

**REGISTER TODAY FOR #OAK2023!  
JANUARY 26-28, 2023  
FRANKFORT, KY**



#OAK2023 is a not-to-miss event featuring Kentucky farmers, production deep dives, research highlights, food system innovations, market opportunities, and the expanding OAK network for 3 days of learning and growing together. This event is open to everyone. Take advantage of early bird pricing, register today and join the OAK Community in January 2023 at KSU's [Harold R. Benson Research and Demonstration Farm](#).

**Registration is open and scholarships are available.**

Scholarship requests for OAK's 2023 Conference will be reviewed and awarded by the middle of each month up until the event and as funds allow. Scholarships are only applied to the regular conference and Pre-Conference Workshops are not included at this time. We share gratitude with partners who make it possible to offer scholarships: Grow Appalachia and Kentucky State University.

[Apply for a scholarship here](#)

## **#OAK2023 Sponsorship Opportunities**

**We are grateful for the early and strong support from the 2023 partners and sponsors listed below! Thinking about sponsoring the event?** Join us! Space is limited for Trade Show exhibits in 2023, so sponsors have first priority and exhibitors will have access to spaces still available after November 1st. Contact Brooke Gentile with any questions.

## 2023 Conference Sponsors, Partners & Funders



## #OAK2023 Speaker Line up is LIVE!!

The OAK Team is proud to announce an incredible line up of speakers for OAK's 12th Annual Conference in Frankfort, KY on January 26-28, 2023. Folks from near and far will come together to deliver relevant, timely and inspirational information for the greater community.

Check out these inspiring voices in sustainable agriculture

Join us for OAK Conference 2023: Rooted in Resilience: Growing Healthy Soils and Opportunities for Kentucky Organics. Now in its 12th year, the Conference includes a growing audience of hundreds of Kentuckians and neighbors active in community food systems: farmers, researchers, nonprofit professionals, federal and state agency partners, allied service providers and conscious consumers working collectively to build a local, resilient and healthy food system. Enjoy keynotes, farm tours, 30+ sessions and 6 half day pre-conference workshops.

Check out the full AGENDA here

## New for #OAK2023: SIX Pre-Conference Workshops!

**Want to dig deeper into a topic that will take you and your farming operation to the next level?**

OAK is offering you just that opportunity with 6 immersive, exciting workshops offered on **January 26**.

Take advantage of this third day of learning with the OAK community and register for pre-conference workshops along with the main conference. Note upon registering, there is an additional cost for this extra day of learning!

**Year-Round Salad Greens** with Farmer/Farm Consultant Ray Tyler

**Nutrient Budgeting** with UK's Krista Jacobsen, and Grow Appalachia's Chris McKenzie

**Forest Farming** with Appalachian Sustainable Development's Robin Suggs and Rural Action's Andrea Miller

**Marketing** with Farm Marketing Guru Corinna Bench

**Funding Opportunities for Kentucky Farms** with KCARD

**Maximizing High Tunnels** with OSU's Matt Kleinhenz, UT's Annette Wszelaki, and Kentucky Farm Consultant Paul Wiediger

Stay tuned to OAK's social media, (new!) website and e-newsletters to learn more about the exciting #OAK2023 agenda of our three days together in Frankfort. Read more on OAK's [conference webpage](#).

Register here

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## OAK Joins the USDA Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP)

The USDA Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP) is investing up to \$100 million over five years in cooperative agreements with non-profit organizations who will partner with others to provide technical assistance and wrap-around support for transitioning and existing organic farmers. AMS is building partnership networks in six regions across the United States with trusted organizations serving direct farmer training, education, and outreach activities. Read more about the USDA program [here](#).

OAK is looking forward to working with MOSA Certified Organic as the Midwest Regional Lead and more than 60 already identified partner organizations across the nation to provide continued and expanded technical assistance and programming to support farmers in transitioning to organic certification. More details to come in early 2023 about programs activities.



## Organic Transition Initiative (OTI) Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP) Regions



This map shows many of the organizations helping to establish the TOPP partnership network (October 2022)

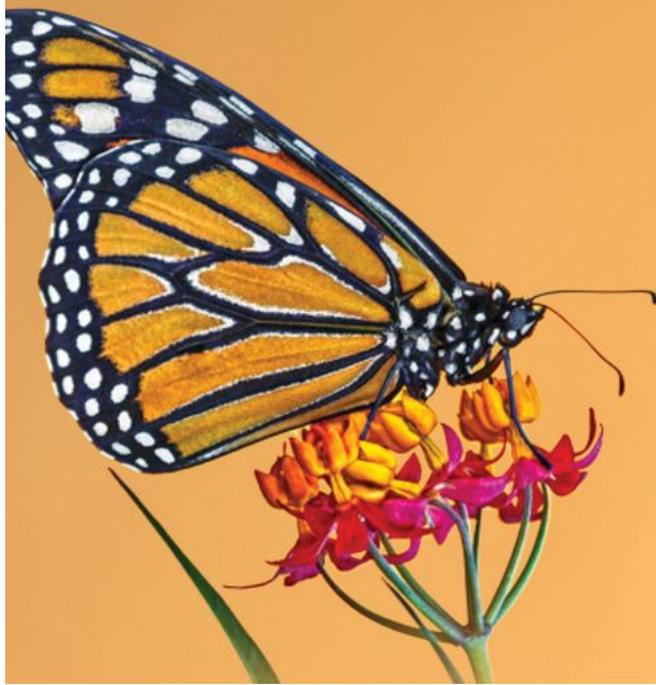


## OAK Members can access discounted registration for AcresUSA Eco-Ag Conference in Covington, KY

OAK is thrilled to announce an incredible opportunity for our Members to attend the [ACRES Eco-Ag Conference](#) in Covington, KY in December. ALL active OAK Members are eligible for a **20% registration discount** for the information packed event next month plus each time the code is used ACRES USA will donate \$25 to OAK. Applying this discount to even the single day Eco-Ag Conference ticket nearly pays for a full year as an Individual OAK Member. What are you waiting for?

While you are there, be sure to visit OAK staff at the Trade Show. We're also on the ACRES agenda, join Executive Director, Brooke Gentile, for a Round Table Discussion on *Resources and Technical Assistance for Beginning and Organic Farmers in Kentucky*.

The annual Eco-Ag Conference & Trade Show is where you find farmers and consultants from every facet of eco-farming who come together to share their experience and expertise. Attend the three-day event to learn the latest in cutting-edge technology and methods or dig in even deeper and join an all-day Eco-Ag U workshop and make your farming operation the best it can be. [Register today!](#)



ACRES<sup>USA</sup>  
**2022 ECO-AG**  
CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW  
Covington, KY  
Dec. 5-8, 2022  
EcoAg.AcresUSA.com

## CSA Production Manual - NEW from UK-CSA!!

Check out the newly released UK CSA Production Manual as a downloadable resource for all! With a full 300 pages, seasonal photos and everything you need to know for CSA production in Kentucky. Get your digital version [here and download or print as desired](#). - **FREE**. Team OAK is sending gratitude to Kristi Durbin, Mark Williams, Krista Jacobsen, and Rachel Rudolph, from the Department of Horticulture for sharing this valuable resource with the community. For anyone interested in a spiral bound printed edition, you can fill out this form to order before November 29. <https://forms.gle/WwzowBtYaiihJW9A6>

All information gathered for this project was the result of documenting production practices and improvements made since the program's inception - including two [customizable Excel workbooks: Share & Field Planner and Fertility Planner](#)

## Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Production Manual of the Organic Farming Unit at the University of Kentucky

*Kristi Durbin, Mark Williams, Krista Jacobsen, and Rachel Rudolph, Department of Horticulture*  
October 2022



## CSA Farms Apply Today and Connect with New Markets through Employer Partner Wellness Programs

**KY Farm Share Coalition (KYFSC) is now accepting applications from produce CSA farms interested in joining the coalition for the 2023 season.** KYFSC works with employers who want to offer a CSA incentive on a weekly local, organic vegetable box to their employees as a workplace wellness benefit. The program focuses on increasing access to fresh healthy foods for Kentuckians and stabilizing revenue for organic farms. In 2022, KYFSC worked with 16 employers to promote CSA opportunities, partnered with 7 CSA farms, and offered over 1000 workplace CSA vouchers to put towards CSA. In addition to coordinating the workplace CSA program, KYFSC offered 6 CSA chef demos, a CSA cooking class, and helped coordinate a spring and fall CSA promotion to spread the word about how to best store, cook, and use a weekly CSA share!

**Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis and due by December 2, 2022, to participate in the 2023 season.** If you are interested or have questions about the program, please reach out to discuss the opportunity! KYFSC Endorsed Farms must offer USDA certified organic produce shares for a minimum of 20 weeks. Farms can also be in documented active organic transition. Please see full endorsed farm criteria in the application through the link here. Questions? Contact Brooke Gentile at [brooke@oak-ky.org](mailto:brooke@oak-ky.org).

Learn more and apply here

## Board of Directors is Accepting Candidate Nominations

Are you interested to serve as a Board Member for the Organic Association of Kentucky? Do you know someone who is the perfect candidate for OAK's Board of Directors? OAK seeks candidates and is requesting your nominations. As a part of our community, you or someone you know may be the right person to bring their time and talent to serve in this important role. OAK's Board of Directors is selected by OAK membership each year and serves in 3-year terms. Nominations are accepted now through the beginning of November and OAK members vote for 3 candidates in January and February.

[Read more about being a Board Member and make a nomination here](#)

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## Interested to Go Organic?

We're here to help - for FREE! OAK's Transition Trainers will answer all your questions and work with you to refine techniques, implement best practices, demystify the regulations, develop recordkeeping systems and make a transition plan to help you apply for organic certification. Email us to learn more about process and how we help farmers have a successful certification experience.



Learn more about [OAK's Transition Trainer Program and apply to work with an Organic Transition Trainer today!](#)

Questions? Contact [brooke@oak-ky.org](mailto:brooke@oak-ky.org) or 502-219-7378.

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## 2022 Census of Agriculture is coming

US Farm Policy is formed with input from you, Kentucky's Farmers. Let your voice be heard and participate in the 2022 Ag Census. Read this [blog post](#) from NSAC (National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition) to remind you when and why you should participate. Don't forget, the ag census includes every operation – large or small, urban or rural – from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products are produced and sold, or would normally be produced and sold, in the ag census year. A complete count, with every producer getting and taking the opportunity to be represented in the data, is vital. The data not only influence business and supply chain logistics, they inform policy and program decisions that directly impact producers, ag operations, and communities across the United States. Keep an eye out for an email with online response options this month OR paper versions sent in December. Find out more about the ag census [here](#).

## OFA unpacks the next Farm Bill

The Organic Farmers Association anticipates that the 2023 farm bill will be a priority with issues such as organic transition, beginning farmer support, land access, organic market competition, and consolidation along with organic farmer technical assistance. Team OAK encourages our community to stay informed and let our collective voices be heard. [Read OFA's Organic Voice: The Farm Bill Issue here.](#)

## Paper Pots are ALLOWED

NOSB final rule - paper pots allowed in organic production - officially added to national list. View the final rule [here](#).

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## Vermont Compost Bulk Order Deadline 12/1/22

Fresh Start Growers Supply (Louisville) is organizing a bulk order from Vermont Compost again this year. Order and pay for Vermont Compost products before December 1st and receive discounted pricing on bulk (2 cubic yards) bags. To take advantage of the offer, simply email [Steve@freshstartgrowers.com](mailto:Steve@freshstartgrowers.com) or call 502-442-7883 with the quantity of product that you want with delivery specifics.

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## National Farm to Food Assistance Survey

Programs that link communities facing hunger with free, locally grown food while also paying farmers a fair price are a powerful way to build community, food security and resilience.

The recently announced USDA-AMS [Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement](#) program has created a ton of new activity and opportunity in this arena. The Wallace Center is working in partnership with Duke World Food Policy Center to capture and amplify the impacts and challenges of these programs to decision-makers, funders, and the USDA.

Complete [this survey](#) to help better understand this growing market channel. This survey will contribute to reports and outreach efforts to make Farm to Food Assistance Programs more sustainable and effective. The Wallace Center will also use it to design relevant technical assistance to support your work. The Wallace Center will enter survey participants in a raffle to win \$250. [The survey](#) deadline is Friday, December 2nd.

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**The Good Giving Challenge is November 28 – December 2. Join us for the online giving extravaganza and hear about OAK's 2022 program impacts!**

OAK's vision is for more Kentucky farmers to grow healthy foods that support healthy communities while being stewards of the land in ways that improve our natural resources, sequester carbon and provide farmers with economically viable futures, keeping farmland productive long into the future. We do this work in partnership with a growing network of farmers, community members, OAK members, agriculture professionals and allied organizations who participate in OAK's programs. Will you, our community, help us raise

funds to grow the organic movement in Kentucky? If you love what OAK does, please share our stories with your network!

Make a Gift during Nov 28 - Dec 2

## Educational & Farming Support

### In-person Events Throughout the Region

#### **Kentucky Fruit & Vegetable Conference**

January 2-4, 2023

Bowling Green, KY

OAK staff invite you to join this event. We'll see you in the Organic Production track.

[More details and registration here.](#)

#### **International Grassland Conference**

Save the Date: May 14-19, 2023

Covington, KY

Scholarships available and due by December 30, 2022

[More details and registration here.](#)

### Virtual Events

#### **Virtual Cut Flower Short Course**

November 21, 6:30pm ET

Topic: Learning Lisianthus with Farmer Bailey

To register for this UK Cooperative Extension event, click [here](#)

#### **Assessing Value-Added Dairy Business Expansion Online Workshops**

November 16: Assessing Value-Added Dairy Business Expansion Webinar Series

November 30: Assessing Value-Added Dairy Business Expansion Webinar Series

[Register here.](#)

#### **Use Your Numbers to Assess Profitability and Full Cost of Production**

December 5, 12, 19, 2022 at 9 am - 12 pm ET

Registration is now open for this three-part winter course from OEFFA with farm consultant Ellen Polishuk of Plant to Profit! This course will build on the material covered in the introductory sessions in January and March 2022 (available [here](#)). Take a deep dive into your numbers from the season to understand your farm's costs of production and calculate fair prices and wages. [Register here](#)

#### **Vegetable Farms Becoming the Employer of Choice**

Motivating and managing employees is essential to most diversified vegetable farms, and rare is the farmer who comes to farming with those labor management skills. Whether you have worked with employees for many years or are in the early stages of hiring staff, this series will give you practical tools to make your farm an employer of choice. [Please](#)

note that this program is for all vegetable farm owners and for hired managers with at least 10 years of experience.

Be prepared to attend online sessions with your camera on and ready to engage in discussions with your farmer peers. [Space is limited - register here.](#)

5 January from 9-11 AM CT: Strategic Leadership

9 January from 4-6 PM CT: Developing a Motivated Workforce

12 January from 9-11 AM CT: Hiring the Right People

16 January from 4-6 PM CT: Employee Onboarding and Training

19 January from 9-11 AM CT: Farm Business Culture

23 January from 4-6 PM CT: Reviews and Feedback

30 January from 4-6 PM CT: Becoming an Ethical H-2A Employer

2 February from 9-11 AM CT: Developing Intercultural Competence for Farm Employers

6 February from 4-6 PM CT: Managing Conflict

### **KY Food Action Network Upcoming Trainings**

November 30, 2022 at 3PM EST [KFAN Farm Bill Working Group](#)

December 7, 2022 at 3:00pm EST **Food RX 101** [Register Here](#)

December 14, 2022 at 3:00pm EST **Administrative Advocacy Training** [Register Here](#)

January 11, 2023 at 3:00pm EST **Advocacy 201** [Register Here](#)

January 25, 2023 at 3:00pm EST **Media Training** [Register Here](#)

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## **Resources and Funding for Farmers**

### **Humane Farming Mentorship Program**

**Deadline** November 30, 2023

**Application Link** <https://www.foodanimalconcernstrust.org/mentorship>

FACT's Humane Farming Mentorship Program is for beginning livestock and poultry farmers seeking personalized guidance from an experienced farmer on business strategies and management practices. It is designed for farmers who wish to raise their animals on pasture using sustainable, humane practices. FACT is currently accepting applications from farmers who wish to participate as mentees and mentors. The cost to be mentored is \$200 (a limited number of partial scholarships are available). Farmers who serve as mentors will be compensated \$500. Additional funding is also available for travel and conference scholarships.

### **Livestock & Poultry Farmers: Apply for a Fund-a-Farmer Grant from FACT**

**Deadline** January 10, 2023

**Application Link** <https://foodanimalconcernstrust.org/grants>

Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT) is now accepting Fund-a-Farmer Grant applications. Grants of up to \$3,000 are available for livestock and poultry farmers to improve and expand pasture for their animals, as well as those who are seeking or who already hold one of three animal welfare certifications.

### **A Guide to USDA Resources for Historically Underserved Farmers and Ranchers**

This new multi-agency guide for USDA assistance for underserved farmers and ranchers, is available online from USDA. If you are a farmer or rancher and are a minority, woman, veteran, beginning, or limited-resource producer, you can use this 40-page booklet to learn about assistance and targeted opportunities available to you. This includes programs offered through the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation

Service, and Risk Management Agency. The guide is also available in Spanish, Hmong, Korean, Vietnamese, Thai, and Chinese.

### **USDA announces assistance for on-farm food safety expenses for specialty crop growers**

**Application period opens:** June 27, 2022

Apply at your local FSA office: <https://www.farmers.gov/working-with-us/service-center-locator>

Specialty crop operations may receive assistance for the following costs:

- Developing a food safety plan for first-time food safety certification.
- Maintaining or updating an existing food safety plan.
- Food safety certification.
- Certification upload fees.
- Microbiological testing for products, soil amendments and water.
- Training.

### **Silvopasture and Forest Farming Support / Funds Available**

The Catalyzing Agroforestry Grant Program is focused on implementing silvopastures and forest farming practices through direct support payments and will assist producers in designing appropriate projects using technical assistance and science-based planning strategies. The ultimate goal of the effort is to increase ecosystem sustainability and diversity by scaling up agroforestry practices. The Appalachian Beginning Forest Farming Coalition (ABFFC) project will provide up to \$1500/acre for silvopasture implementation and up to \$1000/quarter acre for forest farming implementation depending on project scale and scope. To enhance shared learning, producers who receive support will share successes and lessons-learned with their peers and other interested stakeholders. Minority, female, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, and/or socially disadvantaged farmers are highly encouraged to apply.

<https://www.appalachianforestfarmers.org/emef>

### **EKY Flood Damage Farm Equipment Program**

A program for commercial farmers to repair/refurbish small-scale farm equipment damaged during the floods. If you would like to donate to this program, please send an email to [info@kyhortcouncil.org](mailto:info@kyhortcouncil.org). [Learn more and apply here](#)

### **USDA Offers Assistance to Protect Privately-Owned Agricultural Lands**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) encourages people and groups wanting to protect agricultural lands to consider enrolling their property into conservation easements.

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Agricultural Land Easements (ACEP - ALE) focuses on protecting and conserving productive agricultural lands. Landowners are compensated for enrolling their land in easements. [Partners include state or local agencies and certain non-profits](#). Eligible lands include privately owned cropland, pastureland and forestlands. Landowners do not apply directly to NRCS for funding under this program. Applications from eligible entities for 2023 ACEP-ALE funding must be received by December 1, 2022 to be considered for the current funding cycle. Landowners who wish to be considered for ACEP-ALE must make application to an eligible entity.

Entities interested in agricultural easements should contact their [local USDA service center](#) or visit the [Kentucky NRCS ACEP-ALE website](#).

### **Slow Food Bluegrass Garden Grant**

**Deadline:** ongoing

**Link:** <http://www.slowfoodbluegrass.org/gardens>

Slow Food Bluegrass micro-grants support groups in Kentuckiana who foster education about and access to good, clean, fair food. Special priority is given to limited resource communities and to projects that demonstrate a strong buy-in from participants. Grants range from \$500 - \$1,000 and may be awarded throughout the year. If you have any questions or need assistance, please reach us at [slowfoodbluegrass@gmail.com](mailto:slowfoodbluegrass@gmail.com).

### **KSU Small Scale Farm Grant**

**Deadline:** The 1st day of every other month

**Funding Amount:** Up to \$5,000 for farmers, \$15,000 for groups benefiting multiple farmers

**Eligible Entities:** Kentucky farmers and Kentucky agriculture groups including farmers markets

**Link:** <http://ksu.edu/academics/cafsss/research-extension/small-scale-farm-grant-program/>

**Overview:** The KSU Small Scale Farm Grant is designed with the small operation farmer in mind. This grant application is relatively simple to complete and the funds can be used to purchase needed equipment related to the proposed project. To qualify, applicants must be producing a value-added product, be an organic farmer, and/or be an aquatic farmer. Farmers markets are often eligible. Previously approved projects have included canning equipment, a walk-in cooler, a water line to a hoop house, a root cellar, a cool-bot for vegetables, and a trailer for keeping meat cool. **Did you know that the recently added farmer education assistance with a maximum of \$500 can be used for #OAK2023? Apply now, Deadline is December 1, 2022.**

### **Kentucky Proud Promotional Grant**

**Deadline:** On-going

**Funding Amount:** Up to 10% annual gross farm income, max at \$8,000 per year; \$1 for \$1 match

**Eligible Entities:** Kentucky farmers and agribusinesses

**Link:** <http://www.kyagr.com/marketing/grants.html>

**Overview:** The Kentucky Proud Promotional Grant is a cost share program to help Kentucky farmers and agribusinesses pay for advertising and marketing expenses. The award amount is based on 10% of direct farm impact; for a farmer it would be 10% of their total farm gross sales. The applicant must be a registered member of Kentucky Proud to apply and use the Kentucky Proud logo/brand in marketing efforts paid for with program funds. Examples of fundable items include TV ads, radio ads, web expenses, hats, t-shirts, demos, sampling, labels, packaging, tradeshow, UPC, and bar codes. This is a great program that helps promote our local farms!

### **ON-Farm Energy Efficiency Incentives Program**

**Deadline:** Applications are accepted year round

**Funding Amounts:** 50% cost share - up to a \$10,000 incentive, plus \$150 for an approved third party energy audit

**Eligible Entities:** Kentucky farmers with a gross farm income of at least \$25,000

**Link:** <https://agpolicy.ky.gov/energy/Pages/default.aspx>

**Overview:** The Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund offers an On-Farm Energy Efficiency Program to help Kentucky farmers with energy projects. These cost share funds are available to increase on farm energy efficiency and to support renewable fuel production projects. The applicant is required to have a third party energy audit completed. This program can be combined with the USDA-NRCS Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) to get up to 75% of a total project cost covered.

## Rural Energy for America Program - Grants and Guaranteed Loans

Funding Amount: \$1,500 to \$500,000 (25% of the total project cost)

Eligible Entities: Farmers and rural businesses

**Link:** <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-energy-america-program-energy-audit-renewable-energy-development-assistance>

Overview: USDA Rural Development offers REAP grants and grant/loan combos to help agricultural producers and rural businesses install renewable energy systems and do efficiency upgrade projects. A grant only application can pay up to 25% of total project costs. A grant/loan combo can fund up to 75% of total project costs. Guaranteed loan only applications do not have an application or funding deadline to be processed. Some project examples include: lighting efficiency, heating efficiency, bio-energy, solar energy, and dairy ventilation upgrades. An energy assessment or audit is required as part of the application process. If you are interested, you need to inquire as soon as possible. The October 31 due date prioritizes "restricted" or smaller projects that have total project cost of \$80,000 or less (and are requesting \$20,000 or less in grant funds). Fall is the best time for small projects to apply!

Many thanks to [KCARD](#) for promoting many of these grant opportunities. Did you know KCARD can also answer questions about funding programs and help you prepare an application?  
resources



### Stay in touch:

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