



Kansas Creative Placemaking Roundtable The Arts and 21st Century Economies

Roundtable Participants

Barbara Anderson
Kansas Department of Commerce
Southeast Kansas

Regional Project Manager (RPM) for the Kansas Department of Commerce (KDC). I work with communities in Southeast Kansas on Economic Development which includes Business and Community issues and incentives. I have been in the field of Economic Development for over 15 years having served in the Office of Rural Opportunity as well as a local Chamber of Commerce Executive Director before this position as an RPM with KDC.

Challenge: Population loss, empty buildings on Main Street, lack of volunteerism and funding opportunities are tough for communities in SEK, although some communities are finding ways around these issues and seem to be thriving in spite of it! Businesses need good workers, folks willing to work, come to work "clean" (hygiene-wise as well as drug-wise) and yet, low wages are also a challenge for making ends meet in this economy. Qualifying for business incentives are sometimes an issue as well as housing all across SEK.

Brad Anderson
Salina Arts & Humanities
Salina

Salina Arts & Humanities is a fully-funded department in the City of Salina. The organization is responsible for the implementation of the community's cultural plan, engages in arts advocacy, provides arts education, special community arts programming, manages the public art program, and private grant funding through the Salina Arts & Humanities Foundation. The department also includes the Smoky Hill Museum, a nationally accredited venue, and produces the Smoky Hill River Festival.

Challenge: Salina is blessed with strength in the quality and variety of cultural organizations and the programs they provide. The community does not have the same strength and leadership among its individual artists. Efforts are being made to strengthen the artist's role in community engagement, planning, and in their own professional development.

Ina Anderson
Greater Kansas City Local Initiative Support Corp
(LISC)
Kansas City

The Local Initiatives Support Corporation, known as LISC, is one of the largest organizations supporting projects to revitalize communities and bring greater economic opportunity to residents. These include more affordable housing, better schools, safer streets, growing businesses and programs that improve the financial outlook of people. We provide the capital, strategy and know-how to local partners to get this done. Our work impacts 7 million low-income Americans in both rural areas and urban centers across the country. In Kansas City, we work with partners, residents and municipal governments in the Historic Northeast and Troost-Prospect corridors of KCMO and Douglass-Sumner and Downtown areas of KCK.

Challenge: Key challenges that we are addressing include combating blight, utilizing vacant lots, improving community safety, activating parks and improving neighborhood infrastructure like roads, sidewalks and intersections. Residents of the neighborhoods in which we work also have poorer health outcomes (prevalence of diabetes, obesity, asthma, etc) and shorter life expectancy rates compared to other parts of the city/county, so we work to improve the built environment to facilitate better health outcomes through active living.

Porter Arneill
City of Lawrence, Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission
Lawrence

Lawrence is a community rich in talent and cultural resources with a long-standing commitment to arts and culture. The Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission is the City's advisory board on all matters related to Arts and Culture.

Challenge: While arts and culture is a recognized strength in the community, it's an ongoing effort to gain understanding from those not directly engaged in arts and culture programs to adapt their practices to include the arts as a proactive and innovative component for community growth and well-being.

Stacy Barnes
City of Greensburg/5.4.7 Arts Center
Greensburg

Greensburg is a city with a population of about 850 people. We are mostly known for the 2007 EF5 tornado that destroyed 95% of our community, but we don't want to be defined by it. Since that disaster, we have been rebuilding with sustainability in mind. Not just from a construction and green building standpoint, but sustainability as a community through financial stability, population, business growth. We continue to look for new and innovative ways to do rural community different, to sustain and grow while maintaining our identity. The arts have been a part of our community, especially since the opening of the 5.4.7 Arts Center in May 2008 and completion of several public art projects throughout the community including Starlight Public Art Park.

Challenge: The key challenge we face (like every other community) is new business development, existing business growth, and attaining new residents. With that also comes a housing challenge. We feel like we offer an excellent quality of life for potential residents, but jobs are a challenge.

Kristin Beal
Harvester Arts
Wichita

Harvester Arts launched in 2014 to provide a thoughtful platform for visual arts experimentation. We are a residency program that engages the community through critical dialogue and the creation of new work. We bring Resident Artists from across the country to Wichita for short residencies to create an installation or performance of new work and then partner the Resident with local artists, student groups, and area creatives (referred to as Satellite Artists) to engage with each other's ideas and processes. Once the Resident Artist has completed an exhibition, the Satellite Artists continue the conversation by creating new work in response. We host discussion sessions, artist talks, potlucks, and exhibitions.

Challenge: With few professional opportunities for artists, our community struggles to retain its talent.

Christine Bial
Mid-America Arts Alliance
Kansas City

M-AAA is a nonprofit, regional arts organization - representing Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas - that focuses on strengthening communities and improving lives through extraordinary cultural experiences. We do this through arts and humanities programming, grantmaking and professional development opportunities for individual artists as well as arts and culture organizations.

Challenge: Why are we continually having to tell the story of the importance of arts and culture?

Charlie Bryan
Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department
Lawrence

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department serves all residents of Douglas County, Kansas, by advancing policies, practices and programs that promote health for all, prevent disease and protect the environment.

Challenge: We are increasingly aware of the presence of health disparities at a neighborhood level, including a gap in life expectancy of six years between neighborhoods. Public health research suggests that health disparities often exist as a result of the inequitable distribution of opportunities to the social, economic and physical conditions that optimize health, such as educational attainment, income, and access to affordable, healthy foods, safe places to be physically active and tobacco-free environments.

Nancy Daniels
K-State Research and Extension
Manhattan

K-State Research and Extension is a statewide network of educators sharing unbiased, research-based information and expertise on issues important to Kansas.

Challenge: Kansans are increasingly concerned about community vitality and sustained economic growth.

Ongoing concerns in nearly every Kansas community include a lack of employment opportunities, declining per capita income and the retention of youth and young adults in communities. While some communities are growing, many are losing population and economic capacity. Entrepreneurship can help grow the Kansas economy.

Nicole Emanuel
InterUrban ArtHouse
Overland Park

Community Artists founded and run the ArtHouse. Our nonprofit houses 40 artists in 29 studios while running programs, exhibits, performances, classes and gathering space.

Challenge: Managing growth: 2.5 staff people running everything is a big job.

Sarah Fizell
ARTSConnect
Topeka

ARTSConnect is a small but mighty organization that manages promotion of our city's First Friday Artwalk, paints murals and works to expand the arts, connect artists with their audiences and challenge our community leaders to stand in support.

Challenge: We are a small organization with a lot of big ideas and so organizational capacity & fundraising are our largest ongoing challenges.

Derek and Katherine Hamm
The Bank Art Space
Matfield Green

The Bank Art Space is a small gallery and community space located in Matfield Green (pop. 50) in the Flint Hills. We represent local artists, host outside artists and other visitors to the region, and put on events that are accessible to the community.

Challenge: Our key challenges are balancing our role as an arts organization with a desire to be relevant to the local community, maintaining momentum in a place that is unique but remote, and determining what scale and funding levels that will be sustainable.

Dennis Hodges
Pratt Area Arts Coalition
Pratt

The Pratt Area Arts Coalition (PAAC) goal is to further elevate the arts and humanities in the Pratt regional area as a means of cultural and economic enhancement. The name "Pratt Area" is by design to include communities and persons within an undefined radius of Pratt. The coalition wishes to reach and involve all residents of the area, irrespective of age, economic status and race. Four words that describe what PAAC does: Make the arts unavoidable.

Challenge: Community challenge: How to attract and retain young adults/families and/or reduce the generational migration away from the area. Organization challenge: Fully understanding what our role is in the community and how best to structure ourselves to ensure relevance and sustainability.

Mary Lou Jaramillo
Johnson County Latina Leadership Network
Francis Family Foundation
Johnson County

Johnson County Latina Leadership Network is a 2-year old network promoting leadership, civic engagement and networking.

Challenge: The population of Hispanics/Latinos in Johnson County has increased over the past 20 years with relatively small, tiny gains in influence and representation on civic boards and commissions.

Kristen Malloy
Van Go, Inc.
Lawrence

Van Go, Inc. is an arts-based social service agency that provides year-round after-school and summer job-training programs to high-needs and under-served youth, ages 14-24. Using art as the vehicle, Van Go delivers constructive activities to youth at risk for drug and alcohol use, teen pregnancy, truancy or delinquency.

Challenge: Securing consistent funding to support our nonprofit agency is an ongoing challenge.

Melissa McCoy
City of Dodge City
Dodge City / Southwest Kansas

I represent the City of Dodge City but I also assist our area nonprofit, art and tourism related organizations.

Challenge: Funding assistance, recruiting and retaining board members and volunteers.

Angel Mercier
Johnson County Community College
Carlsen Center Arts Education
Overland Park

Presenting Organization. My job programs professional development for teachers, master classes/workshops with artists performing at the Carlsen Center, and daytime performances for youth.

Challenge: Silos and duplication of services offered. Inefficient use of what is culturally and educationally already in place. Organizationally, appreciation of the value of the arts and the potential impact on the community.

Armando Minjarez
The Seed House/ Horizontes Project
Wichita

The Seed House ~La Casa de la Semilla is a workshop space for leadership development and creative social justice strategy, based in Wichita, serving the heartland states. Horizontes Project is a community engaged art project, fostering solidarity between black and brown communities through art in Wichita.

Challenges: access to spaces and/or resources to develop creative approaches to healing and community empowerment. Another challenge that Horizontes is directly addressing is representation of communities of color.

Heather Morgan
Project 17
Southeast Kansas

Project 17 is a Regional Economic Development Project
Challenge: Improving Economic Vitality of the region

Erika Nelson
World's Largest Things, Inc.
S.P. Dinsmoor's Garden of Eden
Lucas

Lucas is a rural community of 400 with a long track record of community-based art. From the century-old Garden of Eden visionary art environment through current-day artist community, this High Plain town celebrates its continuing timeline of creativity.

Challenge: Rural underserved communities face the same issues that urban neighborhoods face: Access, advocacy, and the struggle to build healthy communities with limited resources.

Dan Steffen
Kansas Department of Commerce
North Central Kansas

Regional Project Manager for a 12 County area of N.C. Ks., and represent the Business and Community Development Division of the Commerce Dept.
Challenge: Business Development, Housing, Community Development efforts for small Communities.

Betsy Wearing
Dane G. Hansen Foundation
Northwest Kansas

Private Foundation serving 26 counties in NW Kansas.
Challenge: Declining population, preservation of rural communities.

Erick Wolfe
Independence Community College
Independence

A small community college serving Southeast Kansas.
Challenge: Developing arts programs that not only serve the school but serve the community at large.

Kelly Yarbrough-Frasier
Tallgrass Artist Residency
Manhattan

An artist-in-residence program centered in Matfield Green, KS that invites applications from artists living in different regions of the North American Prairie.
Challenge: Sustained/reliable funding. Also, growing our reach not only to people who will follow us on social media, but who will actually make the effort to participate and show up in rural Kansas.