



**KANSAS WISE**  
WOMEN IN STATE EMPLOYMENT

**Kansas WISE Newsletter | January 6, 2023**

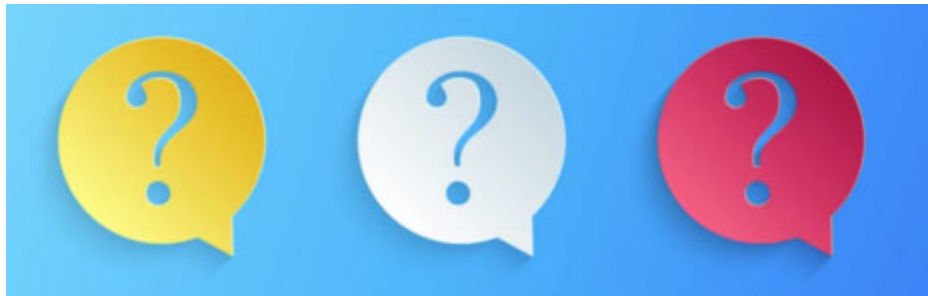
**Let it be messy and painful,  
let it be joyful and rare.**

MINNIE DRIVER  
"MANAGING EXPECTATIONS"

Happy New Year! If you find yourself wanting to start fresh in 2023, but the idea of new year's resolutions gives you anxiety, try these ideas that are both attainable and fun. Giving a compliment a day, stop gossiping, and trying something that

scares you are just a few examples of the ideas you can try. Read through all 55 ideas [here](#).

Interested in a more joyful and connected year? Try the Well Desk 7-Day Happiness Challenge through the New York Times. The challenge focuses on your relationships with a new activity released each day Jan. 2 - Jan. 8. The first four activities can be found [here](#).



## Question of the Month

Thank you to everyone who responded to December's Question of the Month: *What is your most unique holiday tradition?*

Here are a few of our favorites:

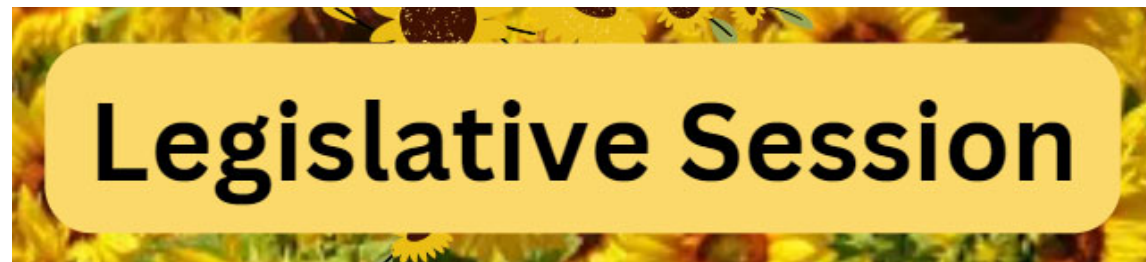
- We used to shoot a potato gun at family reunions.
- At any family gathering but especially the holidays, a SoulTrain line is a must!
- We play DnD; Mario Cart; and have Call of Duty team against each other competitions.
- We don't usually do gifts. We all get together and go to a nice restaurant for dinner close to Christmas and celebrate by eating and spending valuable time together.
- Pizza for Thanksgiving- whichever establishment is open, or whichever frozen variety we purchased for the occasion.
- My brother and I make the other's gift very challenging. Locking a gift in a safe, an escape room out of my car, five senses challenge, etc. We've used chains, rope, locks, puzzle challenges and more.
- Decorating for Christmas.
- Going to the hockey game on Thanksgiving night.
- Everyone at our house for Thanksgiving dinner writes their thanks in permanent marker on the gratitude tablecloth.

**January Question of the Month:** What topics would you like Kansas WISE to cover in 2023 events and newsletters? Those with ks.gov email addresses can respond [here](#); other state employees can email responses to [KansasWISE@ks.gov](mailto:KansasWISE@ks.gov).

If responding via the Kansas WISE email, please send us your preferences from the following list:

- Leadership
- Communication skills
- Dealing with stress
- Personal growth
- Financial planning
- Success in the workplace
- Resilience
- Time Management
- Healthy lifestyle
- Estate guidance
- Getting your next State job
- Other

Please respond by January 23.



## **2023 Legislative Session**

The 2023 legislative sessions begins Monday, January 9. Several events to take notice of during the first week of session are:

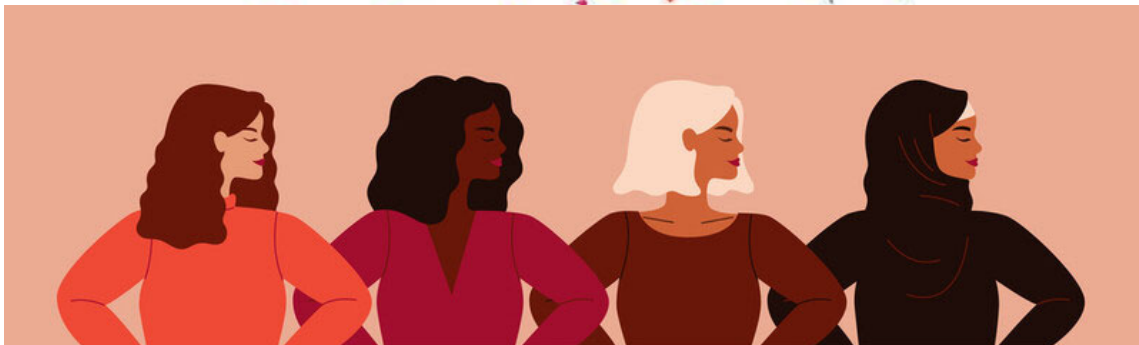
- January 9 at 12pm: Located on the south lawn of the State Capitol, Governor Laura Kelly, Lt. Governor Toland, and other newly elected statewide officials will be sworn in.
- January 11 at 6:30pm: Governor's Kelly's State of the State

[Legislative Resources](#)

The Topeka Capital-Journal has put together a crash course of resources including when the legislative session is, how to identify who your legislator is, how a bill becomes a law in Kansas, how to attend sessions, how to submit testimony, and more. **View a full list of their resources [here](#).**

**You can also call the Legislative Hotline at 1-800-432-3924.** Powered by the State Library of Kansas, experienced reference and research librarians can answer questions about who your legislators are and how to contact them, the status of a bill, the legislative process, and more. Further information:

- Hotline: 1-800-432-3924
- Hours: Monday - Friday from 8am to 5pm
- Email: [infodesk@ks.gov](mailto:infodesk@ks.gov)
- Ask a Librarian Service: [kslib.info/ask](https://kslib.info/ask)
- TTY user should call 711



## **Celebrating Women in State Employment**

To kick-off 2023, the Kansas WISE steering committee is excited to feature a number of state employees celebrating achievements.



**Pamela Hann** (pictured first person on the left) with the Office of Personnel Services was awarded the Employer Member of the Year Award by the Kansas Association of Colleges and Employers (KACE).

The KACE is a professional association made up of employers and career services personnel who work with college relations, recruitment, cooperative education, internships, and career

planning and development.

In her role as Internship Coordinator, Pamela has been an active member of the organization. In her time as a member, she has been instrumental in educating colleges and students about the great benefits of working for the State of Kansas.

In November, Pamela received the award for her work as an ambassador for the State.

Great job, Pamela!



**Phyllis LaShell** from the Department of Commerce has won the Brad Barackman Bridge Award from the Kansas Association of Colleges and Employers (KACE). This award is presented in recognition of the KACE member who implemented an outstanding program that serves as an effective "bridge" between employers and Career Services. Phyllis has been integral in connecting people in both career services and a variety of employment industries for many KACE committees. At the KACE Drive-in, she coordinated an internship panel based on those connections. She frequently connects career services with employers in the state and serves as an effective bridge between the two. Well done, Phyllis!



In December, **Cherie Sage**, State Director of Safe Kids Kansas, received the prestigious Dr. Dennis Colley Award of Excellence.

She has been with Safe Kids Kansas for 20 years, serving as the State Director since 2009. She spends her time volunteering in the community, including time as a Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician and Instructor. Read more about the 2022 Safe Kids Kansas annual awards [here](#).

Way to go, Cherie!



Led by **Donnita Thomas** (pictured back row on the right), the Network/Telecom Services team at the Office of Information Technology Services completed a 2-year project to address outdated end user access switching equipment throughout the State of Kansas. Under her leadership, the project was

completed 10 months ahead of schedule. Congratulations to Donnita and the team!



In December, the Kansas NextGen Under 30 award program announced its 2022 honorees. Included in the list are dozens of people working for the State of Kansas.

Kansas women in state employment who received recognition are:

- Grace Knepp, Kansas

Department of Agriculture

- Margaret McPherson, Kansas Department of Commerce
- Grace Linck, Kansas Department of Commerce
- Dandi Owens, Kansas Department of Commerce
- Haley Pederson, Kansas Department of Commerce
- Emily Unruh, Kansas Department of Commerce
- Alyssa Cabello, Kansas Department of Corrections
- Jade Ramsdell, Kansas Department of Health and Environment

- Tanna Fanshier, Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks
- Hadley Sayers, Kansas Office of the State Bank Commissioner
- Helena Buchmann, Kansas Senate Democrats
- Amanda Petersen, Kansas State Department of Education
- Christina Haswood, Kansas State Legislature
- Hillary McPherson, Lied Center of Kansas-The University of Kansas
- Kaitlyn Fitzgerald, The State of Kansas
- Sara Galapo, University of Kansas
- Grace Lauer, University of Kansas
- Rija Khan, Wichita State University
- Abigail Hammack, Wichita State University
- Angelique Banh, Wichita State University
- Madison Gegen, WSU Tech

Congratulations to all the recipients! A full list of winners can be viewed [here](#).

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.**





The Kansas WISE Steering Committee gives a special thank you to Secretary of Administration and Chief Information Technology Officer DeAngela Burns-Wallace. The idea of Kansas WISE came to her several years ago, and she brought together a small group of women - the early stages of the Steering Committee - to help bring her vision to life. What started as an idea for the Women's Forum turned into monthly events, a newsletter with more than 1000 subscribers, and countless hours of women and men from the State of Kansas gathering to discuss important issues and provide support to one another. Her guidance and support for this effort are truly appreciated.

Thank you, Secretary, for commitment to the State of Kansas and its employees. Kansas WISE wishes you well on your next adventure.



## Kansas WISE

### Get Off the Fence About Mentorship

Join the Kansas WISE Mentoring Subcommittee for a conversation about why 2023 is the perfect time to finally say "YES" to mentorship!

If you've been on the fence about being a mentor or mentee, join the conversation to celebrate current successes, chat with others interested in mentorship, and learn how to communicate your interest in the program with your supervisor.

- **Date:** Wednesday, January 25
- **Time:** 2:00pm - 3:00pm
- **Location:** Zoom
- **Registration:** Free and open to 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!*

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## Events and Resources

Events last one hour unless otherwise stated. Times listed are central time.

- **First Friday Gallery Crawl:** a celebration of art and creativity across the city, a free art crawl where artists, galleries, museums, and local businesses collaborate to help patrons develop or nurture an appreciation for local art. Recurring monthly on the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday in Wichita from 7:00pm-9:00pm - [Information here.](#)
- **Miami County Spring Farm Tour:** Tour the Kansas countryside when it's in full bloom! Plenty of furry things to pet and feed, delicious homemade goods and fresh produce available for purchase and fun demonstrations about life on the farm plus a digital scavenger hunt. Daily through May 14, 10am-4pm - [Information here.](#)
- **Coping With Stress:** Are you experiencing headaches, muscle tension, feeling anxious or jittery, more irritable or angry than normal, not sleeping, feeling tired or worn out, finding it hard to concentrate? Want to learn proven coping techniques to help yourself? Request enrollment for this online training by sending your request with employee ID to [KDOR\\_LearningCenter@ks.gov](mailto:KDOR_LearningCenter@ks.gov). Tuesday, January 10, 8:30am-11:30am.
- **MLK Day January 16:** Honor Dr. King and his legacy by volunteering with one of the events below or with your favorite organization (volunteer times vary):
  - [Wichita Habitat for Humanity](#)
  - [Manhattan MLK Day of Service](#)
  - [McPherson Area Habitat for Humanity](#)
- **Dealing with Difficult People:** We all have that one customer, co-worker, or family member, which just seems to be so difficult to get along with! Want to

learn how to deal with them in a more positive way? Request enrollment for this online training by sending your request with employee ID to [KDOR\\_LearningCenter@ks.gov](mailto:KDOR_LearningCenter@ks.gov). Tuesday, January 24, 8:30am-11:30am.

- **National Compliment Day January 24:** The power of a compliment is a small act that can have a big impact. Make an extra effort to give sincere praise on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

## Did You Know?

Did you know you can begin your HealthQuest rewards program today? It's a new year and time to earn incentives. Employees enrolled in medical plans A,C,J, and N can complete program activities and earn credits to receive a \$480 premium incentive discount. Employees on plans C, J, and N can also receive \$500 in their HSA/HRA account. [Click here](#) for an instructional guide. Visit <https://my.marathon-health.com/login> to register in the portal. If you have any trouble, contact the Member Relations Team at 785-783-4080.

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State employees can subscribe using their state email address [here](#).

Anyone wishing to subscribe using their personal email address should email [KansasWISE@ks.gov](mailto:KansasWISE@ks.gov) with their agency name.

Please email us with any questions and feedback.

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