



2016 Human Service Summit Measured Progress and Looked to the Future



More than 120 professionals from local nonprofit organizations, city and county governments, foundations, and school districts joined together on June 14 to discuss the progress made from our 2015 Call to Action regarding **Reducing Poverty and Creating Opportunity** and UCS' new initiative focused on expanding income and employability for low-income households in Johnson County. Gordon Docking from KidsTLC, Lougene Marsh from Johnson County

Department of Health and Environment, and Tim Gay from YOUTHRIVE shared their organizations' strides in responding to the 2015 Call to Action. Mid-America Regional Council's Frank Lenk provided data about the low-income population and employment trends in our community. Project Chair, Justin Nichols of Lathrop & Gage, and work team members, Lee Jost of Christ the Servant Church and Trent Howerton of Workforce Partnership, shared early information on UCS' new Employment Planning Project. Following the presentations, Summit attendees participated in a roundtable discussion on **Expanding Income and Employability**. Click [here](#) for 2016 Summit presentation materials.

UCS Releases New Reports Related to 2015 Call to Action

Today UCS is releasing three new reports from our 2015 Call to Action around the [Framework for Reducing Poverty and Creating Opportunity](#). UCS' [From Foster Care to Independence](#) report aligns with our Call to Action around safety net supports. This report highlights the challenges faced by Johnson County's youth who age out of the foster care system without adequate support to live independently. The report includes a system assessment, review of best practices and model programs, and recommendations for stakeholders. Our ["Good Jobs" Workshop](#) report reviews the workshops UCS hosted for nonprofit organizations. The series of three sessions provided tools and strategies for implementation of a "good jobs" framework. Finally, the [Talk, Read, Play](#) Campaign report highlights efforts to work with the community to be proactive in promoting quality early learning environments for Johnson County children.



State Budget Cuts Continue to Impact Our Most Vulnerable Citizens

UCS has maintained a standing position in our public policy platform around supporting essential human service programs for the state's most vulnerable residents. UCS commends Johnson County officials for their work on the proposed 2017 budget and efforts to fill some of the budget gaps where the state has made cuts. County Commission Chair Ed Eilert and County Manager Hannes Zacharias have voiced their disappointment over increasing state

cuts and the impact it has on the County's most vulnerable populations. The 4% cut to programs announced by the Governor's office last month means Kansas will forgo more than \$120 million in combined state and federal money for its Medicaid system. In Johnson County and around the state, the impact of these cuts will affect mental health, aging, intellectual and developmental disability services, and likely public health services as well. Unfortunately, the County anticipates further state cuts to these essential services beyond what have already occurred. To attempt to protect these essential services, the proposed 2017 County budget includes a contingency fund of more than two million dollars.

Kansas Taxes - Who Pays?



This week, [Kansas Center for Economic Growth](#) released an article highlighting how the goal to reduce taxes in our state has not been true for many of our lowest income residents. The piece, [Gossen: The Big Shift](#), hits on a number of UCS' public policy positions including the strategic use of tax credits and rebates that can help low wage earners stay employed, and the impact of the Kansas food tax on low-income households. Kansas is one of only

14 states that includes food for at-home preparation in its state sales tax, and one of only seven that taxes this food at the full retail sales tax rate.

Our mission: Provide data analysis, lead collaborative planning and mobilize resources to enhance the availability and delivery of health and human services.

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