



# GOALS

GENERATING OPPORTUNITIES TO ATTAIN LIFELONG SUCCESS

## FINAL REPORT 2019



GOALS IS A PROJECT OF



**The Kansas Department  
for Children and Families**

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# INTRODUCTION

## Generating Opportunities to Attain Lifelong Success

**“No country, however rich, can afford the waste of its human resources. Demoralization caused by vast unemployment is our greatest extravagance. Morally, it is the greatest menace to our social order.”**

*Franklin Delano Roosevelt, September 30, 1934*

When his child passed away, Michael turned to drugs and alcohol as a way to cope. He was homeless when he found out about GOALS. Now, he is proud of how far he's come, with a new home, a job, and plans for the future.

After being released from prison, Ronnie was eager to start a new chapter. But he struggled to find steady employment. Through GOALS, he learned how to turn his negatives into positives, polish old skills, and learn new.

Brad moved to Kansas to pursue a job that fell through, leaving him discouraged and without a path forward. GOALS helped him find a supportive community, secure a full-time job, and start his degree in education.

Sumner loved being a full-time mom, but now she was excited to get into the workforce. Her lack of experience and education were holding her back. Through GOALS, she gained the skills she needed to launch her career.

**GOALS enabled each of these Kansans to write their own success stories.**

This ambitious pilot strove to reshape employment and training services in Kansas. By bringing together the strength and ingenuity of employers, educators, economic developers, and social service providers, GOALS helped put a brighter future within the reach of Kansans who received food assistance.

### WHAT'S INSIDE

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ..... 3

*A snapshot of GOALS*

#### BACKGROUND ..... 5

*How GOALS came about  
DCF's vision*

#### EVALUATION ..... 7

*Evaluation components  
Data collection  
Data analysis*

#### THE GOALS MODEL ..... 9

*Intake and enrollment  
Program duration  
Education and training  
Staffing and professional development  
Model phases  
Key features and lessons learned  
Strategic communications  
Career navigators and intensive case management  
Employer liaisons, retention services, and employer engagement*

#### THE GOALS MODEL (cont'd)

*Employer, adult education, and technical school collaboration  
GOALS commitments  
Behavioral health  
Collective impact, partner involvement*

#### PILOT REGION STORIES ..... 25

*Southwest region  
South central region  
Southeast region  
Northeast region*

#### CONCLUSION ..... 33

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**POINT OF VIEW**

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“If I can hire anybody from the GOALS program, I will absolutely do it. I think it’s because they have shown the dedication they are going to give on the job. That’s a really big deal. They have the ability.”

*April Alhers, Recruiter, Curo Financial Management, GOALS Partner*

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## A Snapshot of GOALS

**GENERATING OPPORTUNITIES TO ATTAIN LIFELONG SUCCESS (GOALS) WAS A** three-year pilot program funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and administered by the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) as part of a national effort to test innovative approaches to employment and training programs for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants.

The GOALS project was the combined effort of state staff, community partners, program participants, and employers working together towards a common goal: to help eligible Kansans receiving food assistance get on a path to successful careers that pay living wages, offer advancement opportunities, and enhance their sense of value to themselves, their families, and communities.

The pilot launched on January 25, 2016, in 36 Kansas counties across two urban and two rural regions and concluded services on March 31, 2019. DCF enrolled 4,167 individuals in the pilot program during the 24-month random assignment intake phase, surpassing the original goal of 3,890 and attracting national attention for messaging and enrollment success.

Throughout implementation, half the participants received GOALS services, and the other half had access to regular employment and training services (where available), in order to compare outcomes for SNAP participants through a comprehensive evaluation process. Unique to the southeast region, individuals selected for the control group were referred to community-based services, and there were no regular employment and training services. This created yet another layer to the study, allowing for a third group for comparison.

### THE GOALS DESIGN

- ▶ Focus on various sectors of the labor market across multiple sites where employment opportunities are most available.
- ▶ Increase the employment rates and earned income of food assistance participants.
- ▶ Engage employers and community partners in sustainable strategies for matching participants with labor market opportunities and providing ongoing skill development for career advancement.
- ▶ Reduce participants' reliance on public assistance.
- ▶ Complement and support workforce partnerships among state agencies, workforce centers, community and technical colleges, and community-based organizations.
- ▶ Provide short-term and ongoing skill development leading to stable employment for SNAP work registrants.

To achieve the GOALS objectives, while also undertaking significant program expansion and rigorous evaluation requirements, DCF tasked a statewide project manager and a pilot leadership team to develop, implement, and monitor the pilot model across the four regions. The leadership team developed pilot-specific staff trainings and facilitated quarterly collective impact meetings in each region. They also partnered with adult education and community colleges to develop short-term trainings, engage employers in programming, and on-board mental health and substance use disorder partners.

The GOALS service model individualized services to meet each participant's needs, with a career navigator providing guidance and support through four service phases: Stabilize, Train, Place, and Sustain. Intensive, strengths-based case management was at the core of services. Participants learned job-seeking skills, including preparing applications and resumes, effective interviewing, essential skill development, and job retention skills. They also had access to self-awareness/improvement classes, occupational skills training, and support services such as transportation and uniforms. When necessary, the GOALS-funded substance use disorder services and mental health services helped participants reach their employment objectives. Employer liaisons provided retention support to both employees and employers for 90 days after employment.

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#### POINT OF VIEW

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**“I love my job. I’ve never made this much money in my life! If it wasn’t for the GOALS team pushing me, I wouldn’t have gotten this job, because I wouldn’t have had enough confidence or courage to even apply for it. I never want another job, unless it’s a promotion.”**

*Heather, GOALS Participant*

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Data on services were gathered and monitored on a regular basis to be used for programmatic improvement and external evaluation. Staff and partners reviewed internal benchmarks as part of the collective impact process, an intentional approach to collaboration.

Kansas participated in a national evaluation conducted by Mathematica and MDRC. Results of the evaluation will be disseminated by the evaluators following completion of the national pilot program. USDA anticipates the midterm report will be available in 2019 and the final report in 2021.

# BACKGROUND

## How GOALS Came About

**THE USDA FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES (FNS) SNAP PROVIDES WORK SUPPORT for low-income people and families. SNAP helps eligible families put food on the table in times of need. It also supports skills and job training efforts so that SNAP participants can obtain jobs that lead to self-sufficiency, while meeting local employer demands.**

In 2014, the Farm Bill authorized up to \$200 million for the development, implementation, and evaluation of up to 10 pilot projects designed to reduce dependency and increase work effort under SNAP. Kansas saw this as an opportunity to build on existing successes in employment and training programming while also testing new strategies.

In March 2014, the Kansas Department for Children and Families Economic and Employment services teamed up with the Center for Public Partnerships and Research at the University of Kansas (CPPR) to design a pilot program and write a proposal. A grant team travelled across Kansas, researching and recording the strengths and needs of various regions to further shape a vision and plan for the pilot. In April 2015, Kansas was one of the 10 states awarded the competitive grant.

Kansas proposed testing a voluntary program with features such as an individualized, strengths-based approach to career navigation; behavioral health services; short-term, job-driven career pathways; and post-employment support. Kansas provided USDA a unique opportunity through this pilot to test each of these enhancements across urban, rural, and designated frontier settings. A frontier area is characterized by low population size and high geographic remoteness.

### THE SEARCH FOR DATA

#### USDA SEEKS ANSWERS ON HOW TO HELP PEOPLE FIND EMPLOYMENT

USDA FNS findings suggest that to help unemployed and under-employed SNAP recipients and their families achieve self-sufficiency, strategies are needed to impart the skills employers want and to help address other barriers to employment.

Some SNAP recipients need assistance developing a resume and accessing job leads.

Others need education and training. Still others need help overcoming emotional or environmental situations that prevent them from maintaining employment.

Through state-tailored programming, the SNAP employment and training program assists unemployed and under-employed recipients with job search, job skills training, education (basic, post-secondary, vocational), work experience or training, and workfare. Prior to launching the 2014 pilot, FNS had determined that limited information existed on what is most effective in connecting these recipients to gainful employment.

Once all the data have been collected, FNS will report to Congress what works for Kansas and what works for the nation. To prepare for this report, USDA funded independent evaluators to conduct a longitudinal evaluation of each pilot to measure the impact of employment and training programs and services on the ability of participants to obtain and retain employment. Interim results of the evaluation were reported every 12 months until the projects were complete.

## **DCF'S VISION**

The Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) saw this pilot as an opportunity to advance research-based benefits of voluntary programs, showcase the Kansas design, and draw national attention to the role collective impact can play in employment and training initiatives. The study created the opportunity to explore the importance of substance use disorder and mental health services in successful employment and community outcomes. Kansas recognized a chance to show what works, while also expanding important services to SNAP participants.

### ***Economic and Employment Services and foundation for approach***

In fiscal year 2010, Kansas joined the growing number of states implementing voluntary SNAP employment and training (SNAP E&T) programs. Ongoing engagement was difficult, in part due to limited funding for skills training. Many services were provided in-house and with the assistance of free Workforce Center programs. In rural counties, often there was not a Workforce Center to serve participants, and case managers could only travel to those sites once a month.

Shortly before the USDA funding opportunity arose, DCF piloted different employment and training approaches for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and SNAP E&T participants. For example, a few years prior to launching GOALS, DCF Employment Services Unit (EES) and SNAP E&T launched a successful partnership with the Food Safety Inspection Services in three southwest Kansas counties where there were four major meat processing plants with a high demand for federal inspectors. DCF EES also created a new position – an employer coordinator. The employer coordinator collaborated with providers, employers, and participants to match people to employers and, when applicable, the appropriate training. This partnership resulted in increased employment outcomes, met employers' needs, and provided a model for the state to build on as part of the GOALS pilot.



# EVALUATION

## THE AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014 FUNDED A RIGOROUS, LONGITUDINAL EVALUATION

of the 10 pilot projects. USDA contracted with Mathematica Policy Research and its partner, MDRC, along with subcontractors Insight Policy Research, Kone Consulting, and Decision Information Resources (referred to as the evaluation team), to conduct the evaluation. The evaluation of each pilot uses a random assignment research design to designate participants as either treatment or control group members.

The evaluation team will share study findings through annual progress reports to the United States Congress. For each pilot, the evaluation team will share study findings through an interim study report in 2019 and a final study report in 2021, as well as a summary report that synthesizes findings across pilots. Each report will discuss all four study components: implementation, impact, participation, and cost-benefit analyses. Each component's findings can be linked to tell a comprehensive story and fully address the evaluation's research objectives.\*

## GOALS EVALUATION COMPONENTS

The GOALS evaluation includes:

### Impact Analysis

- ▶ Identify what works and for whom by examining impacts on employment and earnings, public-assistance receipt, and other outcomes such as food security, health, well-being, and housing.

### Implementation Analysis

- ▶ Document the context and operations of each pilot.
- ▶ Interpret and understand impacts within and across pilots.

### Participation Analysis

- ▶ Examine the characteristics and service paths of pilot participants.
- ▶ Assess whether the presence of the pilots and their services or participation requirements affect whether people apply for SNAP or continue to receive SNAP benefits.
- ▶ Conduct a cost-benefit analysis that will estimate the return on each dollar invested.

\*Source: Evaluation of SNAP Employment and Training Pilots: Fiscal Year 2017 Annual Report to Congress

## DATA COLLECTION

The evaluation team was tasked with collecting data from multiple sources to support the evaluation.

These sources include:

### Primary Data Sources

*(collected from state and local agencies)*

- ▶ **Employment**
- ▶ **Earnings**
- ▶ **Receipt of public assistance**
- ▶ **Service receipt and administrative records**

### Other Data Sources

- ▶ **Baseline information collected from each consenting pilot participant before random assignment**
- ▶ **Data from administered participants surveys after 12 and 36 months of random assignment**
- ▶ **Qualitative data from site visits, interviews, and focus groups with participants**
- ▶ **Employers and agency staff**
- ▶ **Cost data provided by pilot staff**

Data collection was overseen by a data and evaluation coordinator and a data and evaluation liaison. The role of these two positions was to both facilitate the evaluation's data collection needs and to work with front-line staff on real-time data entry concerns. The data and evaluation coordinator worked with state agencies and the federal evaluation staff to assess the collection capabilities of DCF and their partnering agencies. Where potential data collection gaps existed, the coordinator would then assist in finding solutions to allow for the additional data collections to occur. One example of this process was the development of a Performance Metrics tracking system utilizing DCF's existing SharePoint System. Once data were being collected, the coordinator and liaison worked with the USDA's contracted evaluation team to ensure regular secure transfers of the data. In addition, the coordinator and liaison provided a first level of support to the evaluation team when any questions on the data arose.

## DATA ANALYSIS

The evaluation of the pilots is congressionally mandated to be a rigorous, independent evaluation. The pilot outcome data will be compiled and analyzed by the USDA's contracted evaluation team led by Mathematica Policy Research and its partners. The findings will be presented to the U.S. Congress.

The pilot report includes:

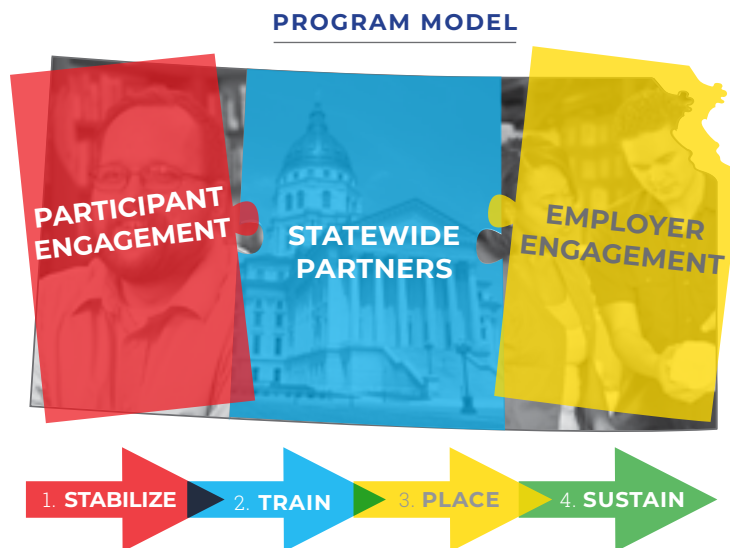
- ▶ **Annual reports to Congress**
- ▶ **A midterm report that examines short-term outcomes**
- ▶ **A final report that provides outcomes of the entire evaluation, including 36-month follow-up data on participant outcomes in each pilot project**

The findings from the evaluation will be posted on the FNS website ([www.fns.usda.gov/2014-ET-Pilots](http://www.fns.usda.gov/2014-ET-Pilots)).

USDA posted the first Report to Congress in June 2016. This report provided the status of the projects through the end of FY 2015. USDA anticipates the midterm report will be available in 2019 and the final report in 2021.

# THE GOALS MODEL

**GOALS WAS DESIGNED TO BE INDIVIDUALIZED AND TO MEET PARTICIPANTS WHERE** they were on their employment journey. The 360-degree approach of GOALS engaged participants, employers, community partners, and DCF staff in working toward successful employment outcomes. The program focused on meeting personnel needs of local employers and matching participants with training, critical resources, and labor market opportunities.



*Find comprehensive details about the program model on page 11.*

## INTAKE & ENROLLMENT

Early investments in strengths-based messaging and positive messaging materials, along with enthusiastic staff, helped garner interest in the program among participants and eligibility staff. Due to the nature of the pilot project, the random assignment and consent process required for enrollment was time consuming and made engaging messaging and materials even more important.

Eligible SNAP participants learned about the program through mailers, posters in DCF offices, eligibility workers, calls from staff, and word-of-mouth. If interested, SNAP participants were encouraged to attend an individual or group orientation at a local DCF office. Those unable to attend were provided phone orientations but were required to complete enrollment and random assignment in person at their local DCF office.

Orientations involved detailed explanation of services, the pilot evaluation requirements, and consent. After completing an orientation, participants were given the option to enroll. Those who opted in completed a detailed random assignment process. Half of the enrollees were randomly selected into the control group to receive "business as usual" services, and half were randomly selected to participate in GOALS.

In three of the four regions, participants in the control group were matched with a career navigator for limited job search, support services, and training assistance. In the southeast region, the control group only received referrals to community resources. GOALS participants were assigned to a career navigator and guided through career and interest assessments soon after intake.

### **PROGRAM DURATION**

Depending on their individual needs, assessments, and interests, participants were either matched with a training program, engaged in job search, or connected to mental health or substance use-disorder treatment services within three weeks. Job-ready participants were assisted with job placement and retention. Once the participant gained permanent employment, career navigators and employer liaisons provided sustainability and career advancement supports to participants and employers for up to 90 days after placement and retention. The overall model recommended 180 days on average through the placement phase, with actual length, duration, and level of support dependent on individual need.

### **EDUCATION & TRAINING**

GOALS included development funds for programs that integrated adult education, job preparedness, and brain science into a collaborative effort between community partners, adult education partners, DCF, and employers. The goal of these programs was to merge traditional educational gains with the social-emotional skills development essential to job stability. Program curriculum highlights included:

- ▶ **Adult education outcomes in math, reading, and writing**
- ▶ **Digital literacy**
- ▶ **Self-esteem and self-efficacy**
- ▶ **Growth mindset and brain science**
- ▶ **WORKReady! certificates**
- ▶ **Problem-solving and hygiene**
- ▶ **Transferable skills and resume building**
- ▶ **Job tours, mock interviews, and employer engagement**

### **STAFFING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The dedicated staff was the engine that made the GOALS model work. To make the model work across the state, DCF developed Generating Opportunities Teams (GO Teams) that were assigned to each of the four pilot regions. The GO Team staff included career navigators, who served as the primary connections with participants, and employer liaisons, who were the primary contact for employers. The team also included community partners. GO Teams provided tailored support to participants and employers and received extensive training to facilitate movement through the model phases.

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#### **POINT OF VIEW**

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**“Sometimes a presenter came in and talked about how to manage your debt and credit. We had a dress for success program, and I got an interview outfit. At the Thursday Thrive meeting, we talked about topics like how to handle stress or self-care. It was really nice.”**

*Loriana, GOALS Participant*

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## GOALS MODEL PHASES

GOALS helps Kansas communities to develop innovative strategies to Stabilize, Train, Place, and Sustain motivated participants by partnering with local organizations and employers to match participants with labor market opportunities and provide ongoing skill development for career advancement.



### 1. STABILIZE

Intensive case management services

"I thought GOALS was amazing. GOALS opened the door and helped break down the barrier that kept me from achieving what I wanted to achieve."

*Cinnamon, GOALS Participant*

#### OBJECTIVE

Participants demonstrate appropriate competencies and skills to prepare them for job training, placement, and retention.

Research and practice confirm the importance of an intensive, integrated, and individually-focused approach for participants who have significant challenges to obtaining or sustaining meaningful employment. During this phase, and throughout the pilot, career navigators were the primary point of contact for each participant. They worked closely as a team with community partners in mental health, substance use disorder, and/or training agencies to help participants with stabilization. Staff working with the treatment group received ongoing, in-depth training on strengths-based case management, motivational interviewing techniques, trauma-informed care and ACEs, financial literacy, and cultural competency.

#### FEATURES OF THIS PHASE

- ▶ Intensive case management
- ▶ Individualized assessments
- ▶ Employment preparation and planning
- ▶ Assistance with relocation as needed
- ▶ Emergency employment as needed, to secure housing and transportation
- ▶ Support services
- ▶ Substance use disorder treatment services as needed
- ▶ Mental health assessment and services as needed

## 2. TRAIN

### Job-driven training & career pathways

“At graduation, most of the participants break down because their life changed during the past six weeks. They really can’t believe what happened, from the beginning to the end.”

*Hector Martinez, Garden City Adult Learning Center Director,  
Garden City Community College, GOALS Partner*

#### OBJECTIVES

1. Participants receive, or are progressing toward, post-secondary education (i.e., a degree or industry-recognized credential) related to in-demand jobs.
2. Participants have the opportunity for placement in positions after they complete training.

Post-secondary education, particularly a degree or industry-related credential related to market demand, is the critical determinant of lifetime income. One additional year of education leads to earnings gains between 6 to 9 percent, with recent studies suggesting an even higher return of 10 to 15 percent per year (U.S. Department of Labor et al., 2014).

SNAP employment and training participants can face both tangible and intangible barriers in accessing entry into education and training. Participants must balance life’s everyday demands with those of pursuing an education. Things like navigating the many degree programs, course offerings, and training options at community colleges can be daunting, particularly for those with no previous exposure to post-secondary education. Understanding the link between educational requirements and market-driven job opportunities can be virtually impossible for some participants. Financial assistance, such as Pell grants, may not cover the costs of training.

GOALS provided a unique opportunity to help education and training participants navigate this complexity. It also brought together community colleges, employers, and community-based organizations. Through these partnerships, GOALS encouraged flexibility and, where appropriate, reductions in the time-frame necessary for certificate and degree program completion to better align with labor market realities.

#### FEATURES OF THIS PHASE

- ▶ Build employer partnerships
- ▶ Match participant skills to labor market
- ▶ Assist navigating post-secondary education system
- ▶ Develop short-term skills training for in-demand jobs
- ▶ Encourage employer participation in orientations and trainings
- ▶ Provide ongoing training for career advancement
- ▶ Support self-examination and personal growth through programming

### 3. PLACE Employment

“The GOALS participants who work for us are really career driven. I know they are not likely to stay stagnant; they will be promoted and move up and contribute even more to our agency. They are working to earn promotions and contribute even more as they gain experience. These are people who, two to three months ago, were on assistance, are now able to support themselves. We need more of these people coming into our program.”

*Dr. Gary Welcher, DVM, Frontline Supervisor, USDA/FSIS/OFO, GOALS Partner*

#### OBJECTIVE

**Participants are employed in settings that support ongoing training and career advancement.**

The employer liaisons played an important part during the Place phase. Their role was to identify employers with openings on an ongoing basis, provide the flexibility needed to respond to emerging employer needs, and assist with finding emergency employment for participants in order to secure their housing and transportation. They engaged employers as leaders in the job preparation and life-skills classes, discussion panels, and had them assist with mock interviews and workplace tours.

Employer liaisons focused on quality employment, since focusing on the quality of job placement is proven to help participants achieve sustained employment and self-sufficiency. To GOALS, quality means a living wage with benefits, job security, full-time hours, fair treatment, and advancement potential. Staff connected with employers and participants for 90 days to make sure the placement was a good fit, work out logistics, and moderate difficulties.

Employers were essential contributors to a participant’s growth over time. This approach sometimes led to a permanent employer-participant match prior to participants’ graduation. Employers often shared that, as long as GOALS helped a person become job ready through program trainings, they would provide the job-specific training after hire. Having employers engaged with participants early on gave employers new insights into some of the day-to-day issues SNAP participants deal with. It also made employers more aware of their needs and strengths.

#### FEATURES OF THIS PHASE

- ▶ Match participants to local labor market demands
- ▶ Support ongoing training and career advancement
- ▶ Build employer/participant partnerships
- ▶ Assist participants to obtain gainful employment
- ▶ Host hiring events
- ▶ Educate employers

## 4. SUSTAIN Job retention

**“GOALS provided me with an applicant who had the skill set, he just didn’t have the longevity and position I usually look for. But he had the GOALS program behind him to overcome the barriers. He’s been here for a while now, and he’s only missed two days of work. He’s doing really well.”**

*Kathleen Cappel, Human Resource Administrator, UPU Industries Inc., GOALS Partner*

### **OBJECTIVES**

- 1. Participants demonstrate satisfactory job performance within their first 90 days of employment.**
- 2. Employers report satisfaction with participants’ performance within the first 90 days of employment.**

GOALS enhanced a critical component to the employment and training model as part of the pilot: 90 days of job retention support and an employer liaison in each region to support both the employer and employee. The pilot provided an opportunity to demonstrate the importance of continued transition support during the first 90 days for participants who may have been unemployed or under-employed for a long period. Employer liaisons worked with employers to develop sustainable strategies for matching participants with labor market opportunities and to provide ongoing skill development for career advancement.

This highly proactive approach involved ongoing feedback from the employer and the participant, plus one-on-one coaching and guidance with the career navigator. There were regular opportunities for support through peer groups/cohorts established during the Train phase, and Circles or Thrive allies (mentors) from the Stabilize phase. The continuity of these ongoing relationships, coupled with the ability to share experiences with peers, provided a supportive framework to help participants navigate challenges, such as loss of child care or transportation, and difficulty adjusting to workplace norms.

### **FEATURES OF THIS PHASE SUPPORTED BY EMPLOYER LIAISONS**

- ▶ Participant feedback
- ▶ Employer feedback and education
- ▶ Peer coaching and mentoring
- ▶ Transition services
- ▶ 90 days post-hire support to employees and employers



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POINT OF VIEW

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**“GOALS helps to break generational poverty. Participants discover that there are other options out there and they can improve their situation. They discover that they can make changes themselves.**

**I think that’s a great thing.”**

*Dr. Gary Welcher, DVM, Frontline Supervisor, USDA/FSIS/OFO, GOALS Partner*

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## KEY FEATURES & LESSONS LEARNED

DCF noted several key features that contributed to the successful implementation of GOALS:

- ▶ Early investment in branding and messaging tools
- ▶ Career navigators and intensive, strengths-based case management
- ▶ Developing the employer liaison's role and retention services
- ▶ Employer, adult education, and technical school collaboration
- ▶ Funding mental health and substance use disorder services
- ▶ Facilitating collaboration using the collective impact model

### Strategic communications

Among the USDA pilot sites, Kansas was often asked to provide insights on its successful messaging campaign and how it achieved such high enrollment rates. Careful planning and investment in branding and messaging prior to roll out were all critical factors. Working with a well-established advertising agency, the planning team used a human-centered design approach to engage potential participants and current staff in focus groups. These focus groups selected messaging and design elements, including colors, logo, and verbiage, that instilled encouragement and hope.

Kansas used the designs to launch a GOALS website as a staff, public, and partner resource. The website included a page for success stories that allowed staff, partners, and participants to see the results of their hard work. These stories were also used for orientations and provider trainings. As a result, Kansas randomly assigned 200 more participants than projected. The designs and messaging continued to be an asset further into the pilot in development of re-engagement materials such as newsletters and postcards.



### Career navigators & intensive case management

GOALS had approximately 16 career navigators across four regions who were tasked with providing intensive, strengths-based case management. Case management started immediately at the point of random assignment, whenever possible. To engage participants early in the process, it was important to have a well-trained staff.

To that end, GOALS embraced professional development and intentionally emphasized a strengths-based approach to case management. An intensive three-week training included education in the pilot model and logistics, as well as the following topics:

- ▶ Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and toxic stress
- ▶ Growth vs. fixed mindset
- ▶ Strengths-based case management
- ▶ Motivational interviewing
- ▶ Offender Workforce Development (OWDs) training on barriers, referrals, and assessments
- ▶ Workplace skills/essential skills
- ▶ Financial literacy, data, and evaluation requirements
- ▶ Random assignment
- ▶ Collective impact approach to collaboration
- ▶ Lemonade for WorkLife: A Practitioner's Guide to Using ACEs Research to Build Hope and Resilience
- ▶ Cultural competency
- ▶ FNS SNAP Employment and Training Policy
- ▶ DCF Management Information System (MIS) system training
- ▶ Presentations from our substance use disorder services and community mental health partners

Refreshers in some of these topics were provided throughout the pilot, as well new topics such as Mental Health First Aid and behavioral insights into participant engagement. Since partners and providers were also an important part of the intensive case management wraparound approach, professional development opportunities were also extended on occasion to partners and employers. Substance use disorder services and community mental health partners also made frequent presentations to staff and participants as part of participant trainings.

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#### POINT OF VIEW

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**“GOALS offers individuals the opportunity to better their situation... When they come in the door, they feel broken. For a career navigator and I to sit with them and say we have resources to connect them to and let them know we’ll walk with them through the process – helps them feel like they never have to do it alone.”**

*Tricia McCourt, Solutions Recovery Care Coordinator and GOALS Case Manager, Heartland Regional Alcohol and Drug Assessment Center (RADAC), GOALS Partner*

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### **Employer liaisons, retention services, & employer engagement**

The employer liaison position was designed to identify and develop relationships with local employers.

The liaisons looked for employers who offered several essentials:

- ▶ Available job openings
- ▶ Positions that allowed for employee advancement
- ▶ Wages that were comparable to living wage standards in the region

The employer liaison was responsible for being well informed about local labor market demands and trends. This was accomplished, in part, through close association with the Kansas Department of Labor, but primarily through personal relationship building in each community. They worked in tandem with the career navigators to assure eligible participants were getting the skills-set trainings they needed to be matched appropriately with employers and employment opportunities. Employers were engaged in training sessions at the invitation and encouragement of the employee liaisons.

Finally, the employer liaison was responsible for providing support to and acting as an advocate for both the participant and the employer for 90 days after job placement. The time invested in treating employers as partners improved employment opportunities for GOALS participants and strengthened community relationships.

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#### **POINT OF VIEW**

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**“I think that this is absolutely an opportunity for not just the participants, but for the employers and for the state in general to thrive and continue to put people to work and continue to lower our unemployment rate. The more people who are working, the less benefits are going out, and the state is saving money.”**

*Jennifer Greer, Business Developer, Express Employment Professionals, GOALS Partner*

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### **Employer, adult education, & technical school collaboration**

Employer, adult education, and technical school collaborations were critical parts of the program model. In order to meet local employer needs, GOALS reached out to training institutions in each geographic region to either develop or enhance existing programming, with a special focus on short-term, in-demand training. Essential interventions included occupational skills training and intensive stabilization assistance. Likewise, skills and personal development training, paired with adult education outcomes, proved an invaluable part of the career pathway for many participants.

Regarding occupational skills training, GOALS worked with technical school and community college partners, and employers to develop or tie into several short-term training opportunities that led to employment. For example, the Aeronautics Manufacturing Program through Wichita State University Technical Services was tied directly to Spirit Aircraft, helping them to fill over 200 job openings.

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POINT OF VIEW

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“One of our GOALS participants did not have a high school diploma. After she finished the Partners for Success class, she wanted to go on and get her high school diploma. When she participated in her graduation, with the cap and gown, she looked like a new person. She gave everyone hope and encouragement: When you have problems, you can stop what you are doing and move forward and change your life.”

*Mary Johanning, Director of Adult Education, Highland Community College, GOALS Partner*

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**PARTNERSHIPS**

A Thrive Community, Manhattan	Highland Community College, Technical Center
A Thrive Community, Wichita	Just Food: KitchenWorks Culinary Arts Program
Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center	Kansas Department of Labor
Business Education & Training Analysis (BETA)	Kansasworks
Butler Community College	Labette Community College
Center for Public Partnerships and Research at the University of Kansas	Martin Training and Staffing Solutions
Circles of Greater Topeka	Neosho Community College
Circles of the Heartland Salina	Seward County Community College
Dodge City Community College	Southeast Kansas Career and Technical Education Center (CTEC)
The Dwayne Peaslee Technical Training Center	Substance Abuse Center of Kansas (SACK)
Eagles Nest, Inc.	Workforce Alliance - Preparation for Aviation/Advanced Career Employment System Program (PACES)
Episcopal Social Services	Workforce Ready Koncepts
Fort Scott Community College	Wichita State Technical College
Garden City Community College	
HealthSource Integrated Solutions	
Heartland Regional Alcohol and Drug Assessment Center (RADAC)	

## **Behavioral health: mental health & substance use disorder services**

**“From the very beginning, I knew that this was going to be a good program. This kind of a program reinforces the need for collaboration across the entire community, to help people get the skills they need to find jobs and keep those jobs.”**

*Patrick Yancy, Chief Executive Officer, HealthSource Integrated Solutions, GOALS Partner*

The pilot provided Kansas an opportunity to test two major enhanced services not previously available to SNAP E&T participants: mental health and substance use disorder services. Kansas wanted to find out if the addition of these supports lead to improved employment outcomes and long-term success. In addition, the state wanted to see if incorporating education about behavioral health into staff, partner, and participant trainings contributed to the overall approach.

To this end, GOALS was designed to help communities and employers address mental health and substance use disorder barriers to successful employment. DCF awarded HealthSource Integrated Solutions a grant to provide administrative support for Community Mental Health Centers (CMHC) across the state. CMHC partners provided face-to-face consultation/counseling services at local offices and during participant trainings.

GOALS behavioral health partners, such as the Heartland RADAC and the Substance Abuse Center of Kansas (SACK), worked closely with GOALS GO Team staff in a hands-on, team approach. They were often able to meet participants offsite. Throughout the pilot, staff, partners, and participants observed anecdotally that the additional supports played a critical role in helping participants achieve and sustain success.

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### **POINT OF VIEW**

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**“With GOALS, we were able to help them. If they needed substance abuse treatment or mental health therapy – all of these things that seemed insurmountable to them before – we were able to tackle those barriers to get their lives back.”**

*Gail Bickel, Lead Care Coordinator, Substance Abuse Center of Kansas, GOALS Partner*

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### **Collective impact, partner involvement**

The GOALS pilot took an intentional approach to collaboration in each region by facilitating a collective impact model. Collective impact engaged partners around the common goals of planning, problem solving, and implementation of GOALS. During the pilot planning phase, a core group of the planning team travelled around the state providing orientations to the project. They also invited partners at the state and local level to participate in regional collective impact approaches to planning and program implementation.

A collective impact facilitator led quarterly meetings throughout the pilot. The first several meetings focused on establishing a connection to the project's overall goal, establishing shared measures, and setting more localized common goals related to the pilot's vision. During the quarterly meetings in each of the four regions, GOALS staff continued to facilitate collaboration among partners and support their investment in strengthening regional infrastructure.

## Collective impact goals

Our common agenda was to help food assistance recipients get on a path to successful careers that pay living wages, offer advancement opportunities, and enhance their sense of value in themselves, their families, and communities.

After the pilot began, regional partners set a goal to create a stronger system of connected services that works for participants. This system would include:

- ▶ **Multiple access points**
- ▶ **Seamless referral system**
- ▶ **Developmental pathways to careers**
- ▶ **Continuum from preventive services through post-employment supports**
- ▶ **Increased outreach to participants**
- ▶ **Supports for participants as they experienced slips and bumps**
- ▶ **No cliff effect or penalties**

Overall, partners were interested in working together to create a system that works for the individual, not the individual trying to make the system work. Pilot staff and partners worked toward these objectives at each meeting by discussing challenges, successes, and programmatic improvements needed to achieve local community and employer needs.

## Shared data

Shared data is a critical piece of the collective impact model. The pilot's data and evaluation coordinator, a member of the statewide leadership planning team, facilitated discussions about accessing county-level data from the Kansas Department of Labor, living wage data from MIT, performance metrics, participant demographics, and referrals. Partners and providers engaged with data trends in real time in order to address opportunities for programmatic improvements or community-level action. This process allowed the pilot programs to make timely adjustments to help better serve the needs of both the participants and the community.

## WHAT IS COLLECTIVE IMPACT?

Collective impact is an intentional approach to collaboration that brings diverse organizations together to solve complex social problems through a shared commitment to a common goal. The collective impact framework consists of five conditions drawn from case studies of successful collaborative projects. These include:



### Common Agenda

Coming together to define the problem and create a shared vision to solve it.



### Shared Measurements

Tracking progress and sharing data to work towards continuous improvement.



### Mutually Reinforcing Activities

Coordinating efforts that, while different and unique, complement each other.



### Continuous Communication

Building trust, relationships, and regular communication among participants.



### Backbone Support

Having dedicated staff and resources to support the work of the group.

Collective Impact Forum  
[www.collectiveimpactforum.org/what-collective-impact](http://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/what-collective-impact)

## Partners

Collective impact participants included representatives from human resources, small businesses, community mental health centers, community colleges, adult education centers, substance use disorder agencies, faith-based community organizations, workforce agency partners, and program participants. Building trust across agencies, these meetings created the time and space for groups to make course corrections on processes such as a referrals and payment processes for mental health services.

### QUESTIONS ASKED DURING PILOT PLANNING:

What excites or motivates you about this project?

What will success look like when this project is completed from your agency's perspective? Your personal perspective?

How can GOALS benefit your agency and/or the state as a whole?

### QUESTIONS ASKED DURING POST-PILOT TRANSITION PLANNING:

How might collective impact and our common agenda look in your community, on a more local level?

Does geography matter? If so, where is the heart of your community?

Who is missing from the table? Who shares this goal? Who can lead?

Where are these conversations already happening?

Are they regular, consistent, focused on the same vision, and inclusive?

If you envision collective impact on a more local level, what people and tools might be available to help support or guide these efforts?

The collective impact model provided an intentional framework for organizing partners around a common pilot objective. In some regions, participation was stronger than in others, in part due to the geographic scope and travel time. As the pilot ended, DCF encouraged partners to take on leadership roles and continue to apply the model in their ongoing work, with the continued backbone support from DCF staff, where available.



## GOALS COMMITMENTS

### FOR PARTICIPANTS WE WILL...

- ▶ Offer you a path to a career with a living wage and a chance to advance—more than just training and a job, a chance for a brighter future.
- ▶ Value and respect you as an individual.
- ▶ Listen and respond to your needs and interests.
- ▶ Expect progress but not perfection.
- ▶ Support you as you develop the skills to be successful.
- ▶ Celebrate your successes with you.

### FOR EMPLOYERS WE WILL...

- ▶ Help recruit and retain the type of skilled, reliable employees you need.
- ▶ Welcome your engagement in all phases of the GOALS project (Stabilize, Train, Place, and Sustain).
- ▶ Recognize and respect your limitations in working with new employees.
- ▶ Support your investment in the GOALS project so that it contributes positively to your bottom line.
- ▶ Work in partnership toward better outcomes for your organization and your community.

### FOR PARTNERS WE WILL...

- ▶ Combine your expertise with others to make a difference in people's lives.
- ▶ Be part of a project that can reshape employment and training services across the country.
- ▶ Benefit from in-depth research about what strategies work best in employment and training.
- ▶ Build new relationships with employers, educators, economic developers, and social service providers.
- ▶ Participate in a proven collective impact model to achieve measurable results through strong partnerships and mutual benefit.

### FOR EACH OTHER (STAFF)...

- ▶ We are a team with a shared commitment to project success.
- ▶ We expect and encourage risk-taking and mistakes—that's how we learn and make change.
- ▶ When a problem arises, we assume positive intent and check it out with each other.
- ▶ We look for the bright spots and celebrate our successes as they come.
- ▶ We model the attitudes and behaviors we expect from our partners and participants in everything we do.

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POINT OF VIEW

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**“The stories are what I will continue to remember going forward,  
long after the spreadsheets are all buried somewhere.  
I’ll still remember the people that I heard speaking at the  
quarterly meetings.”**

*Patrick Yancy, Chief Executive Officer of HealthSource Integrated Solutions, GOALS Partner*

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# PILOT REGION STORIES

**THE GOALS PILOT PROJECT WAS DIVIDED INTO FOUR REGIONS ACROSS THE STATE** and represented urban, rural, and designated frontier service areas. GO Teams were assigned to serve each region. A pilot project manager, along with DCF administrators, provided statewide oversight. Each region consisted of several counties and presented unique features, strengths, and opportunities. With ongoing training and communication, regular site visits from project leadership, and cross-region collaboration, each region's team successfully maintained fidelity to the pilot model throughout the project period.

#### Regional GO Team

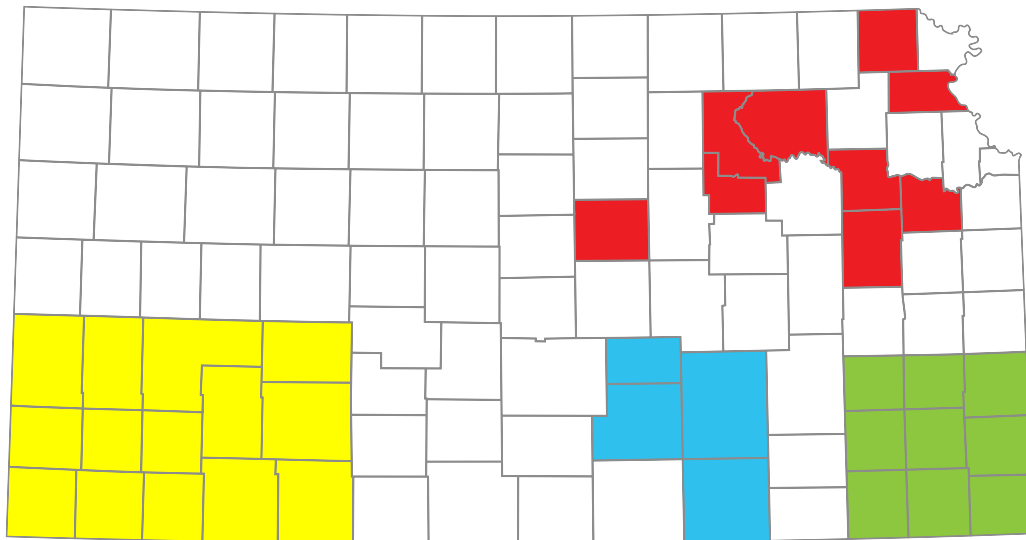
- ▶ Team Lead
- ▶ Employer Liaison
- ▶ Career Navigators

#### Statewide Oversight Team

- ▶ Pilot Project Manager
- ▶ DCF Administrative Office
- ▶ Leadership Team

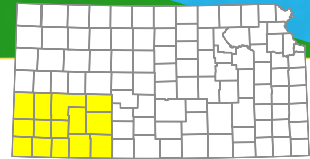
### THE PILOT REGIONS MAP

**SOUTHWEST** | **SOUTH CENTRAL** | **SOUTHEAST** | **NORTHEAST**



To see and hear some of the stories, go to [goals.ks.gov](https://goals.ks.gov).

# SOUTHWEST



**THIS SPARSELY POPULATED RURAL REGION INCLUDED SMALL towns and farming communities. Four meat processing plants provided numerous job opportunities, as did local stockyards, community colleges, city maintenance, and services positions.**

Several years before GOALS launched, DCF first began its collaboration with USDA Food Safety and Inspection Services (FSIS) to fill federal meat processing plant inspector positions in this region. This was a firm foundation upon which to build GOALS.

GO Team staff regularly participated in strong local community meetings, developing contacts and networking with other community providers to assure participants were getting the services they needed. They helped create job fairs and resource events in all three DCF hubs.

Collaboration with Garden City Community College helped the GO Team offer regular Bridges and Partners 4 Success classes. When Garden City Community College lost its instructor for these classes, DCF offered Bridges at its three offices, with continued success.

## **SOUTHWEST REGION\***

### **COUNTIES**

CLARK  
FINNEY  
FORD  
GRAY  
GRANT  
HAMILTON  
HASKELL  
HODGEMAN  
KEARNY  
MORTON  
MEADE  
SEWARD  
STANTON  
STEVENS

### **POPULATION**

139,207

### **SNAP PARTICIPANTS**

8,556

### **PILOT PARTICIPANTS**

636

## **POINT OF VIEW**

**“We want to make sure work like this continues in the state. There is a group of people out there who just need some encouragement and a chance to break this cycle in their lives. Programs like GOALS, with wraparound services, can really make a difference.”**

*Brian Inbody, President, Neosho County Community College, GOALS Partner*

\*Total population taken from 2016 (start of pilot participation) census estimate. Pilot participants taken as the total for the 2 year enrollment period. SNAP participant totals taken from most recently available month, December 2018.



**“The GOALS program flipped the script on what I wanted to do with my life. Without this opportunity, I wouldn’t be doing what I am doing today.” ~ Sumner**

## SUMNER

### GOALS HELPED HER WRITE A BRAND-NEW STORY FOR HER LIFE

“The GOALS program flipped the script on what I wanted to do with my life,” says 32-year-old Sumner.

Sumner was eager to rewrite her story, with a fresh start in Kansas. When her husband was offered a job in Garden City, they were excited to leave behind all the problems and challenges they faced in their home in California and start over. “Something needs to change; something needs to click,” she remembers telling herself.



Sumner couldn’t wait to get to work once her family was settled. But as a stay-at-home mom without a college degree or work experience, she was having trouble finding a job. She knew she needed some type of job training program that would give her skills and confidence to get back in the workforce. When she found out about GOALS, she was elated.

“The GOALS team has been absolutely amazing,” Sumner shares. “They would watch the mock interviews and give me feedback. They helped me pick out outfits. They helped me learn how to better communicate with people—I am a little blunt sometimes. They taught me some of the soft skills I knew I had, but I needed to manage them a little better.”

After she completed GOALS, Sumner was invited to join the staff at a local community college, where she is now a secretary for the English as a Second Language Department. A few months later, she decided to enroll at the college and pursue a degree in accounting. She’s doing so well in her studies that she’s now a member of a prestigious academic honorary society.

“My dad cried when I told him I got straight A’s,” Sumner beams.

Juggling the demands of a job, college, and her family hasn’t always been easy, but Sumner is thrilled with her life and the impact the change has had on her family.

“It’s created a chain reaction,” she explains. “Not only have I been showing my kids that Mommy can balance school, work, and having straight A’s, but she can have time with Daddy and each of you, too.”

Sumner believes all this positive change in her life would not have been possible without GOALS. “Without this opportunity, I wouldn’t be doing what I am doing today,” she says. “There is a point in your life when the change needs to be made or you stay in the rut you are in. I wanted to be a part of something bigger. That’s what we are doing.”



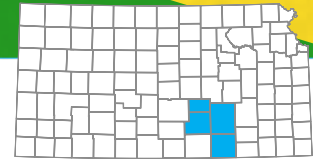
# SOUTH CENTRAL

**THE SOUTH CENTRAL REGION OFFERED GOALS PARTICIPANTS A** wealth of employment options, training opportunities, and wrap-around support services. The region included one state university and two private universities, an Airforce base, a state prison, and dozens of manufacturing companies. There were four DCF offices that served this region.

Most of the GOALS participants lived in Wichita, the state's largest city, home to 29 aircraft manufacturing companies, including Spirit, Cessna, and Textron, and many other companies that provide parts for Beechcraft and Boeing.

In the rural areas, there are agricultural, correctional, and manufacturing opportunities, as well as a meat processing facility that employs FSIS inspectors.

The GOALS pilot also enjoyed a strong and well attended collective impact consortium. In Winfield, GOALS was able to partner with Eagles Nest, Inc., a program whose director has won national awards for her excellence in community service for people in poverty.



## **SOUTH CENTRAL REGION\***

### **COUNTIES**

BUTLER  
COWLEY  
HARVEY  
SEDGWICK

### **POPULATION**

651,700

### **SNAP PARTICIPANTS**

64,682

### **PILOT PARTICIPANTS**

1,921



**RONNIE**

**"The class introduced me to skills I didn't have and helped me polish the skills I already had. They take your negatives and turn them into positives." ~ Ronnie**

## **GOALS GAVE RONNIE A SECOND CHANCE**

There is so much Ronnie wants to do with his legal training. His career goal is to establish a non-profit purchase abandoned buildings, then turn them into housing for people newly released from prison. Ronnie envisions that the tenants would gain job skills as they worked to rehab the properties.

But a few things are standing in the way of Ronnie making his vision a reality. He is over 60, has limited work experience, and few marketable skills. But his biggest hurdle is a criminal record. Ronnie served 31 years for first-degree murder, a crime he is adamant he did not commit.



\*Total population taken from 2016 (start of pilot participation) census estimate. Pilot participants taken as the total for the 2 year enrollment period. SNAP participant totals taken from most recently available month, December 2018.

Despite earning a paralegal degree while in prison and his eagerness to build a new life using his skills and passions, Ronnie faced a lot of difficulty finding and maintaining employment when he was granted parole in 2012, at the age of 57. In the ensuing years, he says he was in and out of jobs, and landed some short-term employment for a temp agency.

Then, things changed the day he heard about the GOALS program.

"I was sitting at the transit center waiting for a bus when a guy I knew from prison recognized me and we got to talking, and he said, "There's this program called GOALS, and you ought to check it out."

Ronnie figured he had nothing to lose, so he explored the new program. He's so glad he did.

"From the first person I met through all of the people that were a part of the GOALS program, they're all the same, you know. Different faces and different races, but the compassion and the care and the concern is the same," he recounts. "They take your negatives and turn them into positives."

**"The best decision I made after being freed was contacting the program and becoming a participant. The counselors involved with this program make it their zealous journey to help, assist, and enhance a person's life. The program instills tools from grammar to appearance while developing other areas in a person's life to give each person self-esteem and purpose."**

His career navigator suggested he go through the Bridges program. In addition to the supportive relationships he built with instructors and others in the class, Ronnie was thrilled with the skills he gained, like writing a resume and conducting a job interview.

"The class introduced me to skills I didn't have, and helped me polish the skills I already had," he shares. "When a person goes to prison and comes out, your background matters – what you were convicted of matters. It closes doors. But in Bridges, they introduce techniques as to how you can take those negative obstacles that are holding you back, and you can turn them into positive, where it helps you. They teach you about the tools and the techniques as to how you accomplish that."

Ronnie is still working on finding a job. But he's not losing hope because he has the support of the team at GOALS. He knows it's only a matter of time if he relies on the skills and training he received in the program.

"GOALS is not a handout; it's a hand up," he says. "I'm just happy that through this program, there are a lot of people that recognize my worth."



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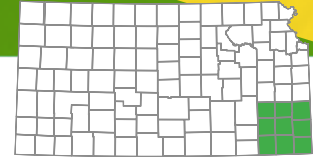
**POINT OF VIEW**

**"There are multiple reasons why people aren't working. Lots of times, it's not because they don't want to work. They just have a number of barriers in their way. GOALS gets them back into the workforce."**

*Kathleen Cappel, Human Resource Administrator, GOALS Partner*

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# SOUTHEAST



**THIS RURAL REGION HAS BECOME AN INDUSTRIAL AND manufacturing hub, with a demand for employees with skills in welding, plumbing, and heavy equipment manufacturing. As a result, employers and community employment consortiums were highly engaged when GOALS provided the basic training through Southeast Kansas Career and Technical Education Center (CTEC) and Labette Community College.**

Partners and employers were particularly active in the collective impact process in this region and planned to continue the meetings after the completion of the GOALS pilot.

One of the GOALS partners, Neosho County Community College, developed the Bridges program. This intensive life and skills-training course was a critical component of the statewide GOALS model and was a central feature of the services offered to participants.

In order to offer a third way to test the efficacy of the GOALS approach, the pilot was designed so that one region would not offer employment services to the control group, as they were in the other three regions. The southeast region was chosen as the place for this test. Control group participants who had not been randomly assigned to GOALS were given a list of local resources to pursue on their own.

## SOUTHEAST REGION\*

### COUNTIES

ALLEN  
BOURBON  
CHEROKEE  
CRAWFORD  
LABETTE  
MONTGOMERY  
NEOSHO  
WILSON  
WOODSON

### POPULATION

169,690

### SNAP PARTICIPANTS

19,336

### PILOT PARTICIPANTS

627



**BRAD**

## GOALS LEADS TO A NEW PASSION AND A NEW CAREER

**"There was an employer right next door to where GOALS classes were being held. I took my resume, and I went next door, dropped my resume off, and within a day, I had a phone call wanting an interview and was hired in less than a week." ~ Brad**

If Brad had any doubts whether GOALS would have an impact on his life, he got instant proof after graduation.

"One of the requirements was to build a resume," he recounts. "There was an employer right next door to where GOALS classes were being held. I took my resume, and I went next door, dropped off my resume, and within a day, I had a phone call to come interview. I was hired in less than a week."



\*Total population taken from 2016 (start of pilot participation) census estimate. Pilot participants taken as the total for the 2 year enrollment period. SNAP participant totals taken from most recently available month, December 2018.



Brad was elated. Since moving to Kansas at age 25 to pursue a trial teaching job that didn't work out, he had nothing but tough breaks. He was unemployed, unable to pay his bills and, if things didn't change quickly, he and his wife would soon lose their housing.

"I had been looking for work since I was let go (from the trial teaching position). I was clueless about the job market, clueless about what to do, where to go, who to talk to. I was just lost at that point. I needed options," Brad recounts. "I was struggling with depression, being in a strange place, losing a job. It was a real blow to my self-worth."

Something had to change, Brad remembers thinking. When he found out about the GOALS program, he was willing to give it a try.

Through GOALS Bridges classes, Brad began to ask himself what he was passionate about and where his strengths lie. He grew personally and formed deep friendships with his GOALS classmates. "We were in the same boat; we were in this together," he explains. "I didn't feel as lonely."

Brad had an associate's degree in business, but during GOALS he discovered he really wanted to be a teacher. GOALS helped him pay his college application fee, and he is now earning a bachelor's in business education.

Thanks to GOALS, Brad is now working full time as a middle school paraprofessional and goes to school full time. With his new job, he and his wife were able to buy their own home, which they now share with their three foster children.

As Brad looks at how far he's come since joining GOALS, he feels a lot of pride. "My proudest moment was the day I got the keys for my house. Pretty close to that was being accepted into school and making good grades," he says. "I've had a lot of proud moments. All the hard work has paid off. It's been very exciting."



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## POINT OF VIEW

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The GOALS participants were eager to learn. They wanted to go out and get a job. Every one of them finished and passed the class. Two of the participants completed the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and forklift training, and both of them got jobs within weeks of finishing.

*Davis Oehme, Welding Instructor, CTEC, GOALS Partner*

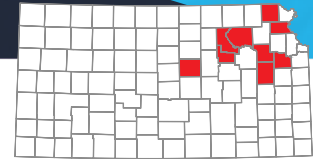
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# NORTHEAST

HOME TO THREE OF THE STATE'S MAJOR UNIVERSITIES, A LARGE military base, the state capitol, and urban and rural communities, the northeast region proved to be a unique environment in which to test the GOALS pilot.

GOALS training partners in the northeast region included local community colleges and technical schools. Other key partners included Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center, Heartland RADAC, Kansas Works, HealthSource Integrated Solutions, and Circles of Greater Topeka.

Salina Adult Education Center in Saline County was the birthplace of the Partners 4 Success class. Through GOALS, this intensive life-skills class became a model for many adult education partners. GO Teams in the northeast region also developed and provided employment preparation classes in-house.



## NORTHEAST REGION\*

### COUNTIES

ATCHISON  
BROWN  
DOUGLAS  
GEARY  
OSAGE  
POTTAWATOMIE  
RILEY  
SALINE  
SHAWNEE

### POPULATION

529,885

### SNAP PARTICIPANTS

38,706

### PILOT PARTICIPANTS

984



## MICHAEL

"Coming from being homeless and suffering from addiction, to have one person say they wanted to help me to succeed in life was a big thing for me. It helped me get my own drive. I wanted to succeed for myself because there was someone who believed I could succeed." ~ Michael

## MICHAEL'S JOURNEY FROM HOMELESSNESS TO HOPE

Michael was at a crossroads in his life. "It was either I live, or I die," he states. He was convinced that if he didn't overcome his substance abuse disorder and chronic homelessness soon, he would end up dead. He chose to live. And GOALS became his pathway.

GOALS, says Michael, "has changed me in almost every way imaginable. I came from being homeless to working a full-time job. I have steady housing. I'm able to pay my rent every month, to eat, and live comfortably enough. And, to go after my dreams."



\*Total population taken from 2016 (start of pilot participation) census estimate. Pilot participants taken as the total for the 2 year enrollment period. SNAP participant totals taken from most recently available month, December 2018.

Michael's life had been picture-perfect at one time. "I had a family, everything you can think of that would make you happy," he shares. Then, tragedy struck. His infant son died.

"It changed my whole life," Michael recounts. "I let my alcohol addiction take over my whole life. I didn't want to live any more. I was completely hopeless, living in an alley next to a liquor store."

For two years, Michael tried to get sober, but it wasn't until he started working with a program that encouraged him to go through GOALS that he finally had the support, resources, and determination he needed to get clean and completely redirect the course of his life.

"They taught me a lot of things. It was basically, how to live again," Michael explains.

Through classes and coaching, Michael began to realize that he had a lot of skills and abilities, and that his future looked pretty bright. His career navigator helped him identify his passions and strengths, and develop hard skills and soft skills to help him succeed in gaining and maintaining employment. Now, he has big aims for his career and life.

"The biggest difference is having people who want to see you succeed," he shares. "For me, it was, when you are living in an alley with raccoons, nobody cares about you. But these people in these programs come along, and they tell you, 'Hey, you are worth something, and I want to help you accomplish some goals. I want you to succeed in life. I'm here to help you figure out how to get your life together.'"

As Michael looks back on where he was, and where he is now, he's happy with the remarkable progress he's made in a very short time.

"Going from homelessness to being full-time employed and being a productive member of the community is something to be proud of," Michael says. "I'm most proud of the fact that I did a lot of this stuff myself. I took the information and resources and went full force with it. I was able to bring myself up, with a little bit of help. That makes me pretty proud."



## CONCLUSION

### Looking Ahead

The GOALS pilot has come to a close, but the impact, stories, and opportunities for growth continue. GOALS brought together the strength and ingenuity of individuals across Kansas to help put a brighter future within the reach of SNAP participants. Together, they not only strengthened their communities, they also contributed to the national dialogue on what works for SNAP employment and training in Kansas and the nation. DCF is grateful to all who came together to make GOALS possible. We look forward to building on our success and continuing to work together for a brighter future for all. For updates on the national pilot results, please see the FNS website at [www.fns.usda.gov/2014-ET-Pilots](http://www.fns.usda.gov/2014-ET-Pilots). For more on how Kansas continues to work towards innovative approaches to employment and training, visit [www.dcf.ks.gov](http://www.dcf.ks.gov).

**"GOALS is a program that lifts people up. It's a program that helps people find their self-esteem, their self-worth. It's a program that focuses on a person's self-determination. We all have the same goal. We all want to see our communities grow, to see our community members become successful."**

*Ruth A. Tipton, Assistant Director of SNAP E&T and Special Projects with DCF*



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| POINT OF VIEW |

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“I want to say thank you for GOALS.  
Thank you for helping me and pushing me.  
Thanks to the GOALS program, I’m here  
and I’m being successful.”

*Heather, GOALS Participant*

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