

KU Community Impact Brief

Fall 2026

The Fall 2026 semester is underway, and the KU Office of Community Impact (OCI) is excited to be moving from planning to action—building on the relationships, ideas, and partnerships that strengthen KU's community engagement and expand its impact across Kansas and beyond.

In this issue of the **KU Community Impact Brief**, we're highlighting several ways that work is taking shape, including the **KU Big Ideas Incubator**, the continued development of **KU Community Impact Hubs and Champions** designation, opportunities to learn and get involved, and the upcoming **KU Community Impact Summit**. Each reflects our shared commitment to connecting people, ideas, and partners in ways that turn community engagement into meaningful action and lasting impact.

As the semester unfolds, we hope this brief will help you discover opportunities, make connections, and find new ways to engage. We're looking forward to building alongside you throughout the fall and sharing more of what's ahead.

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Community Impact in Action



Turn big ideas into lasting community impact

KU Big Ideas Incubator

The KU Big Ideas Incubator is a collaborative initiative launching this fall between the KU Office of Community Impact (OCI), Jayhawk Extended Learning, and the Achievement & Assessment Institute (AAI), that helps KU faculty, staff, departments, and centers turn promising ideas into services and solutions that support communities, schools, youth, and families. Through a year of coaching, mentoring, professional learning, and hands-on development, six selected teams will strengthen their ideas, test them with potential community users, and build a practical plan for bringing them to scale.

Throughout the experience, teams:

- Turn community-engaged ideas into a clearly defined service, program, or project
- Receive feedback from community-based advisors and potential users
- Create a practical delivery and pricing model
- Develop a marketing and outreach plan

Teams leave with:

- Refined and tested idea
- Clearly defined audience and value proposition
- Delivery and costing model
- Marketing plan and pitch
- $1,000 sponsorship to help bring their service or solution to market

Deadline to apply has been extended to October 16!

Learn More & Apply

Partnerships in Practice



Strengthening connections across communities

KU Community Impact Hubs and Champions

The Office of Community Impact launched the KU Community Impact Hubs and Champions designation to recognize and support KU faculty, staff, students, and community partners whose sustained collaborations demonstrate impact in addressing challenges and goals across Kansas. For the inaugural Hubs, OCI selected community health as the initial focus, building on a strong network of community-academic partnerships, including the Local Health Equity Action Teams (LHEATs).

Local collaborators can build capacity, strengthen relationships, and coordinate community-driven action to advance health equity based on evidence of this approach. By further investing where partnerships are established and results are visible, KU can learn from current efforts, strengthen support and sustainability for community-engaged work across its campuses and communities, and lay the foundation for future community-university partnerships.

KU Community Impact Hubs and Champions

People Making a Difference



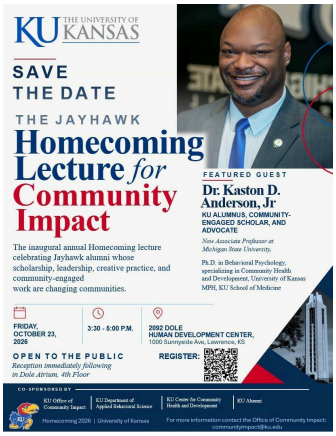
CPPR Family Strong

Featured KU Community Impact Champion

As one of the inaugural KU Community Impact Champions, the Family Strong team created a network of partnerships to strengthen families and communities across southeast Kansas. Led by the Center for Public Partnerships and Research (CPPR) at KU, Family Strong brought together community organizations, public agencies and families to build a coordinated network of support that helps address challenges before they escalate into crisis. The initiative focuses on connecting families with resources early and making services more accessible through collaboration and shared community leadership.

Recognized as the 2026 KU Team of the Year, the Family Strong team has helped expand access to services, strengthen coordination among community partners and improve outcomes for children and families across eight southeast Kansas counties. The project has contributed to a 40% decrease in substantiated child maltreatment and a 12% decrease in foster care removals while connecting hundreds of families with legal, health and other community-based supports. Family Strong exemplifies how community-university partnerships can create lasting systems of support that help Kansas families thrive.

Get inspired to make a difference



The Inaugural Jayhawk Homecoming Lecture for Community Impact

Celebrate Jayhawks who are working alongside communities to foster meaningful impact and lasting change. The inaugural Jayhawk Homecoming Lecture for Community Impact will feature KU alumnus Dr. Kaston D. Anderson Jr., associate professor at Michigan State University and a KU alumnus of the joint master's in public health and Ph.D. in behavioral psychology program.

3:30-5 p.m | Oct. 23, 2026
2092 Dole Human Development Center
Reception immediately following in Dole Atrium

For more information or to nominate a Jayhawk alumnus for the Fall 2027 lecture, contact communityimpact@ku.edu

Register for the Jayhawk Homecoming Lecture

Get Engaged

Save the Date: KU Community Impact Summit



KU Community Impact Summit

Join colleagues and community partners at the 2027 KU Community Impact Summit on January 14, 2027. Hosted by the KU Office of Community Impact and the KU Community Engagement Consortium, this year's theme, *Leading Health: Every Jayhawk, Every Kansan, Every Community*, will explore how community-university partnerships can advance health and well-being across Kansas and beyond.

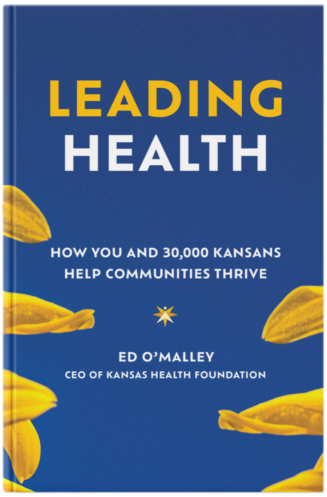
Participants will have opportunities to learn, connect, share ideas, and discover new possibilities for collaboration through keynote presentations, community-engaged scholarship, and workshop sessions. Register by December 1, 2026, to receive priority registration, which includes lunch and a copy of Ed O'Malley's Leading Health.

Interested in presenting at the Summit? We welcome submissions aligned with this year's theme through community-engaged teaching, research, service, or civic engagement. Submissions may feature emerging ideas, ongoing work, partnerships, findings, creative works, or lessons learned.

Learn More & Register

Apply to Present at the CI Summit

Learn something new



Ahead of the 2027 KU Community Impact Summit, we invite participants to explore *Leading Health* by Kansas Health Foundation's CEO and CI Summit keynote, Ed O'Malley. The book offers a thoughtful perspective on how leadership, relationships, and shared responsibility can help communities thrive, providing a valuable framework for this year's theme, Leading Health: Every Jayhawk, Every Kansan, Every Community.

As you read, consider what makes a community healthy and how each of us can contribute to creating positive change.

KU Community Engagement Consortium Corner



KU Community Engagement Consortium

Bringing together people, ideas, and opportunities across KU, the Office of Community Impact (OCI) facilitates the KU Community Engagement Consortium to strengthen collaboration and advance community-engaged work. In September, approximately 40 participants representing three KU campuses gathered to explore emerging opportunities, including the Big Ideas Incubator and the Community Impact Summit, to initiatives advancing civic engagement, service-learning, and community health. Vice Chancellor Corinne Bannon presented and also created space for participants to help shape KU's future, sharing perspectives on the One KU Strategic Framework and identifying opportunities to strengthen community engagement across the university.

KU Community Engagement Consortium

On the Horizon

- Big Ideas Incubator - Deadline Extended- October 16, 2026
- Jayhawk Homecoming Lecture for Community Impact - Oct. 23, 2026
- KU Community Impact Summit - Jan. 14, 2027
  - ***Priority registration closes on Dec. 1, 2026***
  - ***Presenter submissions close on Nov. 2, 2026***

KU COMMUNITY IMPACT
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