



KANSAS WISE
WOMEN IN STATE EMPLOYMENT

Kansas WISE Newsletter | February 7, 2022



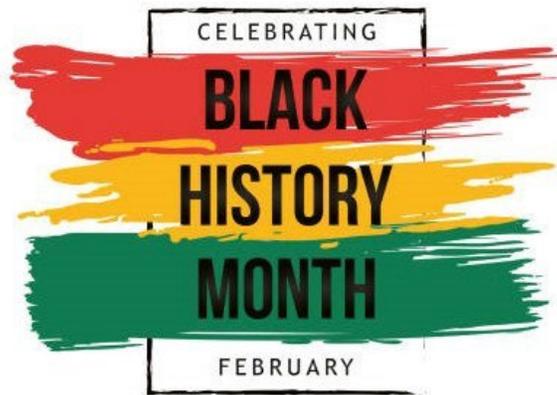
This February, we celebrate Black History Month and the contributions, past and present, of the Black community on American society. In honor of Black History Month and [Galentine's Day](#) (ladies celebrating ladies!), let us lift up their voices, celebrate their legacies, and continue to foster our relationships and empower one another.

Celebrating Women

- Join the National Women's History Museum throughout February as they explore the histories of Black women visionaries, builders, creators, thinkers, and more. Learn more at WomensHistory.org.



Celebrate



While each U.S. President since 1976 has designated February as Black History Month, its origins date back to as early as 1915. Black history is not a separate history but, rather, part of U.S. and world history. The contributions of Black individuals and communities to science, human rights, art, and culture changed the world and impact us all. Read more about Black History Month on [History.com](https://www.history.com).



In celebration of Black History Month, Kansas WISE recognizes Senator Oletha Faust-Goudeau, the first African American woman elected to the Kansas Senate. Inaugurated in 2009, she represents the 29th district in Wichita and currently serves as Senate Assistant Minority Leader. A Wichita native, she attended Wichita State University where she majored in pre-law. She previously served in the Kansas House of Representatives from 2003-2008. Among her many achievements, she was recognized by the Kansas African American Museum and Kansas InterFaith Action in 2021 as the Kansas Legislator of the Year.

Read more about her story [here](#) and other trailblazing Black women leaders [here](#).

Celebrate Black History Month through local events virtually and in-person. A few events include:

- **The Kansas African American History Trail:** Whether you go solo or with family and friends, plan a road trip to visit the eight sites along the the Kansas African American History Trail. Sites include the Gordon Parks Museum and Nicodemus National Historic Site. - [More information here](#).
- **The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art: Testimony: African American Artists Collective (AAAC):** Formed in 2014, the AAAC is made up of 150 artists living in Kansas City or with ties to the area. In addition to the visual artwork on display, the exhibit will host smaller events including a special performance by the Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey. - Ongoing until March 27 - Read about the [exhibit here](#).
- **Confronting the Past: The Douglas County Community Remembrance Project:** This February, the Watkins Museum of History in Lawrence will partner with the Community Remembrance Project to create an exhibit on the 1882 lynching of three black men in Douglas County and remembrance efforts that have since occurred. - February 25 through August 19 - [More information here](#).





International Day of Women & Girls in Science

The first International Day of Women and Girls in Science was observed in 2015 to inspire and engage women and girls in and through science. It is now a global initiative celebrated every year on February 11th. #WomenInScience

Women across the world are making science history, including many women in Kansas.



[Mary Elvira Weeks](#) found great success during her time at the University of Kansas (KU). While teaching at KU, she completed her PhD in chemistry, making her the first woman to do so. Conflicting resources declare her to also be the first woman on faculty in chemistry when she joined the team in 1921. Whether she was the first or one of several, she was part of an initial wave of women to pave the way for other women seeking careers in science.

Women in science, like women in other fields, continue to be underrepresented. As [reported by the United Nations](#):

- Women are typically given smaller research grants than their male colleagues and, while they represent 33.3% of all researchers, only 12% of members of national science academies are women.
- In cutting edge fields such as artificial intelligence, only one in five professionals (22%) is women.

According to the [U.S. Census Data Bureau](#), women are making gains in STEM fields, representing 27% of STEM workers in 2019. This is up from 8% in 1970.

For our readers with high school aged children, Newman University's STEM Exploration Program (NSEP) offers high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors an opportunity to explore STEM fields, earning two hours of free college credit upon completion of the program. Applications are due February 16. [Learn more here.](#)



Celebrating Our Achievements



Allie Denning was recently named Director of Public Affairs for the Office of Information Technology Services (OITS). Allie joined the State of Kansas in September 2020 as a public information officer for OITS and the Department of Administration. In addition to her public affairs responsibilities, she's been involved with the Governors Kansas Cybersecurity Task Force and is a member of the Kansas WISE steering committee. She's a proud Kansan with a love for all things Jayhawks.

Have you, your colleagues, or your department been nominated for or won an award? Do you want your colleagues to be recognized for their achievements? We want to hear about it! **Please submit awards or achievements to KansasWISE@ks.gov for inclusion.**





Kansas WISE Event

Please join Kansas WISE **Tuesday, February 8** for a special panel discussion and Q&A about how to:

“Build Your Own Table: A Discussion with the Kansas Racial Equity Collaborative”

Launched in September 2021, the Kansas Racial Equity Collaborative was formed by women who saw inequalities in the child welfare system and their long-term impacts on Black and Brown children.

The discussion brings together several of the Collaborative’s trailblazing creators to share their stories and inspire other women to build their own tables.

- When: Tuesday, February 8 from 10:30-11:30 am
- Where: Zoom
- Registration: FREE and open to all State of Kansas Employees, [register here](#).

We understand people are busy and schedules may prevent you from attending Kansas WISE events. Other information and opportunities are forthcoming so stay tuned!





Events and Resources

- **KU's Emerging Leaders Academy (ELA):** Over the course of 9 sessions, participants will develop a range of skills from interpersonal communication to navigating change. These skills can be used immediately while also preparing participants for leadership roles within their organizations. - Classes are in-person in Kansas City and Topeka. Cost is \$1,550.
 - Kansas City Cohort - Wednesdays, February 23-June 15 - [Learn more here.](#)
 - Topeka Cohort - Fridays, February 25-June 15 - [Learn more here.](#)
- **Lines for Life: Compassion Resilience in the Workplace:** Join Lines for Life for a virtual workshop series focused on people in public service and how we take care of ourselves. Participants will explore topics from setting boundaries and managing fatigue to the wellness of mind, spirit, and body. - Tuesdays in February from 5:00-6:30 pm - [Register here.](#)
- **HealthQuest Activities for a Healthy Heart:** - Thursday, February 10, 11:00-12:00 pm - [Register here.](#)
- **Financial Empowerment for Women:** Financial educator Dr. Raquel Miller hosts this financial masterclass to help women achieve financial freedom while empowering others to do the same. - Thursday, February 10, 1:00-2:00 pm - [Register here.](#)
- **Galentine's Women's Empowerment Webinar:** Join life coach Lilian Hernandez this Galentine's Day for an opportunity to network with other women while also learning about mental health awareness strategies. - Sunday, February 13, 11:00-12:00 pm - [Register here.](#)

Did You Know?

The State has a [Shared Leave Program](#) that allows employees to donate time to eligible state employees who have exhausted their paid leave time. Leave donations can be general or for a specific state employee that qualifies for the program. Even individuals leaving state service (except retirees) can donate leave. Review the program and consult Human Resources to see if you are eligible to donate or qualify for the program.

State employees can subscribe or manage your subscription settings [here](#).

Questions and feedback can be sent to KansasWISE@ks.gov