

2023 Annual Report



K-STATE
Research and Extension

Frontier
District

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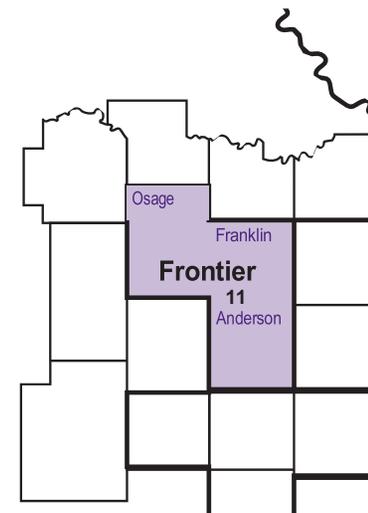
Letter from the Director

Dear Friends,

2023 was a year of growth, innovation, connection and collaboration with stakeholders and community members. We continue to adapt and remain flexible as we provide educational opportunities, resources and services to those who live and work in the Frontier District. We work to create strong partnerships and effective collaborations to address critical issues impacting our communities and region. I invite you to read about some of the highlights from 2023 and how we are impacting the lives of Kansans.

Sincerely,

Rebecca McFarland
District Director



Farm Transition and Succession Planning Conference

Building on the success of a series of estate planning sessions held in the previous few months, the Frontier Extension District hosted a highly successful event, the Farm Transition and Succession Planning Conference, on Feb. 11, 2023, in Melvern. Highlighting the event were presentations by Ron Hanson, emeritus professor at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, and Ashlee Westerhold, director of K-State’s Office of Farm and Ranch Transition.

Hanson, who has counseled and worked with farm families for more than 40 years, tackled two topics: mapping out a plan to keep your farm in the family for future generations and avoiding mistakes of a family succession planning train wreck.

Hanson’s three focus points resonated with attendees: 1) convince farm families of the need for and urgency to have a succession plan, 2) motivate family members to return home with the commitment to initiate a family discussion process and start a planning process, and 3) make full use of the staff and resources available through K-State’s farm and ranch transition office as the family works through the process.

Westerhold’s presentation was titled “Working Together to Implement Transition Planning Resources for Your Farm.” She highlighted the various resources and assistance available through her office, including succession planning, retirement and transferring management and assets. One-on-one consultations are available to anyone

needing assistance with transition planning.

A total of 33 participants from 8 different counties attended the conference. Per the evaluations, 100% of the attendees said the conference was a good value for their time, and 96% agreed or strongly agreed that they had a better understanding of the components of farm transition and that they felt they could begin to map out a plan to keep the farm in the family.

When asked to list one or two things they plan to do as a result of participating in the conference, the following items were shared: family meeting, execute the plan; communicate more, put plans in writing; and establish regular family planning discussions, review existing transition document.

To date, six families have contacted K-State’s Office of Farm and Ranch Transition and are working on succession planning and transferring management and assets.

Frontier District agents Rod Schaub, Janae McNally, Rebecca McFarland, Ryan Schaub, and Amanda Groleau coordinated the event; the Conservation Districts in Anderson, Franklin and Osage Counties and SARE co-hosted the conference with the District.



Ron Hanson, emeritus professor at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, taught at the Feb. 11, 2023, conference in Melvern.



Ashlee Westerhold, director of K-State’s Office of Farm and Ranch Transition, spoke at the Feb. 11, 2023, conference in Melvern.

Building Grant Writers in Osage County



Jason Fizell of the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation speaks with workshop attendees about funding opportunities for their concerns regarding housing needs.

Rural Prosperity and the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation.

Coordination of the workshop was led by Rebecca McFarland, Frontier District Director, and Colleen Mendoza, Osage County Economic Development Director, based on outcomes of the August 2023 Osage County Economic Development Visioning Summit.

Per the workshop evaluations, 46% of the participants had no experience writing grant proposals, and 30% of participants had experience writing proposals for local funding only. However, 100% of participants responded that they would recommend the workshop to someone else. Based on pre- and post-surveys, there was a 42% increase in the number of participants who had greater confidence in writing successful grant proposals, a 70% increase in participants who knew where to find grant opportunities, and a 52% increase in the number of participants who knew how to evaluate or measure success.

Due to the success of the pilot workshop in Osage County, Daniels plans to replicate the model in southwest and northwest Kansas in 2024.

Nancy Daniels, K-State Research and Extension community vitality specialist, piloted a new model of grant writing workshop on Nov. 1, 2023, in Melvern. The new workshop model added table discussions and collaboration to the regular format and was created to target two specific sources of funding: the BIL – Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (federal infrastructure funds) and the Build Kansas Fund (matching funds for local municipalities).

At the workshop, 61 participants from Osage, Franklin, Douglas and Coffey counties collaborated with like-minded attendees to seek funds for municipalities, schools, non-profits, businesses, social services, civic clubs and more.

The participants were also able to interact with and learn from grant experts from Kansas Infrastructure Hub, HDR Engineering Senior Transportation Project, Governmental Assistance Services, FutureFul (a grant writer based in Osage County), the Department of Commerce, Office of



Jaime Aguirre of FutureFul, who is based in Osage County, speaks with workshop attendees about funding opportunities.



Nancy Daniels, KSRE community vitality specialist, leads the grant writing workshop in Melvern on November 1, 2023.

4-H Engagement Interns Help Youth Find Their Spark for Learning



4-H Summer Engagement Interns assisted at the Osage County Fair in Overbrook as one of their final events. The interns are, from left, Timothy Pearce, Mariah Reynolds, Jerra Butterfield and Addyson Easter.

For a second consecutive year, the Frontier District was the recipient of a Kansas 4-H Summer Engagement: Helping Youth Discover Their Spark to Increase Learning Program, which is a partnership between Kansas 4-H and the Kansas Department of Education designed to directly address the impact of learning loss of instructional time due to COVID.

This year's funding allowed four interns—Jerra Butterfield, Addyson Easter, Mariah Reynolds and Timothy Pearce—to spread across the district in teaching internships to engage youth in high quality 4-H learning opportunities.

Programming highlights included food and nutrition, gardening, mental and physical health (through bicycle SPIN clubs) and space exploration, much of which built on successful programs started in summer 2022. Programming content was obtained from the Cosmosphere, Kansas Corn and USDA's Choose Health: Food, Fun, and Fitness (CHFFF).

Community partners included CrossWinds Counseling and Wellness, Lyndon Library, Ottawa Library, Ottawa Recreation Commission, and USD 365 Anderson County Summer School Program.

For the USD 365 Summer School Program, the interns taught students about pollinator gardens and planted a garden in a previously abandoned plot at the school. The students were extremely excited about the program every day, and the interns were able to teach the students how to care for the garden. The students also learned social skills and formed relationships with the interns.

In addition to the value brought to the youth, the interns gained valuable skills such as planning, preparing and teaching youth programs; working with youth, also known as youth development; and working with one another.

In total, the interns organized 50 summer educational programming activities, served 492 youth, and dedicated 53 direct hours to serving Frontier Extension District youth.



Serving Frontier District Seniors Through SHICK

As a Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas (SHICK) volunteer, Janae McNally, adult development and aging & family resource management agent, said she met some amazing folks in the Frontier District helping with their Medicare Part D in 2023.

McNally recently completed her second year as a SHICK volunteer and continued to expand her knowledge about both the Social Security and Medicare systems.

One of McNally's continuing tasks has been to assist with the annual open enrollment for Medicare Part D (prescription drug), which is October 15 through December 7. She has continued to meet with individuals in Anderson and Osage counties to assist in making sure that each is on the Part D plan that is best for the medications they are taking. Sometimes, McNally said, she has found that a person is on a plan that is not the most financially beneficial, and it makes sense to change plans.

There is no charge for an appointment, and sometimes that appointment can save hundreds of dollars over the course of a year. "We do not tell them what to do," McNally said, "but rather we run the prescriptions they are currently taking through the Medicare system, and it gives them the top three options to help them make their own choice."

McNally has continued to learn from more experienced SHICK volunteers. In June, she shadowed a volunteer who has a wealth of SHICK knowledge; this appointment was a great opportunity to learn. McNally also sought formal training. In August, she received updates for Medicare and Social Security and the yearly SHICK training. In September, she attended a New to Medicare class as a refresher on what is needed to sign up and all that is required before retirement. McNally said the presenter did an outstanding job, making the course very beneficial.

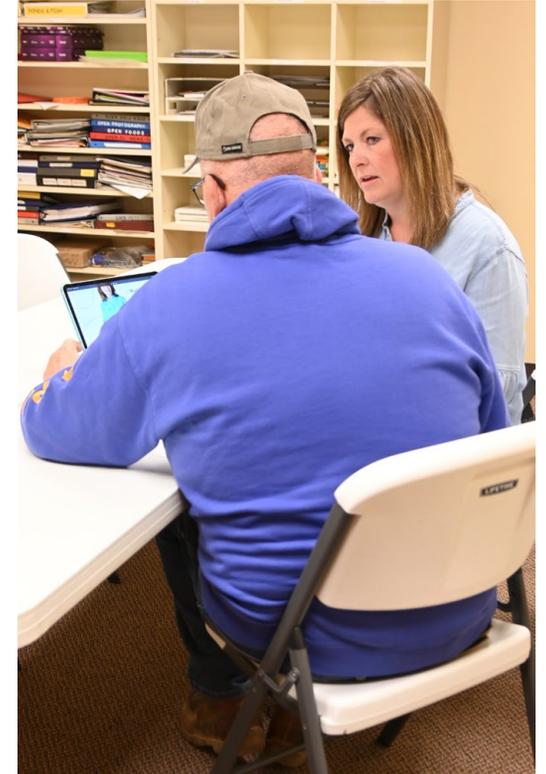
Before Part D enrollment began, McNally worked alongside East Central Kansas Area Agency on Aging (ECKAA) employees to run various plans so that when seniors arrived for appointments, all would flow smoothly. ECKAA also sponsored an update so that volunteers could meet the new SHICK coordinator, Donald Sparks.

During enrollment, McNally and other volunteers spent hours running plans for those with a Part D plan, creating new accounts, recovering old passwords and logins that had been forgotten, and updating meds within individual accounts. The goal was to have individuals get all medications covered and save money on monthly co-pays.

After enrollment, McNally entered data into the STARS system required for Medicare. In 2023, she met with 36 individuals or couples, an increase of 50% over 2022. Evaluations given to these individuals asked 1) how satisfied they were with the presentation, 2) if they would contact the SHICK volunteer again, 3) if they would recommend this service to others and 4) if it was easy to find the details for the appointment.

Of the 36 surveys returned, 92% of respondents strongly agreed with these statements and were highly satisfied with the services provided; the remaining 8% said they agreed with these statements. When asked what could be done to improve the information or services provided, many responded with comments such as "Appreciate this service very much. Easy to work with," and "You are a fantastic resource and I appreciate you all!"

McNally is also appreciative. "All of the individuals I met with were extremely thankful and very gracious for the help provided," she said. That's a successful year for a SHICK volunteer.



SHICK volunteer Janae McNally, adult development and aging & family resource management agent, discusses Medicare Part D with a client from the Frontier District.

Stay Strong, Stay Healthy: One Goal Fulfills the Other

Staying strong and staying healthy are important goals for people of any age, but they are especially important for middle aged and older adults. Research indicates that adults can start to lose muscle mass as early as their 30s. And, in their 50s, it can start to accelerate. The loss of muscle mass can sometimes slip up without warning.

Daily tasks, like putting on socks, tying shoes, reaching to put on a seat belt, getting up out of a chair or tucking a handkerchief in a back pocket, can become more challenging with age or inactivity. The ability to bend, flex, tug and pull can diminish if muscles aren't routinely exercised.

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend doing at least 150 minutes of aerobic exercise each week and doing muscle strengthening exercises at least two days each week.

To help individuals in the Frontier District meet the goal of increased strength and improved health, agents Chelsea Richmond and Janae McNally offered Stay Strong, Stay Healthy classes this past year. Stay Strong, Stay Healthy is an evidence-based program that seeks to improve health and quality of life and maintain independence through strength training.

A spring class was offered in Ottawa and a summer class was offered in Overbrook. Each eight-week program met twice a week for a total of 16 one-hour exercise sessions. Each session included warm-up and cool-down stretches, eight strengthening exercises

They Said It! This is How 'Stay Strong, Stay Healthy' Improved Their Lives!

"I love the exercises, and I like that I can continue them at home"

"I am confident that I will continue to be stronger and better able to do everyday chores"

"It taught me discipline—we met two times a week whether we felt like it or not"

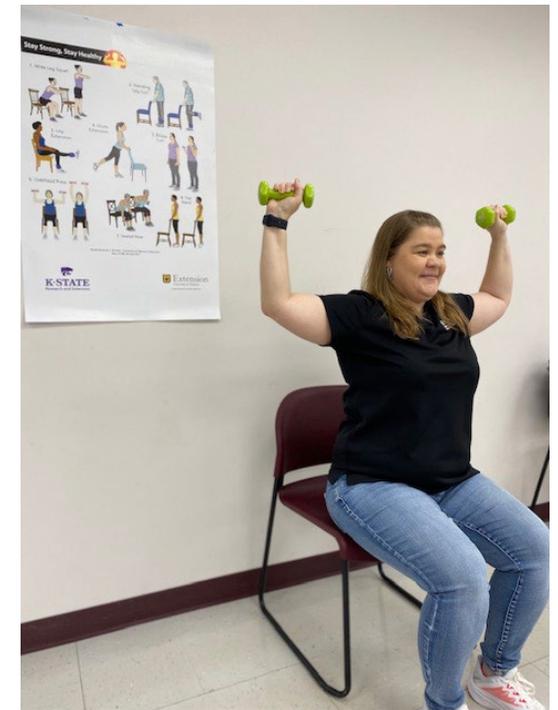
"My entire body seems stronger and I have more endurance"

that focused on the upper and lower body, and deep breathing exercises. Hand and ankle weights were provided for participants to use during the classes.

There were 27 individuals who participated in both the Ottawa and Overbrook classes. Based on the survey administered at the end of the program, all indicated they felt somewhat or a great deal physically stronger and that their overall health was somewhat or a great deal better.

Additionally, 81% indicated they slept a great deal or somewhat better, 62% indicated they had purchased personal weights to use at home and 71% felt very confident or confident they would continue the strength training exercises on their own.

Participants indicated that the classes not only provided benefits to their physical health, but that they also provided an opportunity for socialization and accountability. This was evident as many who participated in the summer class at Overbrook are continuing to meet and exercise together on a regular basis.



Chelsea Richmond leads participants in arm exercises using weights in a Stay Strong, Stay Healthy class. The poster behind Richmond illustrates all of the class exercises.

Frontier Extension District Appreciation Award

Frontier Farm Credit received the 2023 Frontier District, K-State Research and Extension Appreciation Award, which honors a person or persons who have made outstanding contributions to extension programs in a county or district.

Frontier Farm Credit has been a dedicated, consistent supporter of the Frontier District in a variety of ways throughout the years. It has provided the meal for the annual farm management meetings that are held each spring, and it has sponsored a variety of agricultural and natural resources programs by providing meals, resources and support. In February 2023, the organization helped sponsor the Farm Transition and Succession Planning Conference, and in spring 2023 the organization provided a \$4,000 grant for the first ever Frontier District 4-H Camp Livestock held at Camp Chippewa. Frontier Farm Credit also sponsors the 4-H Key Award in all three counties – Anderson, Franklin and Osage – and supports 4-H programs by providing a meal during the fairs for all 4-H families.

“We truly appreciate all that Frontier Farm Credit, led by Alan Maxwell, Gena Ott and Jack Rickabaugh, does to support the Frontier Extension District, area producers, 4-H members and citizens across the district,” said Rebecca McFarland, District Director.



Michelle Cunningham, Frontier Extension District board chair, presents the Extension Appreciation Award to Alan Maxwell of Frontier Farm Credit on Nov. 29, 2023.

Outgoing Frontier Extension District Board Members



Outgoing Frontier Extension District board members honored at the board, staff and Extension Appreciation Award Dinner on Nov. 29, 2023, are (from left) Linda Thurston, Karen Gillespie and Nina Flax.

Outgoing District board members in 2023 were Linda Thurston, Karen Gillespie and Nina Flax.

Thurston had served on the District board since it was formed in 2010 and had served for seven years on the Franklin County Extension Council. She served as the District board chair, vice chair and as secretary for five years.

Gillespie had served on the Frontier Extension District board since 2015 and had served as secretary. Prior to Anderson County joining the District in 2014, Gillespie had served on the Anderson County Extension Council.

Flax served on the District board for eight years and served as the vice chair, chair and secretary. She previously served on the Osage County Extension Council before the district was formed.

“We are extremely grateful for the many years of service to K-State Research and Extension, the Frontier District and their communities that Linda, Karen and Nina have given,” said Rebecca McFarland, District Director.

Frontier District Welcomes New Staff in 2023

The Frontier Extension District was excited to welcome three new staff members in 2023.

Jeanette Stinebaugh joined the Garnett office in May as the 4-H Program Manager for Anderson County. Jeanette was a member of the Burlingame 4-H Club in Osage County for 12 years, and her daughters were members of the Pomona Pioneers 4-H Club in Franklin County for 8 years. Jeanette served as a co-leader for the Pomona Pioneers, helped with many fairs and County Club Day, and was a member and secretary for the Extension Board. She also co-sponsored a CWF trip to Washington D.C. Jeanette recently retired from teaching second grade for 34 years.

The Frontier District's new communications and marketing manager is Carol Engle. Carol joined the district in August. Her home office is Ottawa, but she is assisting all offices in sharing the good news of Frontier District activities through the district's website, social media accounts and news releases to local media. Carol and her husband, Allan, were both involved in FFA in their respective hometowns of Garnett, Kansas, and Waynoka, Oklahoma, and their three grown children were active in the Thomadora 4-H Club in Reno County, Kansas, during their elementary, middle and high school years.

Kierstyn Blaufuss joined the Frontier District in November as the Office Professional – 4-H Youth Development in the Ottawa office. Kierstyn is an alum of the Princeton Goal Busters 4-H Club. She was an active member and strived to make the best better. Her favorite projects were photography and horticulture, and her hobbies now are being outside and tinkering with her plants and garden. Kierstyn graduated from Allen County Community College with an Agribusiness Degree.



Jeanette Stinebaugh, 4-H Program Manager, Garnett Office



Carol Engle, Communications and Marketing Manager



Kierstyn Blaufuss, Office Professional, Ottawa Office

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