

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Grand Challenges

K-State Research and Extension develops and delivers practical, research-based solutions to challenges faced by all Kansans, which includes the grand challenges:

- Global Food Systems
- Water
- Health
- Community Vitality
- Developing Tomorrow's Leaders

Find more stories like this and more at:
www.ksu.edu/solutions

K-State Research & Extension
Shawnee County
1740 SW Western Avenue
Topeka, Kansas 66604
785-232-0062
www.shawnee.ksu.edu



Grand Challenge: Community Vitality

Title: Recognizing our Volunteers

Why is this issue important?

The Extension education model relies on volunteers to deliver parts of our programs and expand our impact. Volunteers take time to recruit, train and retain, but they are essential to what we do.

How did Extension address this issue?

One of the keys to keeping volunteers involved in our programs is to recognize and communicate their impact. We are appreciative of volunteers' time and effort given to our organization.

Our individual program areas have unique ways of thanking and recognizing our volunteers. Our Extension board also votes to highlight one or two volunteers every year at our annual celebration.

This year, our Extension Appreciation awards went to Lisa Martin and Brandon Pope. Martin is our retired EFNEP and SNAP-Ed Agent, and she continues serving with local coalitions to improve food security in Shawnee County. Pope is the Regional Operations manager at Heritage Tractor in Topeka and was instrumental in the revamped 2024 Tractor Safety training. Pope went above and beyond sharing his workspace and knowledge so the youth who took the course could be properly certified to work on non-family farms.

What was the impact?

This budget year, our Extension volunteers gave 13,900 hours of their time. That is the equivalent of 6.5 full time employee positions. Volunteers are the reason we are able to serve as many as we do with research-based education.



Left: Brandon Pope and Agriculture Agent Abigail Gettinger
Right: EFNEP Agent Sofia Diaz Buezo and Lisa Martin

