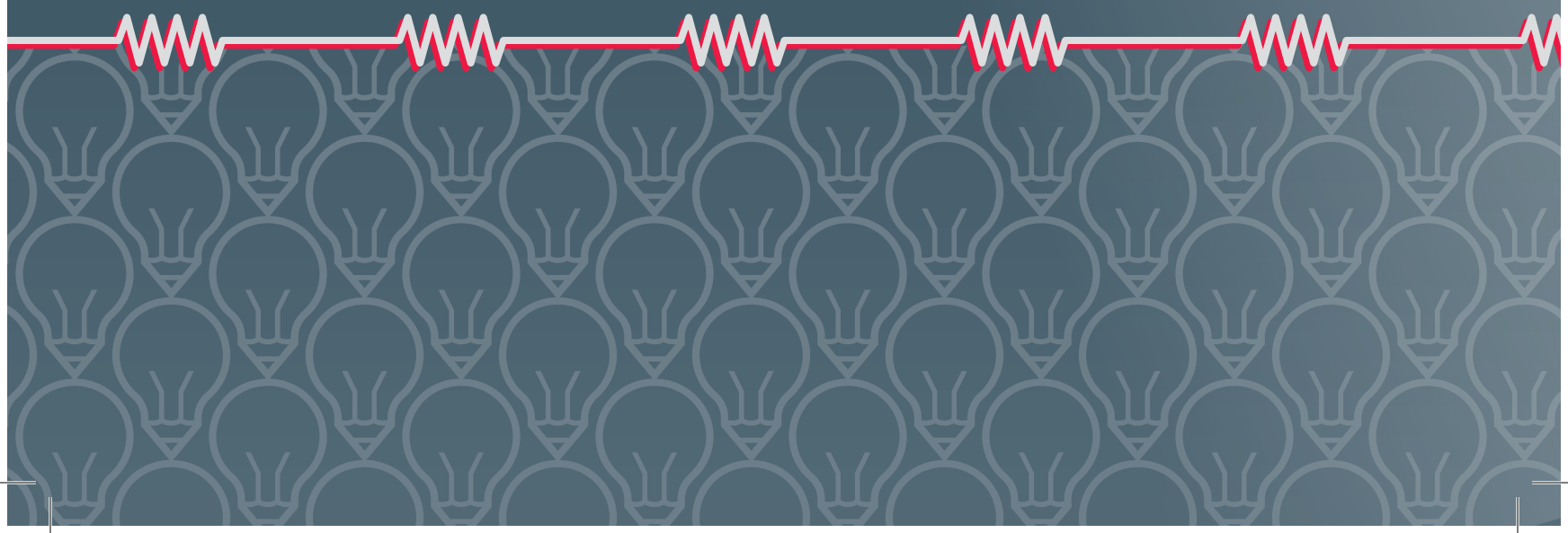


712

INOVATIONS

MEMBER

HIGHLIGHT





CASSIE CARLSON, THE BRASSY EXPLORER



First off, tell us a little more about yourself and your business.

My business is The Brassy Explorer and most of my products are inspired by the places I have lived and traveled that have a piece of my heart. I grew up in Idaho, and I have lived in three additional states since then. I've also had opportunities to travel both domestically and internationally, which has shaped me in many ways. I can't imagine my life without those experiences, and I love having mementos of the places that I call "home." I started out making customized wood state keyrings and seasonal holiday ornaments, and I am gradually expanding into home décor and other accessories. I currently have a display in 4 Girls' Garage in the NOTO Arts District as well as an Etsy shop. I offer wholesale pricing on some of my items including keyrings, which are now featured in a handful of gift shops and coffee shops around the U.S. Most of my local items focus on the state of Kansas, while my items listed on Etsy cover a larger range of locations spanning from Washington state to Florida and beyond to many countries in Africa where my true obsession with travel began over a decade ago.

How long have you been a member of 712 Innovations and what programs/resources do you utilize?

I have been a member of 712 Innovations since September 2016. I primarily use the Epilog laser, and I hope to begin using the ShopBot soon to expand my capabilities and test a few new ideas. I work at a local printing company, GoModern, during the day, so I spend most of my time at 712i during the evenings and weekends. I love that members have 24/7 access to the facility and equipment. I wouldn't be able to accomplish everything that I do without that flexibility. There are a number of great events that 712i hosts throughout each month. There is a little something for everyone, and I'm excited to see how 712i continues to grow!

Tell us how 712 Innovations has impacted your business.

712i has given me the ability to test new ideas while keeping my overhead low. I don't have to hire someone to create a prototype for me, because I can do it myself. I also take great pride in my work, so having the ability to control quality is key. My membership has also allowed me the opportunity to meet other entrepreneurs and be inspired by others' passion for their various businesses and projects.



712 INNOVATIONS



LEADERSHIP GREATER TOPEKA GRADUATION

Leadership Greater Topeka, a Greater Topeka Partnership program, identifies outstanding leaders from the community and teaches the participants the principles of adaptive leadership championed by the Kansas Leadership Center.

For the Greater Topeka area to grow and prosper, we need leaders from all backgrounds and vocations, who will wrestle with the challenges facing our community. The goals are to challenge and motivate traditional and non-traditional leaders by teaching adaptive leadership competencies through information, dialogue and hands-on experience so participants are better prepared to strengthen and transform our community.

In place since 1984, Leadership Greater Topeka has more than 1,000 alumni with nearly 70% still living and active in the Topeka area. Leadership Greater Topeka alumni are challenged to apply their talents throughout the community in volunteer, appointed and elected positions.

Class members attended a retreat and eight day-long sessions that began in January and continued through May.

The sessions covered key community concerns in the areas of quality of life, government, crime, business and economic development, community services, education, health care and the media. Woven throughout the program are concepts of:

- Adaptive/Technical Leadership Skills
- Leadership Skills: Gallup Strengthsfinder, change, collaboration, consensus, facilitation, visioning and steps to a learning community.
- Servant Leadership: the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead... to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are served.

Celebrate their accomplishments on Wednesday, May 9, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Ramada Convention Center, 420 SE Sixth Avenue, Topeka

CONGRATULATIONS

TO THE 2018 CLASS OF LEADERSHIP GREATER TOPEKA ON THEIR RECENT GRADUATION FROM THE PROGRAM.

AJ Patterson

United Way of Greater Topeka
Director of Resource Development

Allyson Wette

Westar Energy, Inc.
Manager, Operations Topeka Division

Alycia Weakland

U.S. Bank
Branch Manager

Andrew Gutierrez

State Farm Ins. - Joe Gutierrez Ins.
Agency
Approved Agency Candidate & Multiple
Line Representative

Barry Muninger

Kansas Rehabilitation Hospital
Director of Quality & Risk Management

Cameron Juhnke

K.L. Johnson & Assoc.
Wealth Advisor Asst.

Cathy Pacaro

FHLBank Topeka
Market Risk Strategist

Cheryl Bean

Sunflower Foundation
CFO/COO

Chad Wilkins

Midland Care Connections, Inc.
VP of Finance/CFO

Dusty Nichols

Shawnee County Dept. of Emergency
Management
Director

Enedina Patch

Stormont Vail Health
Program Manager, Palliative Medicine &
Supportive Care

Eric Grospitch

Washburn University
Vice President for Student Life

Eve Kendall

Shawnee County Dept. of Corrections
Deputy Director

Hannah Naeger

Heinbach & Larkin
DDS Dentist

Jacob Wamego

Prairie Band, LLC
President/CEO

Jacob Wampfler

Faith Lutheran Church
Associate Pastor

Jesse Maddox II

Topeka & Shawnee County Public
Library
Human Resource Director

Kellie Dougan

Barlett & West
Human Resource Leader

Kelly Rippel

Oral Health of Kansas, Inc.
Water Access Manager

Leobardo Espinoza

Topeka Public Schools/Topeka High
School
College & Career Advocate, Restorative
Practices Facilitator

Lyn Rantz

Topeka Collegiate School
Head of School

Maria Kutina

HTK Architects
Director, Architect

Matt Boddington

Shawnee County Sheriff's Office
General Counsel

Megan Rahmeier

McPherson Construction, Inc.
Asst. Controller/Director of Community
Relations

Mike Eichten

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas
Director of Group Sales

Rosa Cavazos

Greater Topeka Partnership
Director of Events

Shanae' Elem

Topeka Justice Unity Ministry Project
Lead Organizer

Sophie Brazington

Shawnee Heights High School
Student

Sydney Houser

Washburn Rural High School
Student

Sylvia Davis

City of Topeka
General Manager

Tammy Brownfield

SE2
Director of Finance Operations

Tim Shultz

Goodell, Stratton, Edmonds & Palme,
LLP
Attorney/Partner

Tom Hagen

Capitol Federal Savings
Marketing Communication Specialist

Tomari Quinn

Topeka Capital-Journal
Editor/Vice President of Audience

Tracy Khounsavanh Killough

Advisors Excel
Learning and Development Specialist

Veronica Byrd

Parents as Teachers
Site Coordinator/Parent Educator

DOWNTOWN PLAZA TAKING SHAPE

PLANS FOR TOPCITY PLAZA REFLECT PUBLIC INPUT, INCLUDING SPLASH PAD AND ICE RINK

It's a typical Saturday in Downtown Topeka, in Spring 2020. Families park just off the avenue and stroll past shops and pocket parks, shopping or browsing as they make their way north. Approaching 7th Street and South Kansas Avenue, music is audible. Crossing 7th Street – directly into the new TopCity Plaza – they are part of something bigger than themselves. They are part of the bustle of the day at the plaza. They are part of the next generation's Topeka.

"It's going to make a huge difference in the energy and excitement!"

Pat Michaelis spoke in an excited, cheerful tone as he discussed plans with the Topeka City Council recently. As chair of the Downtown Topeka Foundation, he thinks a lot

about the area on the east side of the 600 block of South Kansas Avenue, which will soon be part of Topeka's renaissance. His vision translates his excitement.

"This is going to be a place for all people," Michaelis said. "This will be free – no gates and tickets to get in and out."

"[The Plaza] will be free – no gates and tickets to get in and out."

- Pat Michaelis

The foundation, which owns the property from 612-634 S. Kansas and is developing the plaza, is actively fundraising as construction documents are prepared for an early 2019 groundbreaking.

Completion in March 2020 will bring visitors and locals alike downtown for 250+ days per year of programmed activities.

"This is critical to our economic development efforts," Michaelis said. "This is a key component" to improving the quality of life and quality of place in the community."

Mayor Michelle De La Isla agrees and applauded the Topeka Lodging Association for its decision to self-impose a \$1 per room night tax to help fund and program the plaza. The tourism business improvement district is, she said, "a true example of public-private partnership."

As Kurt Young walked council members through the plans, he explained how many of the most-selected items in an April 2016 public survey by Visit Topeka were incorporated into plans for the plaza. Among the features incorporated by Topeka-based architecture firm HTK are: a water



feature/splash pad and ice rink, a performance stage, digital screen, fixed and movable seating, piped in music, space for food trucks and vendors, and public art. Unique design elements will provide logistics support. For example, direct outlets for food trucks will avoid the noise of generators and light poles will include speakers and likely security cameras as well.

"Art is going to be a very key component of the plaza," Young said, highlighting the plans. "We've identified strategic locations" for either permanent or temporary (and likely for sale) public art pieces.

Young, executive director of the Topeka Lodging Association and plaza design

"This is a key component" to improving the quality of life and quality of place in the community."

- Pat Michaelis

committee chair, also explained the downtown history incorporated into the design elements. For example, some of the fixed limestone will be placed on the same footprints as storefronts of that block in the 1930s.

"A lot of details have gone into this," he said. "There will be something going in the center of the plaza all the time." In the summer, that center will be the splash pad. In the winter, from about mid-November through mid-February, that will be a temporary ice rink.

To that news, Councilwoman Karen Hiller, a self-proclaimed ice fan said: "As long as we have a cool-looking Zamboni driver. We've got to have a cool Zamboni driver."

TOPCITY PLAZA

Address
620 S. Kansas Ave.

Cost
\$9.5 million

Construction to begin
January 2019

Opening
March 2020



DOWNTOWN TOPEKA, INC.

PURSuing SAFETY ENHANCEMENT MEASURES FOR NOTO AND DOWNTOWN TOPEKA

There is an undeniable change taking place in Topeka, particularly within its economic landscape. Take areas such as NOTO and the Downtown Topeka, which are experiencing a renaissance of their very own. More and more people are visiting the downtown, whether it be to see the new businesses moving in, scout out new finds at the First Friday Art Walk, grab a bite to eat or take in the local entertainment. Still, as Topeka grows and changes as a community there comes a need to strike up a new dialogue

on public safety. What can the capital city do to enhance public safety for the sake of its visitors and inhabitants? Lucky for us, Downtown Topeka, Inc. and other community leaders are already working to address this concern. At the end of March, a group of 14 other community leaders took a day trip to Wichita to visit the local police department and examine different forms of technology that can be used to boost public safety.



"Public safety is paramount to any city's wellbeing," says Vince Frye, president of Downtown Topeka, Inc. "Although if you look at the statistics, Downtown Topeka and NOTO are the safest places in Topeka. We just want to make sure we're proactive in maintaining its security, identifying any remaining concerns, and educating the community on public safety."

The group has scheduled an additional visit to Kansas City, Mo. Police Department in May.

It is the group's intention to develop a Safety Enhancement Program Committee comprised of community residents and leaders to make sure public safety concerns are addressed. The program would use NOTO and Downtown Topeka as a starting point for its efforts and from there branch out to the rest of Topeka.

In a continued effort to foster a feeling of safety in the downtown corridor, DTI will purchase a Segway on behalf

of the Topeka Police Department. Segways are two-wheeled motorized personal vehicles that will allow officers on patrol to navigate the sidewalks of Downtown Topeka quickly and safely.

Segways are a useful tool for police departments as they allow officers to patrol larger areas for longer lengths of time and provide high visibility to people in the area which deters crime. The use of the segways provides officers the ability to be as agile as they might be on foot or on bicycle, but without the physical strain.

After the initial purchase, segways have little to no expense to maintain or operate, thus allowing a long lifespan for the department.

The purchase and use of segways for TPD will further the goals of DTI by providing businesses and patrons with an added feeling of safety while enjoying Downtown Topeka.

TOPEKA GOES ALL-IN ON EDUCATION AND FUN FOR NATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM WEEK

Topeka has celebrated National Travel and Tourism Week before, but never quite like this.

Celebrated nationally May 6-12, 2018, National Travel and Tourism Week traditionally has been a week focused on being a tourist in your own community, while learning about the positive results of tourism – and the economic impact of the hospitality industry – on Topeka & Shawnee County.

That's still true with this year's Know Your City training and bus tour planned for May 8. But the team at Visit Topeka is branching out in some big ways this year.

On Thursday, May 10, a day-long summit of sales, marketing, service and hospitality education will be offered at the Topeka Performing Arts Center. Topeka's own tourism attractions and hospitality industry partners will receive personalized education before the summit begins. This will include the launch of Visit Topeka's new tourism and hospitality certification, Topeka Destination Specialist (See page 34). At 9:30 a.m. a regional audience will gather to hear Tom Martin and Jay Baer. Both renowned authors and

subject-matter experts – Baer on customer service and digital marketing and Martin on advertising and using digital tools to eliminate cold calls – they are sure to inspire the crowd as well as provide sure-fire tips and practice that can improve results.

Tickets for the SM&SH Summit are \$30 and include books by the authors. Learn more and purchase tickets at **VisitTopeka.com/SMASH**.

Travel and Tourism Week's finale is the first Country and Food Trucks Festival. Gather at 4 p.m. on May 12 in Downtown Topeka, at 9th and Kansas Avenues, to hear four live acts and sample from among 25 food trucks. The headliner, Waterloo Revival will hit the stage at 8 p.m. Thanks to 94.5 Country for sponsoring this event, which is produced by Visit Topeka and Downtown Topeka, Inc. Learn more about this event at **VisitTopeka.com/Country**. Admission is free. Food trucks and beer gardens will charge. Please bring your lawn chairs or blankets and keep your dog on a leash.

Sales, Marketing & Service, Hospitality

SM&SH!



Jay Baer



Tom Martin

THURSDAY, MAY 10 TOPEKA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

TICKETS STILL AVAILABLE | VISITTOPEKA.COM/SMASH
LIVE IN TOPEKA, HEAR TWO GREAT SPEAKERS, GET TWO FREE BOOKS

MOVIE ON THE LAWN

Southside of Statehouse lawn

JAWS

June 1, 2018

7:45 PM

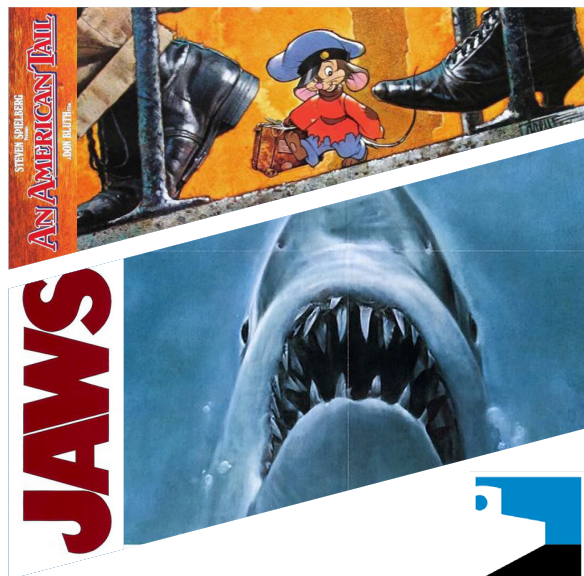
showtime at 8:45

An American Tail

Sep. 7, 2018

6:45 PM

showtime at 7:45



NOON BROWNBAG CONCERT SERIES

FREE

WESTAR POCKET PARK
11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

May 16, 23, 30

June 6, 13, 20, 27

July 4, 11, 18, 25

August 1, 8, 15, 22, 29



SPECIAL EVENTS

King Lear @ TCT

First Friday Art Walk

Topeka Symphony

NHRA National Open

SM&SH Summit

Country & Food Trucks

Wild Kratts Live! @ TPAC

NHRA Heartland Nationals

Movie on the Capitol Lawn

First Friday Art Walk

Harvey @ TCT

Family & Food Truck Festival

Mulvane Art Fair

Sunflower Music Festival

Tap That Topeka

Topeka Rotary Freedom Festival

Spirit of Kansas Blues Festival @ Lake Shawnee

Fiesta Mexicana

Newsies @ TCT

Sunflower State Games

MOTO in NOTO

Bridal Fair @ KS Expo

Shawnee County Fair

NHRA Drag Racing @ Hearland Park

Rock & Food Trucks

Newsies @ TCT

The Grape Escape @ TPAC

First Friday Art Walk

MOTO in NOTO

Burlesque show @ Serendipity

May 1 - 5

May 4

May 5

May 5 - 6

May 10

May 12

May 18

May 19 - 20

June 1

June 1

June 1 - 23

June 2

June 2 - 3

June 22 - 30

June 23

June 30

July 4

July 10 - 14

July 13 - 31

July 14 - 30

July 20

July 22

July 26 - 29

July 26 - 29

July 28

August 1 - 12

August 3

August 3

August 17

August 17 & 18



FIND OUT WHAT'S GOING ON IN
#TopCity

TOPEKA RESTAURANT WEEK RAISES \$1,800 FOR HARVESTERS

Sponsored by:



Eight Topeka restaurants participated in the city's second annual Restaurant Week. The event serves to highlight some of Topeka's best dining establishments by featuring meals full of flavor yet easy on the wallet.

In partnership with Harvesters: The Community Food Network, a portion of the proceeds from each meal benefitted the BackSnack program, which provides shelf-stable, nutritious foods to local children for the weekends.

Each of the locally owned restaurants created a menu specifically for this week. Because of their support, a check for \$1,800 was presented to Harvesters and will benefit children in the community.

Our thanks to event sponsor **Mize Houser & Company**, as well as participating restaurants:

Abuelita's Mexican Kitchen, Blue Moose, Café Holliday, KB Smokehouse, Norsemen Brewing Co, NOTO Burrito, RowHouse, The Burger Stand at College Hill, Top of the Tower.

WANT TO SEE YOUR PHOTOS IN THE VISITOR'S GUIDE?

SHARE THEM
WITH US USING

#FeatureMeTopCity



Find your "Hey! I took
that!" moment.





2018 will be a busy and exciting year in Topeka! **The Tulip Time Festival at the Lake** is planned for April 22. Enjoy an all you can eat pancake breakfast with our second annual Tulip Time Queen, then enjoy a stroll through the Ted Ensley Gardens at Lake Shawnee while shopping, viewing the classic car show and the wonderful local entertainment from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The annual **Capital City Family & Food Truck** is coming June 2, around the Capitol beginning at 11 a.m. Visitors will enjoy their choice of at least 40 food trucks, live bands and entertainment and take a tour of the Capitol, where they can climb 296 steps to the top of the dome to enjoy the best view of the festival.

Be sure to join us for our first ever **Country & Food Truck Festival** where you can sample menus from 25 food trucks offering a wide range of cuisines while enjoying the music of Waterloo Revival on May 12 with the beautiful Capitol in the background, beginning at 4 p.m.

The sixth annual **Tap That Topeka** is growing and becoming the premier regional beer event. With over 300 beers to try, live music, a DJ and food trucks, you don't want to miss it. Tickets sold out last year, so don't wait! Visit **TapThatTopeka.com** to purchase yours now.

We have many more festivals coming, so please check out our calendar: **Topeka365.com**.



April 22



May 12



June 2



June 23

TOPEKA DESTINATION SPECIALIST

Beginning in May during National Travel & Tourism Week, Visit Topeka will launch its Topeka Destination Specialist certification program. Through the program, participants will learn about hospitality techniques, the importance of tourism in Topeka, and how economic development can begin with something as simple as a smile. Participants will also learn about their city and be able to share with visitors the wonderful places to see and things to do in Topeka. Visit Topeka encourages anyone interested in the field of hospitality or tourism to take advantage of this exciting opportunity.

HOW IT WORKS

- Earn a total of 15 points in one year by attending education conferences, trainings, visiting local attractions, shopping local and completing one book report from the provided list of books.
- All the Core requirements must be completed to earn 10 points
- Complete any combination of Electives to earn a 5 points

CORE REQUIREMENTS

KNOW YOUR CITY

Attend ONE Know Your City Training (Offered twice a year)

3 Points

SM&SH

Attend the SMASH Summit in May hosted by Visit Topeka

3 points

VIDEO

View the following three videos' and write a brief summary

2 points total

- Johnny the Bagger
- Give Them The Pickle: How to Act Like You Care
- A Hotel is Just a Building

TOUR LOCAL

Tour a local Attraction and report the significance of the attraction to Topeka

2 points

- 2 per year allowed for a total of 4 points
- Not to be taken at the Know Your City Training
- A selfie must be emailed to Rosemary at Rosemary@VisitTopeka.com

ELECTIVE POINTS

READING

Read a book from the approved book list and provide a summary of the book

2 points

CITY COUNCIL

Attend a City Council Meeting

2 points

- Meets on the first three Tuesdays of each month at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers, municipal courtroom, 214 E. 8th.

LUNCHEON

Attend the Hospitality Luncheon hosted by the Topeka Lodging Association

2 points

SHOP LOCAL

Provide a receipt for an item purchased at a local Mom and Pop Topeka store

1 point

NT&T WEEK

Write a one-page report about National Travel & Tourism Week & it's importance

2 points

For more information and the approved reading list, contact Rosa Cavazos at Rosa@VisitTopeka.com or **785.234.1030**.



CAMP TOPEKA

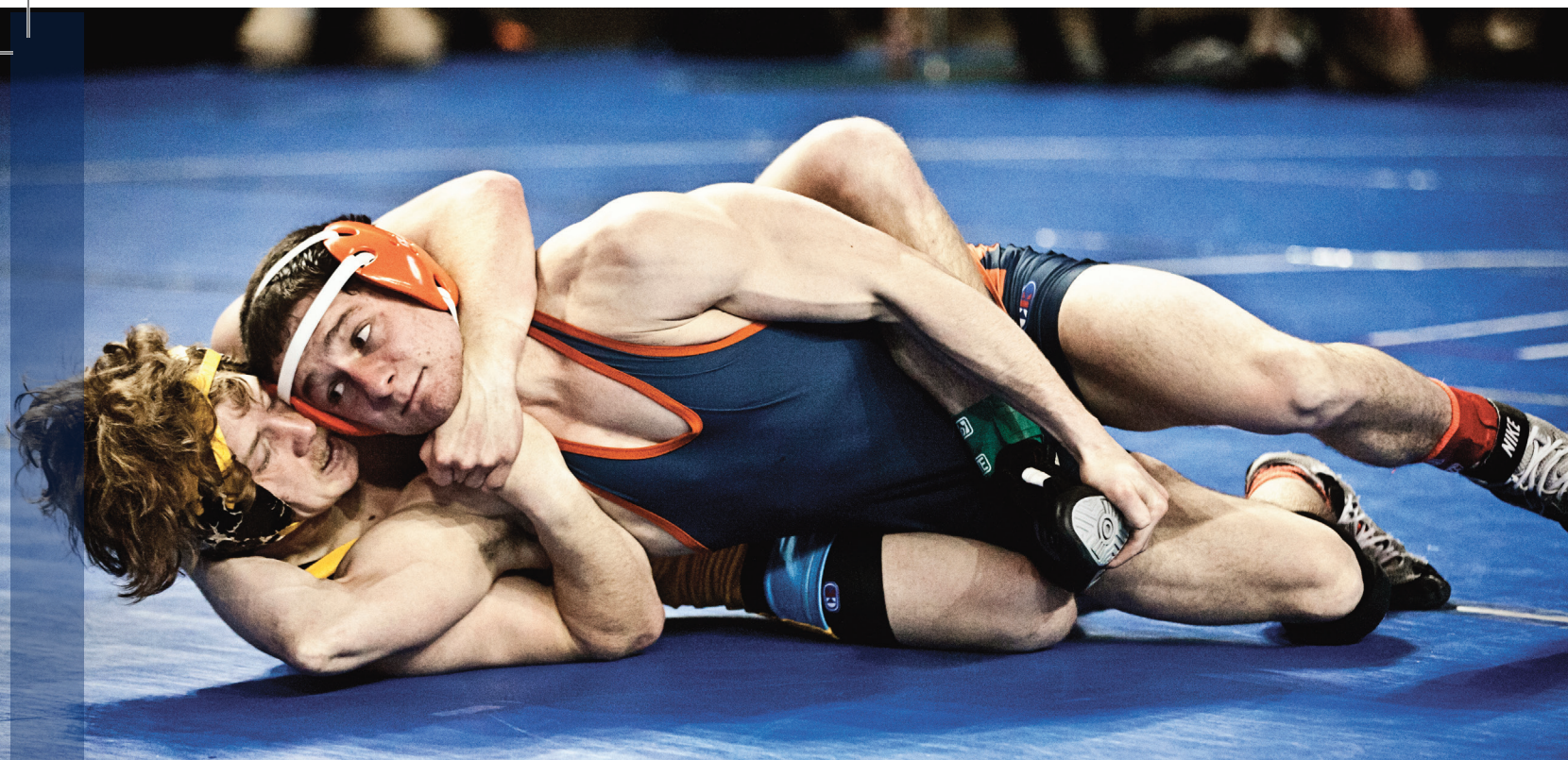
A new summer program has been created for our children in grades 2 to 12. This one week camp, grades 2 to 6 week one, and grades 7 to 12 week two, will take students on a trip around their city. They will learn what events are happening in Topeka, where to find out more about our city, tour historical sites, visit with special invited guests and become an advocate for our community.

"Camp Topeka: Dive into Your City" will begin and end at the Topeka Performing Arts Center in July. Snacks and lunch will be provided.

To be considered for the camp, submit a paragraph telling us why you love Topeka to **Rosa@VisitTopeka.com**.

For more information and sponsorship opportunities please contact Rosa Cavazos at 234-1030.





TOPEKA WINS FIVE YEAR BID TO EXTEND LEGACY

On the weekend of March 24 and 25, Topeka hosted close to 7,000 visitors for the 29th annual Kansas Kids State Wrestling Tournament. After a grueling six-month season, wrestlers, coaches and families packed the Kansas Expocentre for the most prestigious wrestling event in Kansas and to find out who would be crowned the champion.

During the weekend of the tournament, which is one of Topeka's busiest weekends for hospitality, families visit attractions, dine out at local restaurants and occupy nearly every hotel room in the city. Each year the Kansas Kids Wrestling Tournament provides an economic boost for the

city of Topeka. In 2017, the direct spending brought in by the visitor traffic over the weekend was \$1.6 million with the total economic impact coming in just above \$2.6 million.

The Kansas Kids State Wrestling tournament will continue to be held in the capital city through 2023 after Visit Topeka won a 5-year bid earlier this year. During the next five years the wrestling tournament will contribute close to \$7.5 million in economic impact. Next year, in 2019, the tournament will enjoy its 30th anniversary in Topeka.



During the next five years the Kansas Kids Wrestling tournament will contribute close to \$7.5 million in economic impact.



Left to right: Kelsey Papps, creative director; Rhett Flood, account manager; and Michaela Saunders, VP of brand strategy. The team developed the passport, which has been requested nearly 600 times in its first nine months.

VISIT TOPEKA WINS GOLD AT TOPEKA ADVERTISING AWARDS

The Grapes and Grains Passport, a program developed by the Visit Topeka brand strategy team, won a gold award in the marketing brochure category at the Topeka Advertising Awards. During the banquet at Prairie Band Casino on February 10, the team was recognized alongside local agencies and freelance practitioners.

The Grapes and Grains Passport is a beer and wine passport designed to increase tourism to Topeka. The passport aims to showcase the growing craft beer and wine scene in Topeka and throughout the region.

Beer and wine aficionados who live outside of Shawnee County can request the passport online or pick it up at the Visit Topeka Visitor Center. Once the passport is in hand, visitors must purchase a glass of wine or beer to collect their stamp from each establishment. After the stamp from each location has been collected, the passport can be mailed to or dropped off at the Visit Topeka Visitor Center and the Grapes & Grains "ambassador" can choose an official Grapes & Grains pint or wine glass.

The Grapes and Grains Passport wouldn't be possible without the participation from our partners at Blind Tiger Brewery & Restaurant, Crooked Post Winery, Glacier's Edge Winery, Happy Basset Brewing Co., Norsemen Brewing Co. and Prairie Fire Winery.



Top, left to right: Kelsey Papps, creative director; Michaela Saunders, VP of brand strategy. Bottom, left to right: Rosa Cavazos, director of events; Ashlee Spring, corporate events manager; Nevada Finton-Millis, graphics manager.

Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce
120 SE Sixth Ave., Suite 110
Topeka, Kansas 66603-3515
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Editor: Amy McCarter

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 10

SM&SH Summit
Topeka Performing Arts Center
10:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

May 11

Heartland Visioning Meeting
Topeka & Shawnee County Public
Library
7:30 - 9 a.m.

May 15

Small Business Awards
Capitol Plaza Hotel
12 - 1:30 p.m.

May 16

Business Unwind
190th ARW Kansas Air National
Guard

June 6

1 Million Cups
712 Innovations
9 - 10 a.m.

June 8

Heartland Visioning Meeting
Topeka & Shawnee County Public
Library
7:30 - 9 a.m.

June 12

Business Unwind
FHLBank

July 13

Heartland Visioning Meeting
Topeka & Shawnee County Public
Library
7:30 - 9 a.m.

July 26

Business Unwind
Heartland Motorsports Park

July 4

1 Million cups
712 Innovations
9 - 10 a.m.

August 7

Business Unwind
Topeka Zoo

August 10

Heartland Visioning Meeting
Topeka & Shawnee County Public
Library
7:30 - 9 a.m.