



**Leanne Kehres Retires as Executive Director of Southeast KANSASWORKS, Inc.;
Katie Givens Appointed as New Executive Director**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Emporia, KS – Southeast **KANSASWORKS**, Inc. announces the retirement of Leanne Kehres, who has served as the Executive Director since March 3, 2014. Leanne’s decade of leadership has greatly influenced workforce development in Southeast Kansas, positioning the organization as a key resource for job seekers and employers. Her dedication to the region includes significant contributions on numerous boards and committees, leaving a lasting impact on the community and the organization.

Ron Marrone, Chairman of the Board for Southeast **KANSASWORKS** has congratulated Leanne on her retirement, stating, “It has been both a pleasure and an honor to work alongside Leanne for so many years. I deeply appreciate her leadership, mentorship, and encouragement in serving our board, staff, and the workforce of Kansas.”

Katie Givens, currently the Assistant Executive Director, will succeed Leanne as the new Executive Director. Katie shared her admiration for her predecessor, saying, “I am deeply grateful for the leadership and dedication of our outgoing Executive Director, Leanne. Her unwavering commitment has laid a strong foundation for our organization’s success. As I step into this role, I am energized to build upon this legacy, collaborate with our exceptional team, and propel our mission forward, honoring our rich history while embracing the opportunities of tomorrow.”

Katie’s vision for the future includes a forward-thinking approach that integrates technology, community partnerships, and employer-driven training. “As we shape the

future of the Workforce System in rural Kansas, success will come from a powerful combination of emerging technology, local partnerships, and employer-driven training. Together, these elements will open sustainable pathways to employment, grow our communities, and solidify a resilient, skilled workforce for the years to come,” she added.

Southeast **KANSASWORKS**, Inc. looks forward to Katie’s leadership in continuing its mission to build a strong workforce system that supports job seekers and employers across Southeast Kansas. Katie’s experience and commitment will help strengthen partnerships and expand services to meet the needs of the community.

The transition began on January 1, 2025. Reflecting on Katie’s appointment, Leanne Kehres shared, “Katie’s extensive experience in workforce development, particularly within the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) framework, positions her uniquely to drive impactful change. Her leadership skills, including her ability to manage complex initiatives and collaborate effectively with diverse stakeholders, makes her an invaluable asset to the organization. We are excited for the future under her guidance, and I wish her much success in her journey.”

Marrone shared, “we truly appreciate Katie’s hard work, dedication, and professionalism during her time with **KANSASWORKS**. Our board is excited to support her as she transitions into this important position.”

For more information, please contact: Katie Givens, kgivens@sekworks.org or 316-295-0923.

