

**GO**  
**Topeka**



# Quarterly Report

**Q1**  
2021



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HOST  
Program



**GO TOPEKA**  
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### COVER PHOTO:

Topeka continues to make progress despite the events of the past year. Upgrades and new construction help make Topeka a better place to live, work and play.

### INSIDE COVER PHOTO:

Community and Business leaders gather during Business Unwind at Cortez Transportation. This marks the first Business Unwind of 2021 and signals that Topeka is ready to get back to our momentum.

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2021 Go Topeka  
Board of Directors

Momentum 2022 focuses on five key elements to make Topeka & Shawnee County a better place to live, work, play and do business.

KEY ▶



Develop  
Homegrown  
Talent



Create Vibrant  
& Attractive  
Places



Grow a  
Diverse  
Economy



Promote  
a Positive  
Image



Collaborate  
for a Strong  
Community

# TOPEKA & SHAWNEE COUNTY VITAL STATS

Updated 04-19-2021



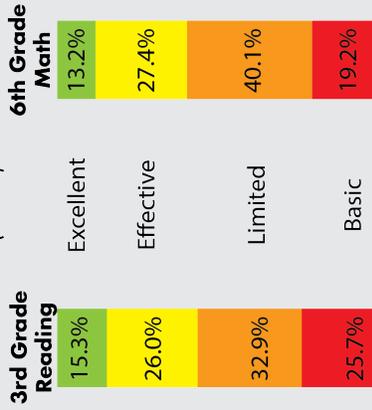
## DEVELOP HOMEGROWN TALENT

### GRADUATION RATE

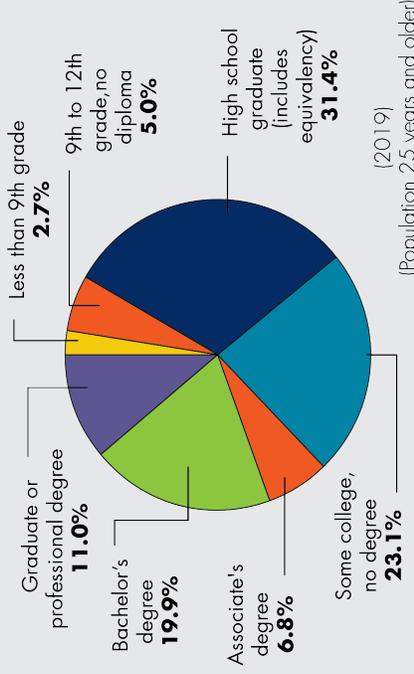


Four-year adjusted cohort formula (all Schools 2019-2020) (1)

### STUDENT-LEVEL METRICS (2019)



### EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



### CERTIFICATES EARNED

1,403

(Less than a 2-year degree) (2019)



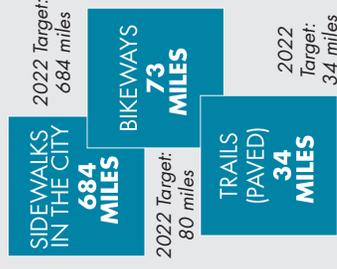
## CREATE VIBRANT & ATTRACTIVE PLACES

### LIVABILITY

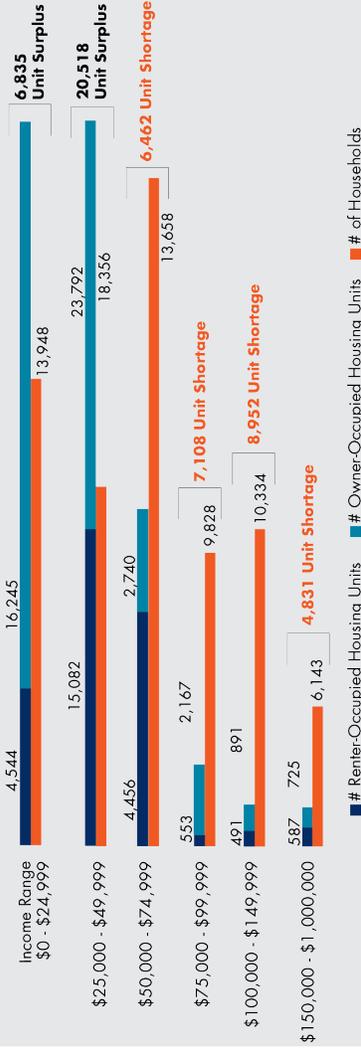
This score rates the overall livability of Shawnee County on a scale from 0 to 100. It is based on the average score of seven livability categories—housing, neighborhood, transportation, environment, health, engagement, and opportunity—which also range from 0 to 100.



### PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLINESS (2021)



### AFFORDABLE HOUSING (2019)



\*The analysis does not account for age or quality of housing units, and there is the possibility that upper income households are likely outcompeting lower income households for the same housing units.

### ATTENDANCE AT ATTRACTIONS (2020)

367,099 PEOPLE

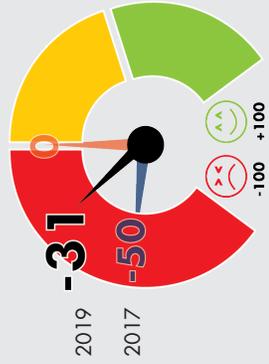
Total attendance of the following Shawnee County Attractions:  
 Topeka Zoo, KS Children's Discovery Center, TPAC, Old Prairie Town, KS State Capitol, TCI, Sunflower Soccer, Mulvane Air Museum, Brown vs Board NHS, Evel Knievel Museum, Museum of KS Nat'l Guard, Combar Air Museum, Jayhawk Theater, Ritchie House, Great Overland Station

2022 Target: 750,000 people

# PROMOTE A POSITIVE IMAGE

## NET PROMOTER SCORE (NPS)

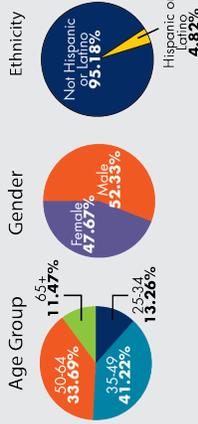
An index ranging from -100 to 100 that measures the willingness of customers to recommend a product or experience to others.



2022 Target: 0 NPS

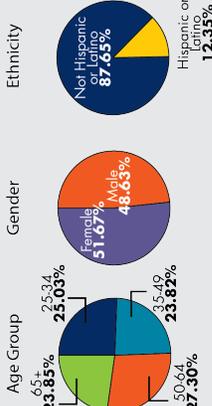
# COLLABORATE FOR STRONG COMMUNITY

## NON-PROFIT BOARD DIVERSITY (2019)

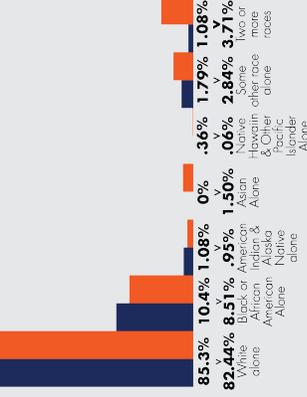


It is intended that non-profit boards are reflective of the community as a whole. To that end, the graphs above should mirror the graphs at right.

## CURRENT SHAWNEE COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS



## NON-PROFIT BOARD DIVERSITY SHAWNEE COUNTY



## PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH (2021)



Average number of physically/mentally unhealthy days reported in past 30 days (age-adjusted)

2022 Target: 2.7 Physical | 3.2 Mental

## INFANT MORTALITY RATE (2021)



(9)

# GROW A DIVERSE ECONOMY

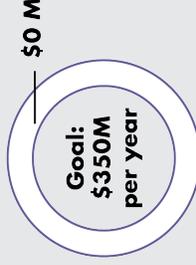
## SHARE OF EMPLOYMENT AT NEW BUSINESSES



(New business is any that has been open less than five years)(2020 Q1) (8)

2022 Target: 7,093 people

## PRIVATE CAPITAL INVESTMENT (JANUARY 2021)



Capital investment is the amount of money new or current businesses spend to create, expand or improve facilities. For this report, capital investment is captured by GO Topeka during regular communications with companies or when companies work with GO Topeka to receive an incentive for an investment. The numbers are self-reported and exclude the cost of maintenance. GO Topeka makes every attempt to gather this info for all companies in Shawnee County, however some will not be captured due to lack of awareness of the investment.

2022 Target: \$350M

## TOTAL PRIVATE JOBS



(Sept 2020)  
(Private = Non-Government jobs) (5)

2022 Target: 79,000 jobs

# GLOBAL METRICS

## GDP OF DOLLARS (10)



Gross domestic product (GDP) is equal to the sum of personal consumption expenditures, gross private domestic investment, net exports of goods and services, and government consumption expenditures and gross investment.



2022 Target: \$11.500 GDP in billions of current dollars

## NUMBER OF PEOPLE WORKING, BUT NOT LIVING IN SHAWNEE COUNTY (2018)



2022 Target: 33%

## PER CAPITA INCOME IN SHAWNEE COUNTY (2019)



2022 Target: \$50,000

## POVERTY RATE IN SHAWNEE COUNTY (2019)



2022 Target: 10%

## STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED LUNCHES



(2021)

2022 Target: 48%

All metrics refer to Shawnee County unless otherwise stated.  
Sources: 1 Kansas State Department of Education, 2 U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 3 AARP Livability Index, 4 City of Topeka Planning Department, 5 Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 6 Occupational Employment Statistics, 7 Momentum 2022 Survey, 8 U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, 9 County Health Ranking, 10 Bureau of Economic Analysis, 11 U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

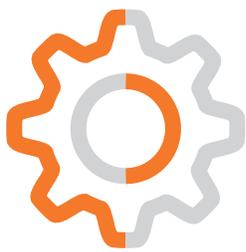
PROVIDED BY



# Business Attraction



GO Topeka continues to see interest from companies considering Shawnee County as a new location. In quarter one of 2021, GO Topeka had four new business projects: three in manufacturing and one in aviation. Currently, GO Topeka has 36 projects in the pipeline.



Manufacturing

3



Aviation

1

In terms of site selection priorities, the availability of sites and buildings along with all things related to workforce continue to drive site location factors.

## Site Selectors' Most Important Criteria:

---

1

Workforce Skills

---

2

Workforce Development

---

3

Transportation Infrastructure

---

4

Ease of Permitting and Regulator Procedures

---

5

State and Local Tax Scheme

---

6

Right-to-Work State

---

7

Utilities (Cost, Reliability)

---

8

Quality of Life

---

9

Incentives

---

10

Legal climate (tort reform)

---

# Junior Achievement Virtual Career Fair

The virtual Junior Achievement Career Fair kicked off on Monday, March 1, and the Greater Topeka Partnership organization GO Topeka was a presenting sponsor. As such, GO Topeka staff hosted two-day-long Zooms for anyone interested in learning more about Topeka and what we have to offer. The Fair was broadcasted to our eight surrounding counties, TV and radio, social media, plus directly to over 35,000 middle and high school students and over 7,000 college students.

There were two LIVE dates: March 4 and 24. On March 4, the fair was geared toward college students and adults seeking work. March 24 consisted of local middle and high school students seeking to understand what types of businesses and job opportunities Topeka affords them. From the most recent data that we have received, our virtual booth has had close to 2,000 engagements.

Washburn Tech  
JEDO Scholarships  
Spring Semester, 2021

# 38

Students  
Assisted

# \$28,800

IN SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED



# 2,000

Engagements



# Business Retention & Expansion



In the first quarter of 2021, GO Topeka worked with existing company projects in the pipeline. We've hosted workforce transportation calls, aligning interested employers with possible resources. We also participated in supporting information sessions with manufacturing and Washburn Tech East on their production programs, and conducted 21 virtual BRE interactions and visits.

We recorded a workforce skills panel presentation for the Junior Achievement Virtual Career Fair that runs for ninety days for community job seekers, college and middle and high school students.

All economic impact numbers are based on a 10 year calculation. All proposed incentives are performance-based, to be paid out as earned and details of the agreement will be outlined via a formal contract with the company and presented to JEDO for approval at a later meeting.

# Minority & Women Business Development



## JEDO Small Business Grant Relief Program

The Joint Economic Development Organization (JEDO) approved the funding for JEDO Small Business Grant Relief Program. The JEDO Small Business Grant Relief Program is a grant program of GO Topeka and JEDO to provide relief to businesses suffering financial losses due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Grants range from \$5,000-\$30,000 and are dependent on the small business' employee count. The funding for the JEDO Small Business Grant Relief Program was approved in quarter one of 2021 and GO Topeka will have more to report in quarter two as applications have been processed. Businesses may now apply at [supporttopeka.com/small-business-relief](https://supporttopeka.com/small-business-relief).



# Minority & Women Business Development



## Small Business Incentives

Q1 OF 2021

23

Incentives  
Issued,  
Totaling

\$116,204

LIFE OF PROGRAM

405

Incentives  
Issued,  
Totaling

\$1.40M

Some companies may have been awarded more than one incentive.

7

New  
Businesses

14

Existing  
Businesses

## Incentive Types



11

Construction



8

Marketing



4

Architecture  
& Design



9

Equipment



**5 NOTABLE  
NEW  
BUSINESSES**

- The Farmacy
- Sunflower Chiropractic
- Enchanting Earth
- Top City Storage
- Poppin Minis

**5 NOTABLE  
EXISTING  
BUSINESSES**

- Stumpy's Smoked Cheese
- Oz Imaging
- Made Maker
- Home Exterior Solutions
- Knolls Heating & Cooling

**FastTrac New Venture**

Q1 OF 2021

**9**

Students  
Started

LIFE OF PROGRAM

**758**

Students  
Graduated

**Jobs  
Impacted**

**62**

**36**

FULL-TIME

**26**

PART-TIME

**First  
Opportunity  
Fund**

**10**

LOANS AWARDED

**2**

LINES OF CREDIT  
FOR \$100,000



# Kansas PTAC

(Procurement Technical Assistance Center)  
February 1, 2021 - April 28, 2021



# \$3,973,390

Total Contract Awards for KS PTAC Sub-Center Topeka<sup>1</sup>

**\$3,769,087**

Federal

+

**\$0**

State & Local

+

**\$204,303**

Subcontracts

**3**

CONTRACTS AWARDED  
TO SHAWNEE COUNTY  
BUSINESSES TOTALING  
\$20,419<sup>2</sup>

**\$60**

RETURN ON  
INVESTMENT (ROI)  
FOR EVERY \$1  
JEDO INVESTS<sup>3</sup>

## SOCIOECONOMIC STATS ON FEDERAL CONTRACT AWARDS

8

Small Disadvantaged  
Business

11

Woman-Owned  
Small Business

6

HUBZone

0

Service Disabled  
Veteran-Owned  
Small Business

**21**

NEW CLIENTS  
23% of Goal

**169**

COUNSELING HOURS  
28% of Goal

**3**

EVENTS HELD IN  
SHAWNEE COUNTY  
38% of Goal

**51**

CONTRACT AWARDS<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Service area covers 32 counties in NE KS

<sup>2</sup>Out of the Total Awards Amount shown above

<sup>3</sup>JEDO was requested to invest \$66,689 in the KS PTAC program for FY2021. This is the number used to calculate ROI.

<sup>4</sup>This Procurement Technical Assistance Center is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the Defense Logistics Agency. It is funded additionally by Wichita State University, Pittsburg State University, GO Topeka, and Johnson County Community College.

# Innovation & Entrepreneurship



## First 2021 Plug and Play Topeka Cohort Selected

15 out of 60 startups selected by the Plug and Play Topeka corporate partners Hill's Pet Nutrition, Cargill and Evergy pitched to a selected audience to compete for a spot in Plug and Play Topeka's first full accelerator cohort on March 24. These startups cover a wide variety of solutions including supply chain, pet food, livestock tracking, alternative proteins, energy as well as food safety, packaging and livestock microbiome. After thorough deliberation, the following 10 companies were selected:

### **Ampcontrol** (New York, New York)

Ampcontrol offers an AI-powered software to optimize the charging of electric vehicles for fleet operators and charging networks.

### **BIOPSIN** (Singapore)

BIOPSIN is developing a revolutionary biosensor device which would empower industries to detect pathogens in real time.

### **GBatteries** (Ottawa, Canada)

GBatteries is on a mission to enable electric vehicles to charge as fast as it takes to fill up a tank of gas.

### **Heila** (Somerville, Massachusetts)

Heila is accelerating the adoption of clean and distributed energy by using the Heila EDGE – an end-to-end control and optimization platform to simplify the installation and operation of even the most complex DER systems.

### **NanoSpy** (Ames, Iowa)

NanoSpy develops rapid detection biosensors for economical in-field, point-of-use diagnostics without the need for sample labeling/pre-enrichment, laboratories, or environmentally hazardous reagents.

### **Nutrivert** (St. Louis, Missouri)

Nutrivert is developing non-antibiotic replacements for antibiotic growth promotants.

### **Obe, Inc.** (San Francisco, California)

Obe's digital platform makes it easier for veterinarians and pet parents to keep pets healthier and happier, for longer. Real-time, accurate behavioral data allows better health and nutrition decisions to help with preventative care and early diagnosis of potential problems, long before the problems are acute.

### **esilient Biotics** (Berkeley, California)

Resilient Biotics is a platform microbiome therapeutics company developing microbiome-based solutions to combat respiratory infectious diseases in animal and human health.

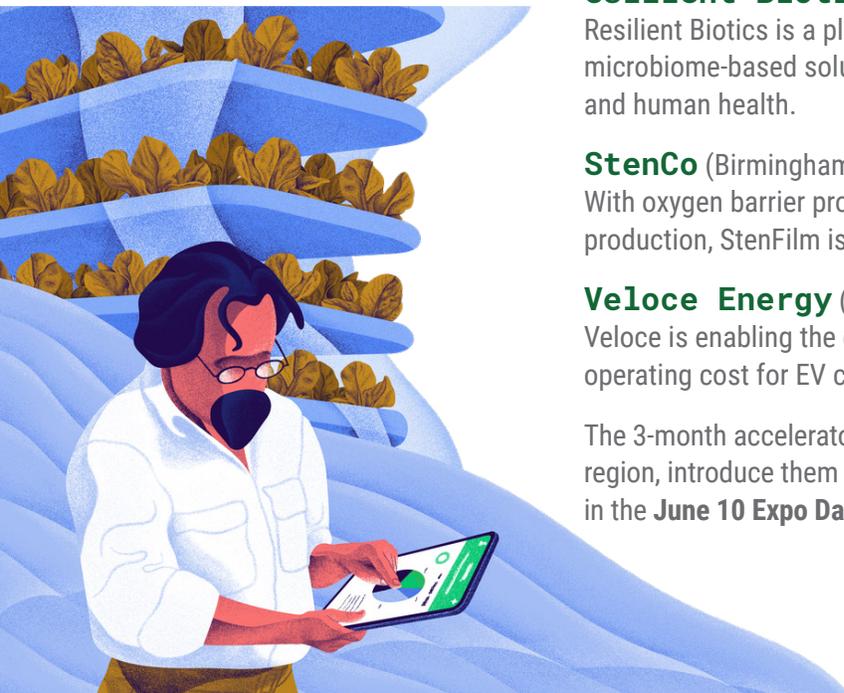
### **StenCo** (Birmingham, Alabama)

With oxygen barrier properties better than most plastics and a low-cost of production, StenFilm is the answer to any number of problems.

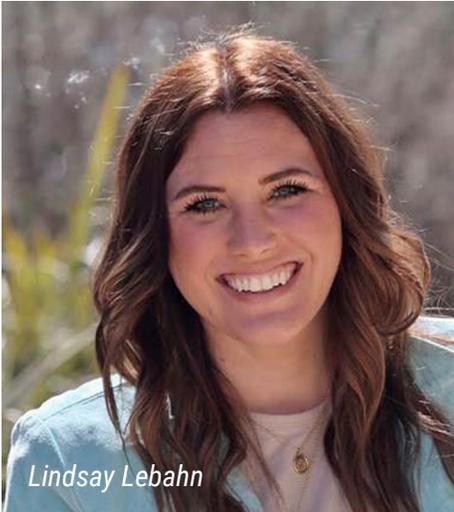
### **Veloce Energy** (Los Angeles, California)

Veloce is enabling the electrification of transportation by reducing installation and operating cost for EV charging stations for fleets, multifamily and public use.

The 3-month accelerator program will pair these startups with mentors in the region, introduce them to resources in the animal health corridor and will culminate in the **June 10 Expo Day**. This will be a public event, so please mark your calendars!



# Innovation & Entrepreneurship



Lindsay Lebahn

## Local Plug and Play Topeka Team Forming

Plug and Play has hired the first two full-time employees to run the accelerator program on the ground in Topeka. Lindsay Lebahn was brought on as Program Manager and oversees programming and manages relationships with participating startups and stakeholders. Bhawna Thairani joins the team as venture analyst.

"I'm thrilled to help launch Plug and Play in Topeka and be a part of an organization that is at the forefront of innovation. It's an exciting opportunity for us as a community to really advance and shape the animal health and ag tech startups reaching for growth in Kansas."

**LINDSAY LEBAHN**

## Innovation Campus Economic Impact Projections

As part of the viability assessment which serves as a basis for the selection of an appropriate site for the innovation campus, GO Topeka conducted an analysis of the economic impact that this project will have on Topeka and Shawnee County. The analysis projects a \$1.34 billion impact over a period of 10 years. This

number includes impact from the construction of phase 1 of the campus itself, operation of the building, and housing of the Plug and Play cohorts (two per year), but also companies that will be retained based on the environment conducive for business success that is being strategically created by the community under GO

Topeka's leadership. The projection also assumes that Topeka will gain a reputation of being a hub of innovation in animal health and technology which will attract more attention by larger players looking for expansion opportunities within the Animal Health Corridor.

# \$1.34B

Impact Over a Period of  
**10 Years**





*India Yarborough (left) and Katrin Bridges (right)  
Photo by Evert Nelson, Topeka Capital Journal*

## **“It’s Your Business” Podcast Series Launched**

It is time the world hears about Topeka’s exceptional entrepreneurs! Katrin Bridges has teamed up with India Yarborough of the Capital Journal to cohost one podcast every month telling the story of a Topeka startup. Bobby Sloan, founder of StayHomeKansas.com (<https://tinyurl.com/kye3kvwt>) and Leslie Fleuranges, owner of Tender Loving Care Pet Nursing Hotel (<https://tinyurl.com/3sn29yjm>) have been the first guests. Subscribe to the series wherever you get your podcasts – Spotify, Apple podcasts or anywhere else!



# Workforce & Talent



## 2021 Q1 Workforce Data

<b>Total Population</b>	<b>123,384</b> TOPEKA	<b>174,351</b> SHAWNEE COUNTY	KS 2,237,518 US 260,924,000
<b>Labor Force Participation</b>	<b>63,470</b> TOPEKA	<b>91,679</b> SHAWNEE COUNTY	KS 1,514,120 US 159,880,000
<b>Employment</b>	<b>60,578</b> TOPEKA	<b>87,741</b> SHAWNEE COUNTY	KS 1,438,862 US 149,466,000
<b>Jobs</b>	<b>77,936</b> TOPEKA ▼ 4.1% FROM 2020	<b>91,612</b> SHAWNEE COUNTY ▼ 4.2% FROM 2020	KS 1,308,939 US 137,424,082
<b>Average Wages</b>	<b>\$48,058</b> TOPEKA ▲ 2.2% FROM 2020	<b>\$48,026</b> SHAWNEE COUNTY ▲ 2.2% FROM 2020	KS \$49,952 US \$61,825

**Labor Force Participation Rate**

**51.44%** TOPEKA

**52.60%** SHAWNEE COUNTY

KS 67.67%  
US 61.27%

**Employment-Population Ratio**

**49.10%** TOPEKA

**50.30%** SHAWNEE COUNTY

KS 64.31%  
US 57.28%

**Unemployment Rate**

**4.6%** TOPEKA

**4.3%** SHAWNEE COUNTY

KS 5.0%  
US 6.5%

\*Total Civilian Non-institutionalized Population

# Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statements

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion assisted with the creation of DEI Statements for GO Topeka, Visit Topeka, Topeka Chamber, Greater Topeka Partnership and Downtown Topeka.

### Greater Topeka Partnership

As members of the Greater Topeka Partnership's Chairs Council, we commit to practicing diversity, equity, and inclusion on every level and in all business strategies. We understand that these principles are essential business drivers and must be integrated in all that we do. They serve as keys to innovation and are the impetus for new product development. As we continue to move toward building a strong and viable Topeka & Shawnee County, let it be known that each of our organizations will endeavor to represent the diversity of people, places, products and services, and embrace the different perspectives and experiences of our citizens.

### Downtown Topeka

Downtown Topeka is the heart of the community and serves as the mirror that reflects, demonstrates, and celebrates the diversity of its citizens.

It has a strong history rooted in commerce and inclusion and represents diversity of cultures, arts, entrepreneurs, innovative products, and services.

As representatives of Downtown Topeka, Inc., we strive to be a symbol of pride, prosperity, and diversity. We stand together against racism and discrimination and commit to being intentional in identifying factors that harm, exclude and eliminate members of our community.

As members and representatives of Downtown Topeka Inc., we pledge to foster an environment where all citizens and visitors feel welcome.

### GO Topeka

DEI Statement: GO Topeka is passionate in its vision to become a strong advocate for the inclusive, equitable and diverse growth of Shawnee County.

We will execute on this vision with integrity by creating a culture of belonging, understanding and appreciation for all people.

As the Economic Development entity, we believe that this passion and commitment for DEI will create a stronger, more prosperous business environment and serve as a key economic driver for the region.

### Chamber

We, the Board of Directors of the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce, envision a community in which every person can attain their full potential and have the opportunity to create economic success. We will actively pursue and support policies and programs that provide for all community members to achieve this potential and have these opportunities without being disadvantaged by race, gender, ethnicity, social position, group identity, or other socially determined circumstance.

We are committed to achieving that vision by advancing core values of diversity, equity, and inclusion across all aspects of our community, including business, public service, education and arts. We will work to ensure inclusion and support efforts of equality on every level of economic and community development. We stand united to speak out against systematic racism and discrimination in Topeka and Shawnee County. It has no place here.

We will challenge the notion of neutrality while producing programming that educates and empowers individuals and organizations. We welcome the partnership of our allies to ensure inclusive practices as it relates to this community. We will work to eradicate injustice, defy discrimination, and dismantle the platform of racism as we seek to grow a better economy and business environment in Topeka and Shawnee County for all of its citizens.

### Visit Topeka

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are core values of Visit Topeka and the Greater Topeka Partnership. It is practiced in all aspects of our organization. As the lead tourism authority for the region, it is our role to invite the world to celebrate the rich and diverse tapestry of ideas, people, and places that our community brings to life.

We are committed to building a variety of strong and diverse relationships. We will intentionally seek to attract visitors from diverse groups and markets. We will exhibit an authentic and welcoming environment to all residents and visitors alike.

## Events and Activities

### MAY 25

Focus Group: What are Your DEI Needs?

### TBD

The DEI Spectrum Series: Emotional Intelligence with Dr. Jarik Conrad

### JUNE 29

Corporate Culture, Company Success & the Bottom Line with Kuma Roberts of Arrowhead Consulting

### JULY 27

Strategies and Achievements – Best Practices Panel Discussion: Actionable Steps to Move the DEI Needle CEO DEI Roundtable (Invitation Only)

### AUGUST 24

Design or Redesign Your DEI Strategy Workshop

### SEPTEMBER 21

DEI Summit

### OCTOBER

Minority Students Corporate FAM Tour

## Seat at the Table

Launched in September 2020, A Seat at the Table has hosted 8 Seat at the Table Events and 72 participants (3-4 per group per meetings). More than 150 pre- and post-event surveys have been completed and speak to the need to continue the conversation about the importance of DEI.



# Choose Topeka Relocation Incentive



**2,000+**

CALLS IN 2020  
(FROM CANDIDATES & EMPLOYERS)

**5,000+**

SUBMISSIONS WITH  
RESUMES OR QUESTIONS

**30+**

REMOTE WORKER  
SUBMISSIONS

**26**

EMPLOYER CANDIDATES  
ACCEPTED, EQUALING

**30+**

REMOTE WORKERS  
ACCEPTED, EQUALING

**\$158,750**

IN MATCHING JEDO  
FUNDS COMMITTED

**\$100,000**

IN RELOCATION  
INCENTIVES

**\$258,750**

IN TOTAL COMMITTED FUNDS FROM THE EMPLOYER  
MATCHING FUNDS AND REMOTE WORKER OPTIONS

## ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

**41**

CANDIDATES

**\$80k**

AVERAGE SALARY

**11.8x**

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

**\$3.2M**

IN ECONOMIC IMPACT,  
YEAR ONE

## CHOOSE IN THE NEWS

GO Topeka uses several public relation tools and have cultivated relationships with regional and national media to help maintain brand awareness through earned media. Overall, 86+ pieces of coverage were read by approximately 4.9M people and generated over 52,000 social media shares. This totals an earned media value of \$400,000.



# Forge



## Chair and Chair-Elect

Forge is pleased to announce that Del-Metrius Herron, realtor with Genesis Real Estate Group/Keller Williams has assumed the role of Forge Chair, and Justin Moore, a principal in the USD 337 district has been named 2021 Chair-Elect. The Topeka community is extremely lucky to have both Del-Metrius and Justin in their respective volunteer leadership roles for the organization!



*Del-Metrius Herron*



*Justin Moore*

## Events

To remain cautious, Forge has continued to offer all events virtually, although we are inching closer to being able to have in-person programming! Committees (Herds) got creative in their virtual platforms and were able to extend their reach and engagement online! Amidst the throes of the pandemic, the herds were diligent in outlining their strategic objectives, while also planning online events, educational workshops, social networking opportunities, and much more! We hope to be back in-person very soon!

Forge was thrilled to partner with Minority & Women Business Development for a Spring Women's Forum: Young Professional - Forging Your Path. Attendees got to hear from a panel of local women leaders about what it's like be a female in a leadership position, challenges in the workplace, and their journey to their careers. This virtual event was free for Forge members and was also streamed live on Facebook.

The Business Development & Entrepreneurship Herd hosted Episode 1 of their "Ask the Expert" Series on March 30 via zoom. Attendees connected with local marketing expert Martha Bartlett Piland. The Herd plans to continue doing these episodes quarterly.

The Leadership Herd also held their first quarterly event: "Getting Hired 101 – Tips & Tricks from the Experts." Attendees got the opportunity to hear from four local leaders and ask questions regarding interview tips, resume building, social media presence and much more! The Herd is already planning future episodes for the remainder of 2021!

## Podcast

Forge Chair, Del-Metrius Herron and Executive Director Kelli Maydew recently sat down for a podcast chat about what the organization is planning for the remainder of 2021 and beyond. Forge will be releasing new podcast episodes quarterly!

## Forge 101

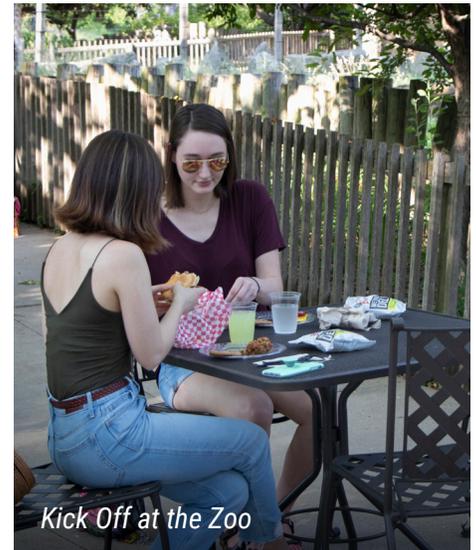
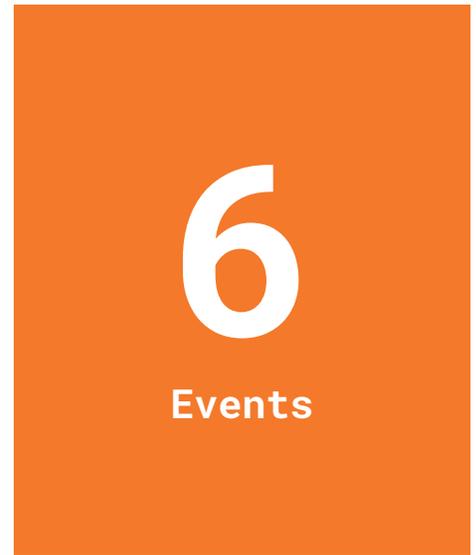
Earlier this quarter, Forge hosted a "Forge 101" quarterly orientation for both new members, as well as those curious about the organization. This was held virtually over the noon hour, and attendees got to learn about the Forge mission, herds, and got to do a Q/A session with Executive Director Kelli Maydew and Forge Chair Del-Metrius Herron. Save the date – the next Forge 101 will be May 14 at noon!

## FORGE Fest 2021

Forge is excited to announce a summer concert and food truck festival to be held on August 28 at Everyy Plaza: FORGE Fest 2021! The in-person event will feature several musical acts, food trucks, a beer garden, giveaways and more! Anyone interested in sponsoring or volunteering for the event can contact Executive Director Kelli Maydew at (785) 250-6026.

# TopCity Interns

The TopCity Interns Committee has been actively planning over the last handful of months. This year there will be a total of 6 events including a Kick Off at the Zoo, Pennant Social, Brew Tour, Influential Leaders Panel Lunch, Financial Literacy Lunch, and an End of the Year Bash. As far as attendance expectancy this year – based on our survey, we’re expecting up to 60-70 in-person interns at our events. In previous years, we have about 150 interns involved in the program. About half of employers who took our survey are providing virtual options for internships. Our survey also revealed 33% of internships will be 100% virtual. Two of our events will have a virtual option.



# HOST

Helping Others Support Topeka



Created to provide emergency recovery and relief to Shawnee County small businesses, the HOST Relief Program has provided more than \$1M in funding toward local economic recovery in the last year.

The Greater Topeka Partnership and GO Topeka shared how its HOST Relief Program has taken the lead to support local economic recovery by providing relief funds to Shawnee County small businesses. Since the program's kickoff in late March 2020, a total of \$1,247,410 has been distributed to 350 small businesses through HOST private donation or public grants in the last year. HOST, or Helping Others Support Topeka, was created to provide emergency and recovery funding for local businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It was always the intention of this program to not only provide relief to Shawnee County businesses but to also build toward our economic recovery. The fight might not be over, but this effort has made our economy all the more resilient because of the needed relief it provided."

**MOLLY HOWEY**



**\$1,247,410**

Distributed to 350  
Shawnee County Businesses



Supported Over

**2,622**

Furloughed Workers,  
Totaling Over

**\$710,445**

in Impact Relief

# Introducing Ashley Lehman



Ashley Lehman

Ashley Lehman started as GO Topeka's Business Development Manager on March 15. She previously worked in the Resource Development Department of the Greater Topeka Partnership under Rosa Cavazos as the Resource Development Manager. In her new position, Ashley will focus on substantive results by creating innovative programs that assist in making Topeka and Shawnee County a prime location for businesses to grow and thrive. Additionally, she will develop quality relationships with local employers and site consultants and work to help establish GO Topeka as a leading economic development organization in the nation.

# 2021 Go Topeka Board of Directors

## Elected Directors

Don Beatty	Hill's Pet Nutrition
Linda Briden	Sunflower Realtors
Kevin Hahn	Tri-Source Pharma
Wade Jueneman	McElroy's Inc.
Jim Klausman	Midwest Health
Treena Mason	Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas
Shane Sommars	Briggs Auto
Jacob Wamego	Prairie Band Pottawatomie Nation
Scott Anderson	HAMM Co.
Steve Anderson	University of Kansas St. Francis
Abbey Frye	Kansas Gas Service
Renita Harris	My Company, Inc.
Dr. Bob Kenagy	Stormont Vail Health
Martha Piland	MB Piland
Marsha Pope	Topeka Community Foundation
Marvin Spees	Capital City Oil
Tammy Dishman	Capitol Federal
Dan Foltz	KBS Constructors
Calla Haggard	Community Bank
Shane Hillmer	Southwest Publishing
Kurt Kuta	CoreFirst Bank & Trust
Jeff Russell	Resers Food
Daina Williams	L&J Building Maintenance

## Directors Appointed at Large

Diana Ramirez	Express Pros
Cassandra Taylor	HTK Architects
Doug Wolff	Security Benefit
Sarah Girard	Central National Bank
Brittany Crabtree	Topeka Collegiate
Scott Hunsicker	Kansas Financial Resources
Manny Herron	Haus Property Partners

## Directors By Virtue of Position Held

Michelle De La Isla	City of Topeka, Mayor
Kevin Cook	Shawnee County Commissioner
Mike Padilla	City of Topeka, Council Member
Eric Johnson	Metropolitan Topeka Airport Authority
Brent Trout	City of Topeka, City Manager
Dr. Jerry Farley	Washburn University
Roger Wilson	Chair of MWBD
Del-Metrius Herron	Forge Chair

# GO Topeka



A Greater Topeka Partnership Organization

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

*AEDO*

Accredited Economic Development Organization



Prepared for JEDO  
Joint Economic Development Organization