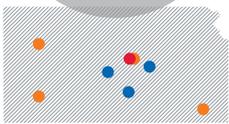


KU WORKS

for KANSAS / No. 10

WHAT'S GOING ON IN YOUR AREA



STATEWIDE

KU developing model anti-bullying policy to help Kansas educators

GARDEN CITY, OAKLEY, PARSONS, SALINA

KU program helps individuals with disabilities obtain assistive technology

GREAT BEND, HERINGTON, HUTCHINSON

KU Medical Center doctor heads project to improve stroke care throughout Kansas

SALINA

KU scientist reviews tree-ring data to help understand, predict drought



Anne Williford, assistant professor of social welfare at KU, is leading a project to create a model anti-bullying policy that Kansas schools can then tailor to their unique needs.



STATEWIDE

Helping Kansas Schools Address Bullying

KU developing model anti-bullying policy to help Kansas educators

ALTHOUGH KANSAS LAW REQUIRES ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY schools to have an anti-bullying policy, the schools often struggle to translate this legal obligation into effective policies and practices that address the pervasive problem.

But a team of University of Kansas researchers is developing a model policy that will help schools across the state clearly define bullying and implement strategies for dealing with bullying and related issues.

Anne Williford, assistant professor of social welfare, is the principal investigator for the project, funded by a grant from the Kansas Department of Education.

"Our goal is to create a model anti-bullying policy that individual schools can then tailor to their unique needs," Williford said. "We know that schools sometimes struggle to identify, track, and address incidents of bullying, so we want to create user-friendly resources.

"Specifically, we want to provide training for school personnel, create a Web-based resource for school districts, and provide technical assistance to school staff. We'll also provide schools with recommendations for addressing the all-too-common consequences of bullying, particularly for victims, like social and emotional difficulties that may require further supports to be put in place." ■

MORE INFORMATION ■ SOCWEL.KU.EDU



TRAINING SESSIONS

- **Once the model policy** is finalized and the website is created this fall, KU researchers will offer training sessions.
- There will be at least **10 training sessions** for three to five representatives from school districts across Kansas.



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- The **Assistive Technology for Kansans** program can help individuals locate services that support vision, hearing, speech communication, computer access, daily living tasks, mobility, vehicle modifications, environmental modifications, recreation and sports, and learning, organization, and memory.
- The ATK program has sites in **Oakley, Salina, Wichita, Topeka, and Parsons** and an affiliate office in **Garden City**.

GARDEN CITY, OAKLEY, PARSONS, SALINA

Improving Lives Through Technology

KU program helps individuals with disabilities obtain assistive technology



Byron Carter of Parsons was able to locate a lift for his truck with help from KU's Assistive Technology for Kansans program.

FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES, ASSISTIVE technology can be essential to living as they choose. But technology — wheelchairs, voice-to-text programs, or vehicle modifications, for example — can be difficult to obtain and very expensive.

That's why the University of Kansas manages the Assistive Technology for Kansans program, which helps people with disabilities locate the technology they need to live, work, and participate in their community. From five locations across the state, ATK staff can help Kansans who have disabilities research and test devices, borrow a device for a few weeks, and even locate funding, often through government or non-profit agencies or grants.

The program has been crucial to 21-year-old Parsons resident Byron Carter, who has Duchenne muscular dystrophy and uses a wheelchair. Over the years, ATK staff members have helped Byron obtain speech-to-text technology, a mobile workstation, and a special truck lift. Thanks to the technology, he is able to help run his family's cattle operation and recently earned his associate's degree from Coffeyville Community College.

"ATK staff have helped connect me with life-changing technology," Carter said. "All these technologies together have improved my quality of life." ■

MORE INFORMATION

ATK.KU.EDU

GREAT BEND, HERINGTON, HUTCHINSON

Taking the Initiative on Critical Treatment

KU Medical Center doctor heads project to improve stroke care throughout Kansas



Dr. Colleen Lechtenberg, a physician and assistant professor at KU Medical Center, leads the Kansas Initiative for Stroke Survival.

WHILE TOP-QUALITY STROKE CARE IS USUALLY AVAILABLE IN metropolitan areas, patients in rural areas haven't always been so fortunate. And providing immediate, effective treatment for a stroke is key to the patient's survival and recovery.

But now patients throughout Kansas are receiving better stroke care because of an initiative designed to train health-care professionals statewide. Colleen Lechtenberg, a physician and assistant professor at KU Medical Center who is director of KU Hospital's Advanced Comprehensive Stroke Center, also leads the Kansas Initiative for Stroke Survival, which aims to provide expertise and support to smaller Kansas hospitals so they can better treat stroke patients.

The initiative's ultimate goal is to make hospitals "Emergent Stroke Ready," meaning they are much more prepared to handle a stroke patient who comes into the emergency room. Before the program, Kansas had 12 hospitals that met the criteria, all of them in metropolitan areas. Today, 58 hospitals in Kansas are Emergent Stroke Ready and can be found all across the state.

"With a stroke, time is brain," Lechtenberg said. "Where you live shouldn't determine whether you live." ■



ADVANCING CARE AND TREATMENT

- The **Kansas Initiative for Stroke Survival** is supported by KU Medical Center, KU Hospitals, and the American Heart Association.
- Before the program, Kansas had **12** hospitals designated as "Emergent Stroke Ready," all in metropolitan areas. Today, **58** hospitals across the state are Emergent Stroke Ready.
- Among the facilities to earn the designation in 2013 are **Great Bend Regional Hospital, Hutchinson Regional Medical Center, and Herington Municipal Hospital**.

MORE INFORMATION — KUMC.EDU

Looking to the Past to Plan for the Future

KU scientist reviews tree-ring data to help understand, predict drought in Kansas



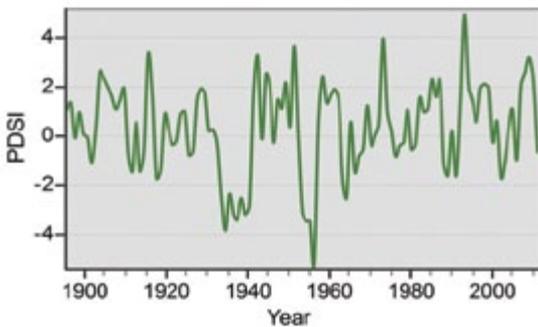
THE IMPACT OF DROUGHT



- **Drought is among the most costly** types of natural disaster in North America, though it doesn't always get the same attention that other, more spectacular, natural disasters receive.
- **In 2011**, drought-related losses in Kansas exceeded \$1.7 billion.

SURVEY INFORMATION

- **The Kansas Geological Survey** at KU conducts studies throughout the state on natural resources, water quality and quantity, and geologic hazards.
- **The KGS publishes information** on such topics as geochemistry, geohydrology, geophysics, geoaerchaeology, energy resources, and stratigraphy.



THINK READING TEA LEAVES IS A good way to predict the future? When it comes to drought, you might try counting tree rings instead.

"Tree rings are telling of precipitation for a given year, because a tree grows more and generates a thicker ring in a wet year, versus a thinner ring in a dry year," explained Anthony Layzell, a doctoral student in geography and a research assistant with the Kansas Geological Survey at the University of Kansas. "So tree-ring data can help you examine drought conditions over time."

Layzell recently surveyed tree-ring data going back a thousand years in Kansas. His research aims

TOP KU researchers are examining tree rings — such as those from this Douglas fir — to better understand and predict droughts in Kansas.

BOTTOM The Palmer Drought Severity Index shows drought trends in Kansas from 1895 to 2011.

to help put recent droughts — such as those from the 1930s, the mid-1950s and 2010 — into a longer historical context. Such information could be crucial to state policymakers and farmers in planning for drought conditions and managing vital water resources such as the Ogallala aquifer that underlies much of western Kansas.

"We often use the 1950s drought for worst-case planning," Layzell said. "But if you go back further, the longer-term record shows that the 1950s drought wasn't that unusual and that droughts have been much worse in the past. So, it might be wise to take a longer-term perspective." ■

MORE INFORMATION ■ KGS.KU.EDU

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