



**KANSAS WISE**  
WOMEN IN STATE EMPLOYMENT

## Kansas WISE Newsletter | April 1, 2022



### **A Message from the Steering Committee**

Kansas WISE recently received several requests asking that we begin advocacy work on different topics. We (the Steering Committee) take that as great feedback because it is a sign of engagement. The last year has allowed us to connect with so many people across Kansas, inviting in fresh ideas and diverse perspectives, giving us an opportunity to learn about and speak on topics that are near and dear to our hearts. With that in mind, we want to make sure we remain clear on our purpose so that we all continue to benefit from the work being done.

Kansas WISE does not serve as an advocacy group. Our vision is to be a diverse group of people dedicated to the support of women working for the State of Kansas. With support

resources focused on mentoring, career development, and personal development, Kansas WISE aims to create spaces where state employees can learn together and from one another.

Your feedback is important to us, and as a result of the suggestions, the Steering Committee is organizing a session in May to discuss the different ways you can advocate for issues important to you. Look for more information in the coming weeks.

Thank you to everyone for being a part of this journey, and we look forward to what the next year will bring.

- Kansas WISE Steering Committee



## **Earth Day: April 22**

Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson had long been concerned about the deterioration of the environment, particularly in the United States. In 1969, after seeing the devastating impacts of an oil spill in California, he began to organize a campaign to host environmental teach-ins on college campuses. With the help of fellow Congressman Pete McCloskey, they recruited activist Denis Hayes to organize the teach-ins.

April 22, 1970 became the first recognized Earth Day, bringing together 20 million Americans from across the country to protest the impacts of industrialization on the environment. Earth Day also influenced environmental protection policies in the United States, including the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency. Earth

Day has also inspired the engagement of millions of people in more than 190 countries. Read more at [The History of Earth Day](#).



[The Kansas Women's Environmental Network \(KWEN\)](#) was established in 2013 by Kim Mahanna-Bellemere and Rachel Myslivy to connect, inspire, and empower environmentally minded women.

In addition to their work with KWEN, Kim and Rachel are active in the Lawrence community promoting environmental education, preservation efforts, and conservation.

The KWEN is an open group that encourages all women to join the fun in advocating for the protection of the environment.

Look for local opportunities to celebrate Earth Day and science throughout the month of April. A few events include:

- **"Why Trust Science"** - Join author and world-renowned geologist Naomi Oreskes as she presents, "Why Trust Science?" Oreskes will present at the University of Kansas (April 5), Kansas State University (April 6), and Fort Hays State University (April 7) as part of her speaking tour. - [More information here](#).
- **Topeka Zoo & Conservation Center** - Party for the Planet - Saturday, April 23 all day in Topeka - [More information here](#).
- **Trivedi Wine Free Earth Day Concert:** Trivedi Wine, a Kansas farm winery, is partnering with the American Music Academy for an evening of music, community, and wine! - Saturday, April 23 at 4:00 pm in Lawrence - [More information here](#).



On March 8, Kansas WISE welcomed hundreds of Kansas employees to it's virtual event, **"The Power of You."** A day filled with inspiring women sharing their stories of success and

challenges as well as opportunities to invest in our personal and professional development, Kansas WISE could not imagine a better way to celebrate International Women's Day.

Thank you to Secretary DeAngela Burns-Wallace, Insurance Commissioner Vicki Schmidt, General Counsel Natalie Yoza, and former Secretary of Revenue Joan Wagnon for participating on the panel. The discussion was inspiring, and we appreciate all of you for joining the conversation and asking questions.



If you missed the event or would like to listen again, the panel discussion and the afternoon breakouts were all recorded and can be viewed online at [Kansas WISE Event Recordings](#).

Breakouts include:

- Awakening the Passion in Your Life
- 10 Strategies to Improving Your Finances
- Interviewing 101: Showcasing Your Best Self
- Civic Leadership Pathways





## Celebrating Our Achievements



On Wednesday, March 9, Janet Stanek was confirmed as Secretary for the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE). Secretary Stanek began serving as KDHE's Acting Secretary in November 2021 when she was appointed by Governor Laura Kelly.

Secretary Stanek previously served as the Director of the State Employee Health Benefits Program (SEHBP). She also spent 35 years in healthcare leadership positions in Pennsylvania, western New York, and Kansas, including 21 years at Stormont Vail Health Topeka where she last served as chief operating officer and senior vice president.

Congratulations to Secretary Stanek!

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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](mailto:KansasWISE@ks.gov) for inclusion.**



**Kansas WISE Mentoring Subcommittee:**

# The Art of Active Listening

Join the Kansas WISE Mentoring Subcommittee **Tuesday, April 12** for a conversation about:

## "The Art of Active Listening"

During this discussion, participants will explore the idea of active listening, including what it looks like and how to improve their own active listening skills.

- Date: Tuesday, April 12
- Time: 10:30-11:30am
- Location: Zoom
- Registration: FREE and open to all State of Kansas employees, you can [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

Events are virtual and last one hour unless otherwise stated.



**Kansas Racial Equity Collaborative Symposium:** Join the Kansas Racial Equity Collaborative for the culmination of their 6-month learning journey regarding racial inequities in the child welfare system. In-person on KU's campus at Burge Union, Friday April 15 from 8:30-3:30pm, Lunch provided - [Register here by April 7](#).

- **Katz Coffee Break: Managing Stress in a Relationship:** Presented by Katz Institute for Women's Health, interactions with friends, family, partners, and colleagues can

be stressful. Join expert Bella Grossman, PhD, to learn about skills of effective communication. Factors to consider when making a request or saying no will also be discussed, so that you can feel good about yourself no matter what the outcome. - Wednesday, April 6, 9:00-9:30am - [Register here](#).

- **EAP Webinar - Balancing Work and Life:** Using the philosophy that “those who are happy at home perform better on the job,” this workshop was developed for those who feel burdened with too many responsibilities and without enough time for personal enjoyment. This workshop will help participants explore and define home responsibilities, identify career requirements and prioritize leisure time. The resulting better balance will help achieve more in one’s career and at home. - Wednesday, April 6, 1:00pm - [Register here](#).
- **Power of Credit Wealth Talk - Classy Credit Chick Edition:** Presented by Sai Lena Willis, participants will learn the 5 ways your credit score is calculated, industry credit myths and do's and don'ts, how you can start to improve your credit score in 45-90 days, and how to leverage your credit to build wealth and secure your family's future. - Multiple Dates, 6:00pm - [Register here](#).
- **Silence Your Inner Critic, Unleash Your Superpower:** Join Ann McCluskey, holistic coach, change specialist, stress management practitioner, and meditation facilitator, for a session on how to reframe your thinking to build confidence and achieve your goals. - Tuesday, April 19, 7:00am - [Register here](#).
- **The Collective: Telling the Stories of Women of Color Speaker Series 2.0:** Presented by Action Research Center, join The Collective for the Telling the Stories of Women of Color Series. The Collective is a group comprised of artists, activists, writers, scholars, entrepreneurs, and community leaders. We share the stories of minoritized women in America. We aim to lift up and create space for women of color to share their voices, especially as it relates to the intersection of race, gender, and class. - Saturday, April 2, 1:00pm - [Register here](#).
- **EAP Webinar - Sleep: An Essential Component of Health and Well-Being:** In the past five years, it has been routinely reported by researchers and the media alike that Americans are notoriously sleep-deprived. This workshop provides the latest research findings regarding the importance of sleep and offers participants suggestions on how to improve their sleep according to priority and quality measures. - Wednesday, April 20, 1:00pm. - [Register here](#).
- **EAP Webinar - Mental Health Awareness:** This training is designed to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness and to promote ways of supporting one another in the workplace. The session will address signs and symptoms of distress and effective ways of providing support for co-workers. The training also will include exercises to develop these skills. - Wednesday, May 4, 1:00pm - [Register here](#).

## Did You Know?

Did you know the Office of Personnel Services publishes a statewide training calendar? From harassment prevention training to workshops on how to cope with stress, the training calendar provides in-person and virtual opportunities to suit everyone's schedules. [More information here.](#)

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

Questions and feedback can be sent to [KansasWISE@ks.gov](mailto:KansasWISE@ks.gov)

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