



**31<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL**

# **KANSAS TRANSPORTATION SAFETY CONFERENCE**

**Realizing what else is possible**

**Hilton Garden Inn • Manhattan, KS • April 21-22, 2026**

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**Sponsored by the University of Kansas Jayhawk Hospitality  
and a federal grant through the Kansas Department of Transportation**

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Laura Kelly, Governor

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April 21, 2026

Greetings!

Welcome to the 31st annual Kansas Transportation Safety Conference. We are excited to offer you the opportunity to choose from a wide range of breakout sessions, hear from engaging and distinguished keynote speakers, and connect with peers dedicated to reducing fatalities and serious injuries in Kansas. Conference topics cover a broad spectrum, are timely and relevant, and are addressed by experts who work to save lives every day.

One of the greatest benefits of a conference is the opportunity to build connections with fellow attendees. We encourage you to meet someone new, to learn something new, and to leave energized to tackle the challenging topics in your community. Don't miss the regional breakout discussions on Wednesday morning meant to foster new partnerships and coalitions. Please be sure to also check out partner booths in the exhibit hall.

New in 2026! You will see Conference Partners are supporting our conference meals and breaks. You will see their names displayed on the ballroom screens, on featured signs, and in our program and conference app (Learn@KU). We are grateful for their generosity and invite you to join us in thanking them.

The conference breakout sessions are organized and offered by each of the elements of the Safe System Approach, providing a comprehensive selection of sessions addressing safer roads and road users, safer speeds, safer vehicles, and timely and quality post-crash care. This is our third year to offer certification maintenance credits for professional planners (AICP credits) and continuing education units for emergency medical services professionals (EMS CEUs).

Finally, **please let us know how we can make this conference better and how we can assist you with your transportation safety needs.** Email us at [DriveToZero@ks.gov](mailto:DriveToZero@ks.gov) or contact [Ingrid.Vandervort@ks.gov](mailto:Ingrid.Vandervort@ks.gov). Please also add your suggestions to the questionnaire following the conference; your input is valuable as we prepare for future conferences.

We are thrilled you are here and appreciate all you do to *Drive to Zero Kansas Traffic Deaths!*

Sincerely,

Vanessa Spartan, AICP, RSP<sub>1</sub>  
Chief of Transportation Safety  
Kansas Department of Transportation

Gary Herman  
Behavioral Safety Section Manager  
Kansas Department of Transportation

# 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Transportation Safety Conference

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## Visit and use the Drive to Zero Crash Data Dashboard and StoryMap

[storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/01b8e784d1634e94b84ea0df67b8aea4](https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/01b8e784d1634e94b84ea0df67b8aea4)

Use this tool to understand the nature, frequency, and distribution of fatal and serious injury crashes in Kansas.

**Click it.  Or ticket.**  
It's Kansas Law.



## WI-FI CONFERENCE CENTER CONNECTION

Conference Center Wi-Fi network: Manhattan Conference Center  
Password: MCC2026

# Conference at a Glance and Safe System Approach

## Monday, April 20

7:30 a.m.	Registration and continental breakfast
8:30 a.m.	Morning workshop sessions
Noon	Lunch for workshop attendees, provided by HNTB, Blue Level Partner. KDOT will present updates.
1 p.m.	Afternoon workshop session
4:30 p.m.	Adjournment

## Tuesday, April 21

7 a.m.	Exhibitor setup
7:30 a.m.	Registration, continental breakfast, and exhibits open
8:30 a.m.	Welcome and opening remarks
9:15 a.m.	Opening Keynote Address
10 a.m.	Refreshment break provided by HDR Engineering Inc., Gold Level Partner
10:30 a.m.	Concurrent Session 1
11:30 a.m.	Luncheon provided by Burns & McDonnell, Platinum Level Partner. Plenary Address and People Saving People Transportation Safety Recognition Awards Presentation.
1:30 p.m.	Concurrent Session 2
2:30 p.m.	Refreshment break provided by Wilson & Company, Gold Level Partner
3 p.m.	Concurrent Session 3
4 p.m.	Adjournment and exhibits close

## Wednesday, April 22

7:30 a.m.	Registration, continental breakfast, and exhibits open
8:30 a.m.	Concurrent Session 4
10 a.m.	Refreshment break provided by WSP USA, Gold Level Partner
10:30 a.m.	Concurrent Session 5
11 a.m.	Exhibits close
11:30 a.m.	Luncheon with Plenary Address and Hero Transportation Safety Recognition Awards Presentation
2 p.m.	Adjournment

## Conference Sessions Support Safe System Approach

The first-ever National Roadway Safety Strategy was adopted by the U.S. DOT in 2022, and the **Safe System Approach** serves as the guiding paradigm to address the roadway safety crisis in the U.S. **The Kansas Drive to Zero Coalition** embraces the Safe System Approach as an organizing framework to both prevent severe injury crashes and provide quality post-crash care in the event of a crash.

The Kansas Transportation Safety Conference supports the **Safe System Approach** in its selection and organizational delivery of topics for you to choose from. Breakout sessions are categorized following the Safe System Approach Objectives, including:



Safer People



Safer Roads



Safer Vehicles



Safer Speeds



Post-Crash Care

Each session will include one or more icons to illustrate which Objective(s) the session touches. To learn more about the Safe System Approach and the Objectives, use the QR code below.



### Tuesday Opening Session

**Devin Henderson** is a multi-talented powerhouse: an experienced presenter and seasoned performer, having logged thousands of performances as an award-winning comedian, magician, and in-demand keynote speaker. His unique combination of skills and storytelling and his hilarious and engaging interactions make him an audience favorite. His clients have included Pepsi, Hallmark, Cerner, and hundreds more. His performances have been called “unreal,” “unexpected,” and “unforgettable,” and he delivers the ultimate keynote experiences to inspire possibilities, purpose, and impact.

### Tuesday Lunch

**Melissa Wandall** is the President of both the National Coalition for Safer Roads and M3 Motivational Concepts. She is a nationally recognized speaker, advocate, and philanthropist who transformed personal tragedy into a powerful force for change. She was instrumental in passing Florida’s Mark Wandall Traffic Safety Act and continues to work alongside law enforcement, advocates, and community leaders to prevent roadway fatalities and protect lives. As the founder of The Mark Wandall Foundation, she also provides vital support to grieving youth while delivering a message of resilience, purpose, and the enduring impact of every life.

### Wednesday Lunch

**Bill DeMott** brings more than 30 years of experience in professional wrestling and sports entertainment, having captivated audiences around the world. He also has performed, produced, and appeared on TV in commercials and movies and as a reality TV star. DeMott is an author, life coach, and victim advocate. More importantly, Bill is a husband and father of three. He serves in his church and is the founder of The Keri Anne DeMott Foundation. Keri Anne DeMott was tragically killed on October 15, 2015. Her life was taken in a head-on collision caused by a multiple-DUI offender. Keri Anne was 20 years old. Since that time, the DeMott family formed a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in their daughter’s name with the mission of raising awareness about the decisions that are made every day and how those decisions affect so many people. Bill now travels across the nation speaking to students from elementary school through college, to youth groups, and at corporate events, safety events, and law enforcement agencies. His mission is to share his daughter’s story and inspire others to be more mindful of the choices they make each day. He challenges audiences to recognize the real-life consequences of everyday actions, such as using social media, texting, bullying, and deciding not to drive drunk, impaired, or distracted. Drawing on his life experiences and perspective, DeMott delivers a powerful and deeply personal message at every event. He takes audiences on an emotional and motivational journey, reinforcing how what we do, what we say, and how we act can profoundly influence and impact others.



**Don’t forget to post on X!** You are invited to post on X using #KansasTSC during breaks in the action about things you see or hear at the conference that made an impression on you and that you believe would be helpful for others to know.



**Snapchat – Download it!**

**Snap and share!** Safety Superheroes! We encourage you to find our Snapchat filter for the conference. Create your own story and share it with your peers.

## Preconference Sessions

### MONDAY, APRIL 20

7:30 a.m.

**Registration** | *East Foyer*

**Continental Breakfast** | *Alcove*

8:30 a.m. – Noon

**Trolling for Evidence** | *McDowell/Tuttle*

This course teaches officers how to use open-source information to document the behavior of individuals involved in impaired driving cases. Officers will learn how to use information found on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok and how to properly build a fictitious profile on these platforms so officers can search on the platform without using their personal information. The content of this course is designed for officers of all experience levels who want to enhance their investigations and strengthen their case when testifying. This course also covers how to build community relations using social media.

**Speakers:** **Sgt. Frank Imparato** began his law enforcement career in 1999 as a Law Enforcement Explorer with the City of Coral Springs Police Department. In August of 2003, Sgt. Imparato was hired by the Coral Springs Police Department as a Telecommunicator. After two years in the Communications unit, Sgt. Imparato was assigned to the Road Patrol unit and served as a civilian Traffic Accident Investigator. After some time in the Road Patrol unit, he was transferred back to communications, where he remained for approximately three more years. To improve his DUI investigation skills, Sgt. Imparato has continued his law enforcement education by attending Standardized Field Sobriety Testing, DUI Instructor, DUI Trial and Case Preparation, Advance Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE), Drug Recognition Expert, and Drug Recognition Expert Instructor schools. Sgt. Imparato also serves his department as a Traffic Homicide Investigator, Instructor, and Field Training Officer. He speaks regularly to faculty, students, and community organizations about the dangers of impaired driving.

**Ashley Eller** began her law enforcement career in 2004 with the Orlando Police Department as a Dispatcher. In 2006, she became a Community Service Officer for the Orlando Police Department. In 2010, Ms. Eller accepted a position as a certified Law Enforcement Officer with the Apopka Police Department. Ms. Eller has taught SFST-DWI Detection, Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE), Marijuana Impaired Driving

Detection for Law Enforcement (MIDDLE), Advanced Marijuana Impaired Driving Detection for Law Enforcement (AMIDDLE), and the Drug Evaluation and Classification Program (DECP) training (DRE school). Ms. Eller was a certified Intoxilyzer 8000 Operator and Agency Inspector for the Intoxilyzer 8000. Ms. Eller has taught for the Institute of Police Technology and Management (IPTM), Valencia Community College Criminal Justice Institute, Georgia Public Safety Training Center, and Tallahassee Community College via the Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor (TSRP) program.

**Moderator:** **Al Ackerman**, KDOT

**Credits:** **3.5 AICP Credit**

Noon - 1 p.m.

**Lunch** | *Alcove* | KDOT Updates Presentation Thank You HNTB, Blue Level Luncheon Partner

1-4:30 p.m.

**Improved Internal Communication for Police Officers** | *McDowell/Tuttle*

This fast-paced class gives officers a simple, shared language and practical tools for better communication skills in the workplace. We use Insights Discovery, a psychological self-awareness tool, and real examples from the field. You'll spot your own style, read others', and adjust how you brief, talk on the radio, write reports, and debrief. This isn't a lecture; it's active and entertaining. Expect short demos, true stories, quick drills, and a bit of friendly competition to keep the energy high.

**Speaker:** **Randal Moody** is a retired law enforcement executive and former Chief of Police for Harrisonville, Missouri. He supports police professionals in leadership development, training, and organizational effectiveness and specializes in emotional intelligence and practical tools for daily police work.

**Moderator:** **Troy Wells**, Law Enforcement Liaison, KDOT

**Credits:** **3.5 AICP Credit**

4:30 p.m.

**Adjournment**

## Conference Sessions

### TUESDAY, APRIL 21

7:30 a.m.

**Registration** | *East Foyer*

**Continental Breakfast** | *Mid-Foyer/Grand Ballroom*

**Exhibits Open** | *South Foyer*

8:30 a.m.

**Introduction Master of Ceremonies Vanessa Spartan, KDOT**

**Welcome** | *Grand Ballroom* | **Vanessa Spartan**, Chief of Transportation, KDOT, Bureau of Transportation Safety

**Opening Remarks** | **Calvin Reed**, Secretary of Transportation, KDOT; **Susan DeCourcy**, Regional Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; **Norbert Muñoz**, Deputy Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration - Kansas Division; **Michael Christopher**, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

9:15 a.m.

**Opening Keynote Address** | *Grand Ballroom*  
**What Else Is Possible**

For many individuals and teams, a once-held vision of unlimited possibility becomes small and limited because of life's daily stressors, persistent insecurities, self-doubt, isolation, and even failure. But what if we could reclaim and even expand our full potential at any time? And what if our potential were bigger, richer, and more satisfying than we previously envisioned? Seasoned speaker and performer Devin Henderson brings an unforgettable experience of impact and inspiration and will help us take a break from the worries of the day and break free from our perceived limits. We will discover practices for maintaining mental strength and resilience to realize our greatness like never before.

#### "WHAT ELSE IS POSSIBLE" TAKEAWAYS

- Be resilient to fears and challenges that sabotage what's possible when left unchecked.
- Attain a seemingly impossible goal without slowing down or giving up.
- Rethink what's possible and uncover untapped potential like never before.
- Collaborate with teammates to achieve greater things together!

**Speaker:** Devin Henderson

**Credits:** 0.75 AICP CM

10 a.m.

**Refreshment Break** | *Mid-Foyer* | Thank You HDR Engineering Inc., Gold Level Refreshment Break Partner

10:30 a.m.

### Concurrent Session 1

**Driving Change: The Work Zone Safe Initiative**



*Flint Hills*

Launched statewide in April 2025, the Work Zone Safe program is Kansas' new online training designed to equip teen drivers with the skills they need to safely navigate work zones. Developed in partnership with the Kansas Contractors Association, Kansas Highway Patrol, and Kansas Turnpike Authority, the program addresses the heightened crash risks facing new drivers and provides schools, parents, and driving instructors with ready-to-use educational tools. This session will highlight the program's rollout, early engagement efforts, and resources available to support teen transportation safety.

**Speakers:** **Michael White**, Kansas Contractors Association; **Kevin Shelton**, C-Hawkk Construction; **Haley Dougherty**, KDOT

**Moderator:** Lori Haskett, KDOT

**Credits:** 1.00 AICP CM

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**Community First Aid and Crash Response**



*Kings ABC*

This session will help teach local community first aid and crash response, including information geared toward high school students. Hear from speakers with programs in Brown County (Sheriff John Merchant and Bill Sullivan) along with Phillips County EMS Director Kassy DeWitt, who will share how rural medical response has been enhanced using AVEL eCare telemedicine.

**Speakers:** **Bill Sullivan**, KDOT; **Sheriff John Merchant**, Brown County; **Kassy DeWitt**, Phillips County EMS

**Moderator:** Noel Schneider, KDOT

**Credits:** 1.00 AICP/1.00 EMS Operations Credit

## Conference Sessions

### Kansas Safety Corridor Pilot Program: Update From the Halfway Point



*A/cove*

This session will provide an up-to-date overview of the Kansas Safety Corridor Pilot Program, highlighting how data-driven interventions are improving safety along high-risk highway segments. Attendees will learn about recent traffic speed trends and restraint usage within the corridor, cooperative law enforcement initiatives designed to reduce dangerous driving behaviors, and the deployment of new speed feedback signs aimed at encouraging driver compliance. The presentation will share early outcomes, lessons learned, and next steps as Kansas evaluates the effectiveness of this multi-agency safety effort.

**Speakers:** David Schwartz, KDOT; Gayle Donaldson, KDOT

**Moderator:** Chase Null, KDOT

**Credits:** 1.00 AICP CM

### An Overview of NCHRP 20-102(24): Infrastructure Modifications to Improve the Operational Conditions of Automated Vehicles



*McDowell/Tuttle*

The adoption of Automated Vehicle (AV) technologies has the potential to transform transportation by advancing safety, enhancing mobility, and improving climate resiliency. Yet their successful deployment depends on infrastructure that can support AV systems across a wide range of operating conditions known as the Operational Design Domain (ODD). This presentation will share early insights from the NCHRP 20-102(24) project, Infrastructure Modifications to Improve the Operational Conditions of Automated Vehicles. Attendees will be introduced to the project's AV Infrastructure Guidelines, which provide practical, actionable recommendations for infrastructure owner-operators (IOOs) preparing their networks for AV deployment. The guidance addresses critical focus areas including pavement markings, roadway surfaces, signage, signals, work zones, geometric design, policy, and digital infrastructure, helping IOOs make informed decisions today to support the transportation systems of tomorrow.

**Speakers:** Samantha Anderson and Douglas Gettman, Kimley-Horn

**Moderator:** Jim Hollingsworth, KDOT

**Credits:** 1.00 AICP CM

**11:30 a.m.**

Thank You Burns & McDonnell, Platinum Level Luncheon Partner

**Master of Ceremonies:** Gary Herman, KDOT

### Luncheon With Plenary Address

#### Purpose in Progress: Resilience That Restores and Saves Lives

*Grand Ballroom*

Behind every statistic is a story, and behind every story lies the opportunity to make a difference. In this powerful presentation, Melissa Wandall explores how resilience, purpose, and connection fuel the shared vision of Kansas' Drive to Zero plan. Through her own journey and years of advocacy, she reminds us that lasting change begins when we move beyond the data, lead with humanity, and unite through collaboration, believing that one action and a shared commitment can save a life.

**Speaker:** Melissa Wandall

**Credits:** 0.75 AICP CM

### People Saving People Transportation Safety Recognition Awards Presentation

**1:30 p.m.**

### Concurrent Session 2

#### How to Identify and Leverage Local Influencers



*McDowell/Tuttle*

Attendees will learn about practices to identify and cultivate local influencers to share behavioral safety messaging at the grassroots level such as at high school events, with businesses, and in communities. Methods to share messaging at low to zero cost will be discussed. This breakout session will also cover a statewide example of Kansas' safety messaging investment in NIL partnerships in sports marketing with Avery Johnson, Kansas State Quarterback, and Kansas' longtime partnership with Miss Kansas.

**Speakers:** Jordan Garcia, JNA Advertising; Gayle Donaldson, KDOT

**Moderator:** Maura Fitzgerald, KDOT

**Credits:** 1.00 AICP CM

## Conference Sessions

### Public Transportation: Safe Mobility for an Aging Population



*Alcove*

Recent research indicates that the death or injury rate on public transit is about one-tenth that of car travel. Beyond these statistics, safety is an important consideration when it comes to planning for and operating public transportation. Many safeguards are put in place for the safety of passengers as well as drivers. These efforts include physical protection barriers, bus stop site design elements, and safety equipment for emergency response and threat assessment training. Mobility Managers play a vital role in connecting the public with information about available transportation options and supporting individuals as they transition from driving to using public transit. Their guidance helps people feel confident and secure while maintaining independence and quality of life. In this session, attendees will learn how safeguards are applied to ensure safe and reliable transportation for Kansans who cannot or choose not to drive a personal vehicle.

**Speakers:** Rene Hart, KDOT; Trell Grinter, OCCK Inc.; Michael Wilson, Flint Hills Coordinated Transit District

**Moderator:** Max Wilcox, KDOT

**Credits:** 1.00 AICP CM

### 2025 Windstorm in Western Kansas Recap



*Flint Hills*

This presentation will provide a review of the conditions motorists and responders on Interstate 70 experienced during the 2025 windstorm in western Kansas. Learn information to aid in preparation and response to extreme weather conditions while traveling, including flooding, heat, wind, dust, tornado, and smoke.

**Speaker:** Capt. Stephen LaRow, Kansas Highway Patrol

**Moderator:** Amy Smith, KDOT

**Credits:** 1.00 AICP CM/1.0 EMS Operations Credit

### Electric Hybrid Vehicle Fire/Rescue Response Operations



*Kings ABC*

This presentation will introduce the audience to preparedness and response for handling incidents involving electric vehicles (EVs), hybrids, and

autonomous vehicles (AVs). Hear from NHTSA and a TIM community professional speaking on crash responses for ensuring safe operations at incident locations with EVs, hybrids, and AVs. The session will also highlight areas for future research needs that will help nationwide first responders combat these fast-growing technologies.

**Speakers:** Tony Thampan, NHTSA; Shivraj Patil, GFT

**Moderator:** Melissa McCoy, KDOT

**Credits:** 1.00 AICP CM

**2:30 p.m.**

**Refreshment Break** | *Mid-Foyer* | Thank You Wilson & Company, Gold Level Refreshment Break Partner

**3 p.m.**

### Concurrent Session 3

#### Using Drones in Crash Response and Post-Crash Care Medical Response



*Flint Hills*

This session will cover innovations in crash response and medical care delivery. Learn how emergency response uses drones in first responder programs.

**Speakers:** Brian Kassin, KDOT; Technical Trooper Clayton Tarpley, Kansas Highway Patrol

**Moderator:** Lori Haskett, KDOT

**Credits:** 1.00 AICP/1.00 EMS Trauma Credit

#### Designing Safer Intersections: Proven Solutions, Public Engagement, and Lessons From Missouri



*Kings ABC*

MoDOT experts will showcase real-world projects using innovative intersection designs, including R-Cuts, J-Turns, DDIs, and roundabouts, and share the safety outcomes and lessons learned from their implementation. This session connects these proven countermeasures to broader safety goals such as Drive to Zero and highlights practical strategies for educating and engaging the public on the value of lifesaving roadway designs.

**Speakers:** Katy Harlan, MoDOT; Kataryna Garlock, MoDOT

**Moderator:** Haley Dougherty, KDOT

**Credits:** 1.00 AICP CM

## Conference Sessions

### Advancing Traffic Safety Analysis With Replica's Driver Event Data



*Alcove*

This session will showcase how Replica is transforming traffic safety analysis through rich, data-based insights. Jake Herrman will introduce the platform's capabilities, including the use of driver event data, such as hard braking, speeding, and mobile phone use, to identify risk patterns and support data-driven decision-making. David Schwartz will then demonstrate real-world KDOT applications, highlighting how these analytics are being used to better understand roadways through a safety lens.

**Speakers:** David Schwartz, KDOT; Jake Herrman, Replica

**Moderator:** Maura Fitzgerald, KDOT

**Credits:** 1.00 AICP CM

### Taming Traffic: Diverse Speed Management Strategies for Safer Communities and A Case Study: Dodge City's SS4A Speed Assessment



*McDowell/Tuttle*

Dr. Howard Lubliner will share examples from several communities identifying speed as a traffic safety concern and developing strategies to address it. These examples will illustrate the different paths communities have taken to measure, contextualize, and prioritize travel speeds and to mitigate speed-related crashes. Approaches include systematic application of traffic calming strategies, targeted safety improvements geared at reducing speeding at acute locations, conducting systemwide speed limit reviews, and speed limit policy revisions. The presentation will highlight how one size does not fit all when it comes to speed management and how tailored strategies that reflect a community's culture, values, and transportation user experiences yield the greatest results. Slade Engstrom will complement this session by presenting the Dodge City Comprehensive Safety Action Plan with focus on its speed management methodology, including local web surveys and INRIX-identified areas.

**Speakers:** Howard Lubliner, Burns & McDonnell; Slade Engstrom, GFT

**Moderator:** Max Wilcox, KDOT

**Credits:** 1.00 AICP CM

**4 p.m.**

### Adjournment

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22

**7:30 a.m.**

**Registration** | *East Foyer*

**Continental Breakfast** | *Mid-Foyer/Grand Ballroom*

**Exhibits Open** | *South Foyer*

**8:30 a.m.**

### Concurrent Session 4

#### Three Regional Workshop Sessions



Attendees will reflect on and share their community or organizational practices in transportation safety areas such as stakeholder engagement, data, and planning. Resources in these areas will be briefly presented, followed by a networking opportunity.

**Northeast Region-District 1** | *Flint Hills*

**Facilitator:** Vanessa Spartan, AICP, KDOT

**Moderator:** Jim Hollingsworth, KDOT

**West Region-Districts 2, 3, 6** | *McDowell/Tuttle*

**Facilitator:** Haley Dougherty, KDOT

**Moderator:** Gary Herman, KDOT

**South Region-Districts 4, 5** | *Kings ABC*

**Facilitator:** Max Wilcox, KDOT

**Moderator:** David Schwartz, KDOT

**10 a.m.**

**Refreshment Break** | *Mid-Foyer* | Thank You WSP USA, Gold Level Refreshment Break Partner

**10:30 a.m.**

### Concurrent Session 5

#### Prioritizing Safety for Kids Walking, Biking, and Rolling to School



*Kings ABC*

This session will describe the huge strides the Kansas Safe Routes to School Program has made to date and provide updates on the funding, educational resources that are now available, and proven safety countermeasures that communities across the state are beginning to implement.

## Conference Sessions

**Speakers:** Jared Tremblay, Flint Hills Metropolitan Planning Organization; **Scott Harris**, Toole Design; **Jenny Kramer**, KDOT

**Moderator:** Gayle Donaldson, KDOT

**Credits: 1.00 AICP Credit**

### The Public Trust Toolkit: Winning Support for Safety Decisions



*Alcove*

Effective transportation safety, from road design to critical incident response, depends on public cooperation and trust. This presentation offers officials, law enforcement, educators, and first responders a practical, two-part media strategy to improve public perception and support for their work.

1. Getting Ahead (Proactive): Strategies for framing long-term projects, laws, and educational campaigns to secure public buy-in and reduce resistance to necessary changes
2. Handling the Crisis (Reactive): Protocols for rapid, transparent communication during immediate safety events, such as traffic incidents or critical closures, to manage public frustration and reinforce institutional competence

By adopting these communication methods, safety stakeholders can proactively shape the public narrative, build essential community trust, and ensure their vital dedication to safety is understood and supported.

**Speakers:** Drew Mitrison, Burns & McDonnell; **Technical Trooper Jodi Clary**, Kansas Highway Patrol

**Moderator:** Amy Smith, KDOT

**Credits: 1.00 AICP CM/1.00 EMS Operations Credit**

### CMV Safety and How You Can Help



*Flint Hills*

This session will explore safe traveling in and around commercial motor vehicles (CMVs). In addition to passenger vehicle drivers being aware of challenges CMV drivers face daily including stopping distances and sightline issues, Capt. LaRow will address inspection, load enforcements, and safety audits, including tire pressure, brake testing, and more. Learn about the KHP high-tech weigh station and license plate recognition (LPR) as it pertains to commercial driver licenses and leveraging technology.

**Speaker:** Capt. Stephen LaRow, Kansas Highway Patrol

**Moderator:** Jim Hollingsworth, KDOT

**Credits: 1.00 AICP CM**

### Institutionalizing the Safe System Approach



*McDowell/Tuttle*

The Safe System Approach (SSA) is widely recognized for its potential to reduce roadway fatalities and serious injuries, but U.S. transportation agencies have not fully institutionalized its principles within planning and programming. A recently developed toolkit features actionable strategies and real-world examples to help agencies build readiness and integrate SSA across all aspects of their work programs. This session will be for practitioners who are ready to take the next step in safety, sharing ideas for bolder safety practices and discussing difficult barriers to be broken down and methods to make “every dollar a safety dollar” and safety the “easy and obvious choice” for all stakeholders and system users.

**Speaker:** Nicole Waldheim, Fehr & Peers

**Moderator:** Max Wilcox, KDOT

**Credits: 1.00 AICP CM**

**11:30**

**Master of Ceremonies:** Jennifer Warren, KDOT

### Luncheon With Plenary Address

#### #NoMoreEmptySeats — It Made a Difference For That One

*Grand Ballroom*

The #NoMoreEmptySeats presentation delivers a powerful and deeply personal message about how one decision, good or bad, can change countless lives. Bill DeMott shares the story of his daughter, Keri Anne, who was killed by a repeat DUI offender in 2015, and how his family transformed tragedy into purpose through The Keri Anne DeMott Foundation. Designed specifically with law enforcement and public safety professionals in mind, this presentation reinforces the impact that officers have not only through enforcement but also through education, visibility, and daily interactions within their communities. Bill addresses decision-making, accountability, and officer influence from a human perspective, reminding us that every contact, every

stop, and every moment of intervention carries the potential to save a life. Through powerful storytelling, images, and statistics, Bill challenges audiences to look beyond numbers and case files and reconnect with why they wear the badge in the first place. The goal is not only to prevent impaired, distracted, and reckless driving but also to restore purpose, unity, and resolve across those on the front lines.

**Speaker: Bill DeMott**

**Credits: 0.75 AICP Credit**

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### **Hero Transportation Safety Recognition Awards Presentation**

*Grand Ballroom*

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#### **Prize Drawing (must be present to win)**

##### **Rules of participation for prize drawing:**

- To be eligible for the prizes, you must be registered for both days of the conference.
- If you are registered for both days, you are automatically entered in the drawing.
- The prize drawing will be held after the Hero Transportation Safety Recognition Awards presentation on Wednesday in the Grand Ballroom.
- You must be present when names are read.
- You will need to claim your prize immediately. If you are not able to do so, another name will be drawn for the prize.

**2 p.m.**

#### **Adjournment**

### GENERAL INFORMATION ON ATTENDANCE CREDIT:

The Kansas Transportation Safety Conference offers up to a total of 9.5 contact hours of instruction. The preconference workshops offer a total of 7 contact hours of instruction. Generally, the amount of credit awarded is based on attendance and if an employer will recognize conference attendance for credit. If you need a certificate of attendance for your employer/HR department, see: **Certificates of Attendance from Jayhawk Hospitality Instructions**. Note to Kansas Department of Transportation employees: KDOT's HR Department will use a list of verified conference attendance for documenting eligible credit in the Learning Management System.

### PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION CREDIT:

Professionals working in Emergency Medical Services and Transportation Planning will find several topics qualify for CEUs or CMs unique to their professions through these organizations: Partners are Techs EMS, Program Provider #9307, as approved by the Kansas Board of Emergency Medical Services and the Kansas Chapter of the American Planning Association (CM Provider for the American Institute of Certified Planners).

- The Transportation Planning adheres to the accrediting by the AICP and refer to their credits as continuing maintenance units or CM. See: **Login to AICP CM Credits Instructions**.
- The EMS folks are looking for credits under the Kansas Board of Emergency Medical Services and refer to their credits as continuing education credits.
- Conference attendees will find AICP and/or EMS credit assigned to qualifying sessions listed at the end of the session descriptions in this program, on the conference website, and in the conference app (Learn@KU).

### LOGIN TO AICP CM CREDITS INSTRUCTIONS:

Access [planning.org/cm/search/providers](https://planning.org/cm/search/providers) to "Search by Provider" or scroll down to "APA Kansas Chapter" to find the offering from this conference. Then choose the sessions you attended, fill out the KS APA Survey (link in the session description), and log your CM credits. For general information on logging AICP CM credits: [planning.org/cm](https://planning.org/cm).

### CERTIFICATES OF ATTENDANCE FROM JAYHAWK HOSPITALITY INSTRUCTIONS:

If you need a certificate of attendance, please email [conferences@ku.edu](mailto:conferences@ku.edu).



# Conference Schedule

## TUESDAY, APRIL 21

7:30 a.m.	<b>Registration</b>   <i>East Foyer</i> <b>Continental Breakfast</b>   <i>Mid-Foyer/Grand Ballroom</i>			
8:30 a.m.	<b>Welcome</b>   <i>Grand Ballroom</i>   Vanessa Spartan, Chief of Transportation, KDOT <b>Opening Remarks</b>   Calvin Reed, Susan DeCourcy, Norbert Muñoz, Michael Christopher			
9:15 a.m.	<b>Opening Keynote Address</b>   <i>Grand Ballroom</i> <b>What Else Is Possible</b>   Devin Henderson			
10 a.m.	<b>Refreshment Break</b>   <i>Mid-Foyer</i>   Thank You HDR Engineering Inc. for the Refreshments!			
10:30 a.m.	<b>Concurrent Session 1</b>			
	<i>Flint Hills</i> <b>Driving Change: The Work Zone Safe Initiative</b> Michael White, Kevin Shelton, Haley Dougherty 	<i>Kings ABC</i> <b>Community First Aid and Crash Response</b> Bill Sullivan, Sheriff John Merchant, Kassy DeWitt 	<i>Alcove</i> <b>Kansas Safety Corridor Pilot Program: Update From the Halfway Point</b> David Schwartz, Gayle Donaldson   	<i>McDowell/Tuttle</i> <b>An Overview of NCHRP 20-102(24): Infrastructure Modifications to Improve the Operational Conditions of Automated Vehicles</b> Samantha Anderson, Douglas Gettman  
11:30 a.m.	<b>Luncheon With Plenary Address</b>   <i>Grand Ballroom</i> Thank You Burns & McDonnell for Lunch! <b>Purpose in Progress: Resilience That Restores and Saves Lives</b>   Melissa Wandall <b>People Saving People Transportation Safety Recognition Awards Presentation</b>			
1:30 p.m.	<b>Concurrent Session 2</b>			
	<i>McDowell/Tuttle</i> <b>How to Identify and Leverage Local Influencers</b> Jordan Garcia, Gayle Donaldson 	<i>Alcove</i> <b>Public Transportation: Safe Mobility for an Aging Population</b> Rene Hart, Trel Grinter, Michael Wilson  	<i>Flint Hills</i> <b>2025 Windstorm in Western Kansas Recap</b> Capt. Stephen LaRow 	<i>Kings ABC</i> <b>Electric Hybrid Vehicle Fire/Rescue Response Operations</b> Tony Thampan, Shivraj Patil  
2:30 p.m.	<b>Refreshment Break</b>   <i>Mid-Foyer</i>   Thank You Wilson & Company for the Refreshments!			
3 p.m.	<b>Concurrent Session 3</b>			
	<i>Flint Hills</i> <b>Using Drones in Crash Response and Post-Crash Care Medical Response</b> Brian Kassin, Technical Trooper Clayton Tarpley 	<i>Kings ABC</i> <b>Designing Safer Intersections: Proven Solutions, Public Engagement, and Lessons From Missouri</b> Katy Harlan, Kataryna Garlock 	<i>Alcove</i> <b>Advancing Traffic Safety Analysis With Replica's Driver Event Data</b> David Schwartz, Jake Herrman 	<i>McDowell/Tuttle</i> <b>Taming Traffic: Diverse Speed Management Strategies for Safer Communities and A Case Study: Dodge City's SS4A Speed Assessment</b> Howard Lubliner, Slade Engstrom 

Exhibits Open | South Foyer

7:30 a.m.	Exhibits Open   South Foyer	<b>Registration</b>   <i>East Foyer</i>			
		<b>Continental Breakfast</b>   <i>Mid-Foyer/Grand Ballroom</i>			
8:30 a.m.		<b>Concurrent Session 4</b>			
		<i>Kings ABC</i>	<i>Flint Hills</i>	<i>McDowell/Tuttle</i>	
		<b>South Region-Districts 4, 5</b> Facilitator: Max Wilcox	<b>Northeast Region-District 1</b> Facilitator: Vanessa Spartan	<b>West Region-Districts 2, 3, 6</b> Facilitator: Haley Dougherty	
10 a.m.		<b>Refreshment Break</b>   <i>Mid-Foyer</i>   Thank You WSP USA for the Refreshments!			
10:30 a.m.	<b>Concurrent Session 5</b>				
	<i>Kings ABC</i>	<i>Alcove</i>	<i>Flint Hills</i>	<i>McDowell/Tuttle</i>	
	<b>Prioritizing Safety for Kids Walking, Biking, and Rolling to School</b> Jared Tremblay, Scott Harris, Jenny Kramer	<b>The Public Trust Toolkit: Winning Support for Safety Decisions</b> Drew Mitrisin, Technical Trooper Jodi Clary	<b>CMV Safety and How You Can Help</b> Capt. Stephen LaRow	<b>Institutionalizing the Safe System Approach</b> Nicole Waldheim	
11:30 a.m.	<b>Luncheon With Plenary Address</b>   <i>Grand Ballroom</i>				
	<b>#NoMoreEmptySeats — It Made a Difference For That One</b>   Bill DeMott				
	<b>Hero Transportation Safety Recognition Awards Presentation</b>				
	<b>Prize Drawing</b> (must be present to win)				
2 p.m.	<b>Adjournment</b>				

### SESSION ICONS

	Safer People		Safer Speeds
	Safer Roads		Post-Crash Care
	Safer Vehicles		

### 2026 People Saving People Recipients

**The People Saving People Award highlights the efforts and achievements of a person or organization that has a positive effect on transportation safety in Kansas. To be eligible, an individual or organization must have successfully resolved a transportation safety issue or situation within their organization or community.**

#### Shirley McDonald

*Nominated by Kim Stich, Kansas Department of Transportation*

On June 1, 2005, KDOT employee Marvin “Scotty” McDonald III was killed in a work zone crash on U.S. 75 near NW 35th Street in Topeka while performing maintenance duties. McDonald, an Equipment Operator at the Gage Area Office, was picking up litter when the crash occurred.

His family was devastated and heartbroken by the loss. His coworkers were shocked by his sudden loss as well as knowing this could also happen to them.

Just six months later, his parents, Shirley and Marvin, were invited to an ATSSA event in Kansas City, Missouri, which paid tribute to those killed in work zone crashes.

When asked if she would like to speak, Shirley said yes without hesitation.

“I remember when the phone call came about Scotty — it changed our lives forever,” Shirley said. “It’s not something that will ever change back, and that’s a hard thing to live with.”

Shirley couldn’t change the past, but she could impact the future. The following spring, she helped support the expanded Move Over Law, SB 411, which included vehicles engaged in highway construction or maintenance operations (the original law was only for emergency vehicles). Former Gov. Kathleen Sebelius signed it on April 18, 2006. The Move Over Law has been expanded in years since, a huge benefit to those who work along highways.

Shirley then spoke April 7, 2008, at KDOT’s first event highlighting National Work Zone Awareness Week at the state Capitol. Two-hundred-and-seventy-nine orange cones representing the people killed in work zone crashes since 1990 and Kansas highway workers killed since 1950 were placed in the Capitol. Several of the 100-plus attendees were Scotty’s friends and KDOT employees.

Through the years, Shirley continued to support work zone safety efforts. A few examples include:

- Attending and/or speaking at every KDOT National Work Zone Awareness Week event.
- Sharing her story in a work zone video titled, “Behind the Vest,” where highway workers, law enforcement, and Shirley spoke about the dangers in work zones.
- Being featured in a statewide Public Service Announcement that aired each April and May from 2019 to 2023.
- Writing numerous blogs for KDOT’s National Work Zone Awareness Week and Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day blog safety series (the last was published in 2025 as one of the most impactful work zone safety blogs in the past 14 years).

Shirley’s advocacy to raise work zone safety awareness has been a mainstay for KDOT in the last 20 years. We will never know how many people are alive today because of her efforts, or how many lives will be saved in the future. But we know her unwavering support has made an incredible difference.

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#### Amanda Pfannenstiel

*Nominated by Christine Ladner, Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley*

Ms. Pfannenstiel is the Lead Breath Alcohol Specialist in the Breath Alcohol Program at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE). She is a scientist who has worked for KDHE for 19 years. I met Ms. Pfannenstiel in 2025 while prosecuting a DUI from Fort Riley, KS. I am a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney tasked with prosecuting offenses committed by civilians on Fort Riley and traffic offenses committed by both civilians and military personnel.

I recently prosecuted a defendant who was charged with DUI and transporting an open container. The defense retained a private forensic toxicology consultant to challenge the accuracy of the Breath Alcohol Concentration (BAC) results obtained by Fort Riley law enforcement on the Intoxilyzer 9000, the breath testing device used in Kansas. Some of my prosecutor colleagues recommended I reach out to Ms. Pfannenstiel at KDHE for a consult and to inquire whether she might be a possible rebuttal witness to the defense expert.

When I contacted Ms. Pfannenstiel, she was more than helpful to the task at hand, producing a quality expert rebuttal report, and so much more. She is an extraordinary public servant. She is a critical

## Transportation Safety Recognition Awards

professional and ally to law enforcement and prosecutors throughout Kansas. She made herself available to me for trial prep and consultation. She educated me on breath alcohol and the Intoxilyzer overall. I learned she has made herself available to prosecutors in cases all over Kansas for consultation and testimony. I learned she and another colleague personally travel to every law enforcement agency in the state annually to certify and test these devices, which are crucial to DUI investigations and successful prosecutions. There are 364 law enforcement agencies in Kansas that use the Intoxilyzer 9000. She and her team perform the annual site inspections at each agency, train Intoxilyzer operators on proper breath testing protocols, and are responsible for evaluating and maintaining Monthly Certified Standard Reports. Every agency must complete those monthly reports (for the device and for each officer who is certified to use it) and submit them to KDHE. Ms. Pfannenstiel is the professional who oversees this enormously important task.

The public has no idea of the depth of what she does and the windshield time it takes to do it. In addition to all the certification tasks, she trains. She is frequently on the road training with law enforcement on breath alcohol and the Intoxilyzer. Ms. Pfannenstiel testified in my case. She was articulate, relatable, to the point, knowledgeable, and persuasive. The judge made findings that she was a very credible witness. She knows what she is talking about. She is in a unique role as a scientist who ultimately promotes transportation safety because she protects the integrity and accuracy of breath alcohol results in DUIs. Her work is unknown, unsung, but so important to transportation safety in Kansas. I nominate Ms. Pfannenstiel, not for what she accomplished in one DUI case, but the entire scope of her work in traffic safety and how very well she deserves it.

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### **Sgt. David Rolf**

*Nominated by Capt. Zach Roberts, Gardner Police Department*

For nearly three decades, Sgt. David Rolf has exemplified what it means to serve with dedication, consistency, and an unwavering commitment to public safety. In September 2025, Sgt. Rolf reached an extraordinary milestone, his thousandth DUI arrest. This achievement, while quantifiable, represents far more than a number. It symbolizes a career devoted to protecting lives, preventing tragedy, and setting a standard of excellence for impaired driving enforcement across the state of Kansas.

Sgt. Rolf's career with the Gardner Police Department began 27 years ago. From his earliest days on patrol, he demonstrated a passion for traffic safety and a determination to keep impaired drivers off the road. He has evolved from a proactive officer into a respected leader and mentor, now serving as the patrol supervisor for the department's midnight-shift crew. Despite the administrative and supervisory responsibilities that come with this position, he continues to lead by example, remaining an active, hands-on enforcer of DUI laws and a teacher of the next generation of officers.

He has approached impaired-driving enforcement as a life-saving mission. Every traffic stop, every arrest, and every court case represents a potential life spared from the consequences of a preventable tragedy. While it is impossible to know precisely how many lives he has saved through his 1,000 DUI arrests, the impact is undeniable. Each impaired driver removed from the roadway reduces the risk of innocent motorists, families, and children traveling the same streets. His dedication has directly contributed to making Gardner and surrounding communities safer places to live, work, and travel.

Sgt. Rolf's influence reaches statewide as an instructor and mentor. He is certified as a Standardized Field Sobriety Test (SFST) Instructor, Intoxilyzer Instructor, Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) Instructor, and Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) certified officer. Sgt. Rolf provides in-service training to law enforcement agencies and serves as an instructor at police academies educating new recruits on the critical role of DUI enforcement in public safety. He is a role model and mentor reminding new and seasoned officers that impaired driving enforcement is not just about making arrests but about saving lives. He rides with younger officers, reviews their reports, and shares insights. Sgt. Rolf is one of the most active members of his shift, conducting traffic stops and leading from the front, often the first to step up during impaired-driving saturation patrols or holiday enforcement campaigns.

Sgt. Rolf promotes a culture of safety and professionalism. His involvement in EVOC instruction underscores his dedication to officer safety behind the wheel, ensuring that those enforcing traffic laws also operate safely themselves. He has shaped a generation of officers who understand the life-or-death significance of what they do. Reaching 1,000 DUI arrests is a rare and remarkable achievement few officers achieve. It reflects a career of vigilance, skill, and integrity.

## Transportation Safety Recognition Awards

Yet, Sgt. Rollf would be the first to downplay his role. There is no doubt, however, his focus is on the mission: saving lives. His work embodies the spirit of service and sacrifice that defines the best of law enforcement.

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### Michael Vermillion

*Nominated by Chad Flesher, Mount Hope Police Department*

Michael Vermillion has operated his Motorcycle Rider Education training school for several years. He has locations in Wichita, El Dorado (in conjunction with Butler County Community College), and Manhattan/Junction City (in conjunction with Cloud County Community College). Michael and his cadre of experienced motorcycle Rider Coaches teach both new and returning riders the basic fundamentals of how to ride motorcycles safely. Using the curriculum developed by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation, the Rider Coaches spend several hours over a weekend teaching riders both in a classroom setting and outside with practical exercises. The Rider Coaches' main focus is the safety of the new rider on Kansas streets and highways. Their goal is to reduce the number of motorcycle fatalities in the state of Kansas.

Michael believes in this goal so much that when other motorcycle safety programs were short on Coaches, he graciously loaned his out to them. Michael and Motorcycle Rider Education also offer additional motorcycle safety programs in addition to the basic course. They also offer programs for three-wheeled motorcycles, a bike bonding course, and experienced rider and advanced rider courses. These additional courses are designed to keep even seasoned riders safe on their motorcycles.

On some days Michael can be found out on the range providing private lessons to riders. He is also certified as a Rider Coach Instructor and responsible for training many Rider Coaches in the state of Kansas. In 2022, Michael invited me to join his company as a Rider Coach. I had been employed as a Kansas Law Enforcement Officer for about 28 years. One of my first motorcycle crashes where I worked as a rookie Deputy in Saline County involved one of my friends from high school. In 1989 we got our motorcycle endorsement together in high school. Luckily my friend had minor injuries, but I had to make that phone call to his mother. Those phone calls are never pleasant to make, and I always want to reduce them. Since then, I had been looking for ways to help reduce motorcycle fatalities in Kansas. Michael provided me with that opportunity.

My fellow Rider Coaches are some of the best in Kansas. This is due to Michael Vermillion's focus on quality instruction. Michael has been featured on several news stations in the Wichita area in regard to motorcycle safety. I feel that the number of fatal motorcycle crashes in Kansas would be much higher if we didn't have these safety courses available. The 2025 numbers are not finalized yet, but in 2024, between all their locations, Michael and his staff provided quality motorcycle safety instruction to over 850 riders.

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### ThinkFirst of Greater Kansas City VIP Speakers & Moderators

*Nominated by Rose Simone, ThinkFirst of Greater Kansas City*

Since 1987, ThinkFirst of Greater Kansas City has been a cornerstone of safety education, serving six counties across Kansas and Missouri. Sponsored by The Research Foundation, we have a mission to prevent traffic-related injuries and fatalities through evidence-based programming and powerful personal testimony. This mission is more critical than ever; according to Kansas crash data, 2025 saw 1,379 crashes involving teen drivers in Kansas, with over 16% resulting in fatalities.

Our impact is driven by our Voices for Injury Prevention (VIP) speakers — individuals who have sustained permanent brain or spinal cord injuries. By sharing the raw reality of their crashes and the lifelong effects, they provide a perspective that traditional education cannot match. Aligned with the U.S. DOT's Safe System Approach, ThinkFirst focuses on two primary initiatives:

#### **School-Based Assembly Program**

Offered free of charge through the support of the Kansas Department of Transportation, this program reached nearly 16,000 Greater Kansas City area students during the 2024-25 school year. We provide age-appropriate education for grades K-12, covering everything from helmet safety and e-scooters to the dangers of distracted and impaired driving. As one educator noted, these memorable presentations change lives by helping students "ThinkFirst" for years to come.

#### **Young Traffic Offenders Program (YTOP)**

Created in 1997, YTOP is a court-ordered, four-hour intensive for high-risk drivers aged 15-24. Hosted at a local trauma center, the program walks attendees through the medical aftermath of a crash — from the ER and ICU to long-term rehabilitation. In 2025, 897 young drivers completed the program. One attendee reflected: "I first regretted my ticket because of the cost; after this class, I regret it

because I learned how it can change someone's life."

Being recognized with this award is a profound honor for our dedicated presenters and staff. It validates our commitment to protecting vulnerable road users and ensures that the message of safety continues to resonate throughout Greater Kansas City.

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## 2026 Hero Award Recipients

**The Hero Award recognizes an individual who risked his or her own life for someone else when they encountered a crash, or while trying to prevent the likelihood of a crash.**

### **Motorist Assist Technician Lyle DeWalt**

*Nominated by Capt. Jimmie Atkinson, Kansas Highway Patrol*

Kansas Highway Patrol Motorist Assist Technician (MAT) Lyle DeWalt is stationed in the Wichita Metropolitan area, and during 2025, MAT DeWalt consistently provided outstanding service to motorists while operating in some of the most challenging roadside environments. He responded to numerous incidents involving disabled vehicles, traffic hazards, and stranded motorists, often under conditions of heavy traffic, severe weather, and elevated risk. In every circumstance, MAT DeWalt demonstrated a calm, courteous, and safety-focused approach that ensured motorist well-being and promoted efficient traffic flow.

An example of his work occurred on April 21, 2025, while MAT DeWalt was patrolling southbound on Interstate 235, just north of Gold Street. He observed a northbound vehicle strike several cones within a construction zone and veer into the center median, headed in his direction. Recognizing the imminent danger to other motorists, MAT DeWalt immediately activated his emergency lights to warn approaching traffic. The vehicle then crossed into the southbound lanes, spun out of control, and collided head-on with MAT DeWalt's motorist assist truck. Despite sustaining injuries in the collision, MAT DeWalt immediately contacted KHP Central Communications and began securing the crash scene. He moved witnesses off the high-speed roadway to safer locations and then triaged the occupants of the involved vehicle, providing necessary medical assistance until law enforcement and emergency medical services arrived. MAT DeWalt was later transported to a local hospital and

released with minor injuries. His quick thinking and decisive actions likely prevented further injuries and significantly reduced the risk to other motorists.

MAT DeWalt is widely respected for his strong situational awareness and sound judgment. His proactive approach to traffic incidents has helped reduce secondary crashes, minimize congestion, and improve overall roadway safety. Whether providing traffic control, assisting motorists with vehicle issues, or coordinating with law enforcement and emergency responders, MAT DeWalt consistently demonstrates reliability, teamwork, and professionalism. He is known for his exceptional customer service. He treats every motorist with respect, patience, and compassion, often providing reassurance during stressful and frightening situations. Numerous motorists and partner agencies have expressed appreciation for his professionalism, demeanor, and willingness to help.

MAT DeWalt also serves as a positive representative for the Motorist Assist Program and the Kansas Highway Patrol. He is a trainer for new Motorist Assist Technicians and routinely volunteers his time for public outreach and education. In 2025, he participated in events such as the Haysville Parents as Teachers program and the Douglass High School Safety Fair, where he provided important traffic safety information to young children and families.

He demonstrates creativity and a strong commitment to safety. Earlier this year, he repurposed damaged wooden KDOT signposts to create sacrificial blocks and wooden wheel chocks for Motorist Assist Vehicles. These tools are now used by MAVs and other first responders to stabilize vehicles during roadside incidents, helping prevent unintended movement and enhancing overall safety on scene. MAT DeWalt's work ethic, positive attitude, and dedication to excellence set a strong example for his peers and contribute significantly to the Motorist Assist Program's strong reputation statewide.

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### **Patrol Officer Travis Morris**

*Nominated by Lieut. Warren M. Neff, Mission Police Department*

On July 17, 2025, the Kansas City metropolitan area experienced heavy, record-breaking rainfall that resulted in significant flooding through the metro area. Some locations received nearly 10 inches of rain. As a result, Interstate 35 flooded, forcing the closure of both northbound and southbound lanes between 18th Street and Highway 635.

## Transportation Safety Recognition Awards

Multiple vehicles became stranded between those exits due to rising water.

One of those vehicles, a small red passenger car, was stranded in the southbound lanes just north of the Lamar Avenue bridge. At the time, the water level had risen to the top of the vehicle's tires, and the current was moving steadily. Despite these hazardous conditions, Officer Morris advised that he would attempt to check on stranded vehicles to ensure there were no occupants in need of assistance.

As he made his way toward the red vehicle, Officer Morris entered chest-deep water and carefully waded through the moving current. Upon reaching the car, he discovered it was occupied by a female driver who expressed concern for her safety and a desire to exit the vehicle. Officer Morris helped her open the driver's side door, assisted her in stepping out, and physically supported her as he guided her safely through the floodwater and onto the Lamar Avenue exit ramp.

Officer Morris' actions reflect an unselfish commitment to public service. He placed the safety and well-being of a stranded motorist above his own personal comfort and risk, demonstrating the core values of courage, duty, and compassion. His conduct exemplifies what it means to perform unselfishly in advancing the cause of law enforcement.

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### Technical Trooper Ryan Wolting

*Nominated by Capt. Dax Lewis, Kansas Highway Patrol*

On February 16, 2025, Kansas Highway Patrol Technical Trooper Ryan Wolting stopped an SUV for no visible license plate on Interstate 70 in Ellsworth County. There were two adult male occupants who were in their 60s in the front seats. There was also a rear seat passenger, but Technical Trooper Wolting was unable to distinguish anything about that person at this point. He did detect the odor of marijuana coming from inside the vehicle and observed that the occupants were nervous. The adult males gave cross-country travel plans that were very suspicious due to many abnormal details.

Technical Trooper Wolting returned to his vehicle to check the driver's license and other information on the driver. The driver had a criminal history of

homicide, drugs, and weapons violations. Technical Trooper Wolting went back and spoke to the front-seat passenger and was able to identify the passenger. Back in his patrol car, Technical Trooper Wolting was notified that the passenger was wanted on a nationwide arrest warrant for kidnapping from Indiana. The computer entry of the warrant also stated that this suspect may be in the company of the child, who was a 6-year-old female.

After confirming the warrant, Technical Trooper Wolting and other arriving law enforcement officers executed a high-risk traffic stop, calling out both adult suspects and arresting them at gunpoint. Technical Trooper Wolting secured his rifle and approached the vehicle to make contact with the young female child in the rear seat. He brought the child back to his car in a calm, nonthreatening manner and asked who she was. The child was scared and crying and initially lied about her name and date of birth. Ultimately, she stated she was the missing child and that she had been told not to tell the police her correct name and date of birth if they were ever approached or questioned.

The males were booked into jail and the kidnapped girl taken into protective custody.

Technical Trooper Wolting is a 24-year veteran with the Kansas Highway Patrol. He is currently assigned to our criminal interdiction unit and has been for over a decade. His keen abilities to "look beyond the ticket" is the reason this girl was rescued after approximately 30 days of being with the male who took her. We are proud of Technical Trooper Wolting's vigilance and efforts to protect society's most vulnerable.

## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2026 PARTNERS

### PLATINUM LEVEL PARTNER | \$1500

**Burns & McDonnell**  
Tuesday Lunch



### GOLD LEVEL PARTNERS | \$1000

**HDR Engineering Inc.**  
Tuesday Morning  
Refreshment Break



**Wilson & Company**  
Tuesday Afternoon  
Refreshment Break



**WSP USA**  
Wednesday Morning  
Refreshment Break



### BLUE LEVEL PARTNER | \$750

**HNTB**  
Law Enforcement Preconference Lunch



### SILVER LEVEL PARTNERS | \$500

**Alfred Benesch & Company**  
Meals

**Kimley-Horn**  
Meals

### BRONZE LEVEL PARTNERS (EXHIBITORS)

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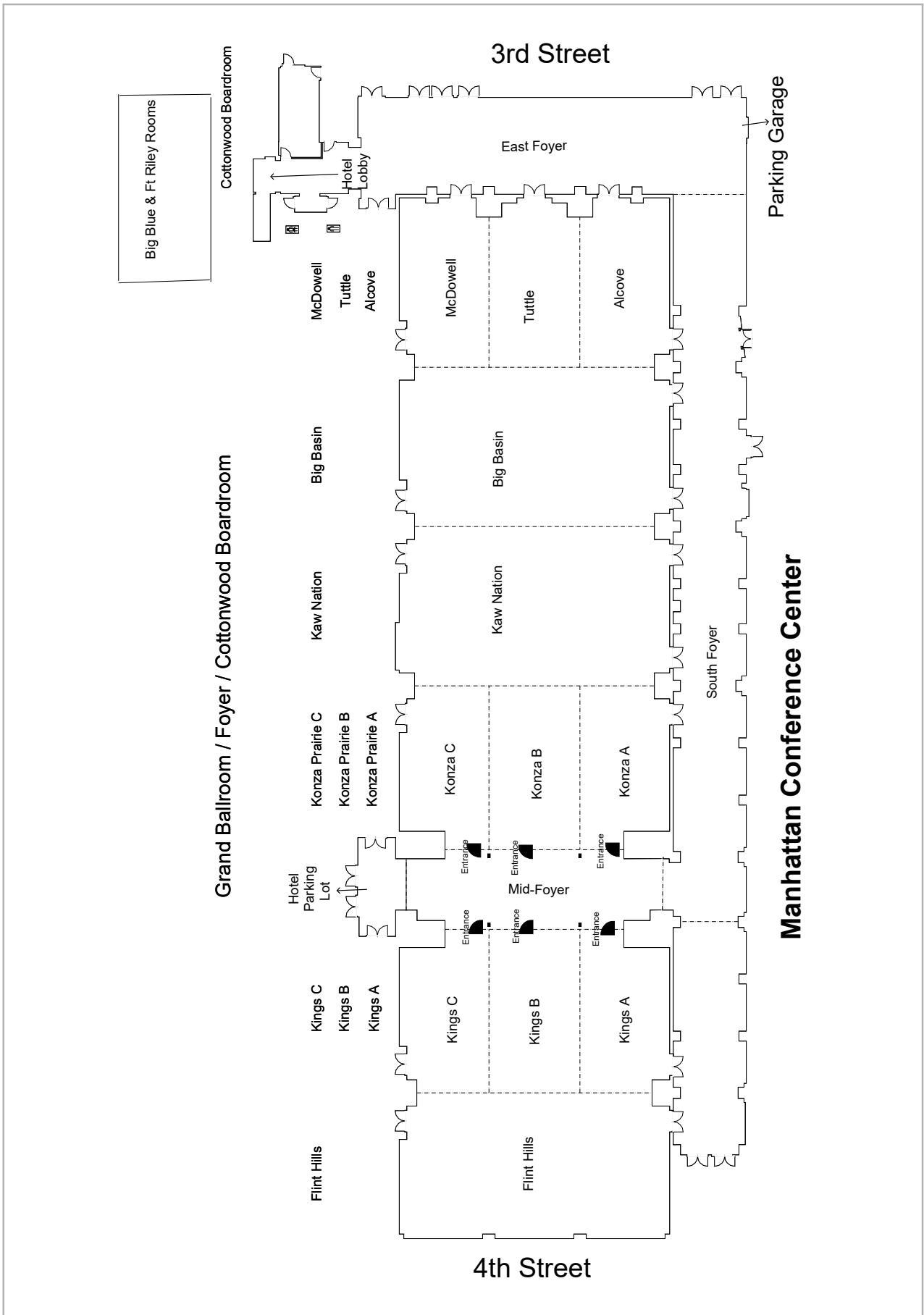
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## Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office (KTSRO)

KTSRO is a program of KDOT. Its mission is to provide public information and education to protect roadway users from avoidable injury or death on Kansas roadways. 800-416-2522



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