



# FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY



Presidents Burks, Mason, and Schears host a February 8 town hall meeting on the campus of Fort Hays State University.



Kansas Small Business Development Center Award winners recognized in March 2 ceremony at the Kansas State Capital in Topeka.

## Strategic Affiliation Initiative Update

On February 3, 2023, House Bill 2290 was introduced and referred to the House Higher Education Budget Committee for consideration. This bill seeks to authorize the establishment of a voluntary institutional affiliation between Fort Hays State University, North Central Kansas Technical College, and Northwest Kansas Technical College. This affiliation initiative was created to deliver solutions for rural Kansas, including the development of market-smart academic programs and integrated student services and leveraging new efficiencies and optimizations that reduce unnecessary bureaucratic barriers to student success. A key element in the initiative will be the creation of a powerful coalition of businesses, industries, and communities focused on increasing opportunities for our students, expanding entrepreneurship, and meeting local workforce development needs.

On February 21, FHSU President Tisa Mason, North Central Tech President Eric Burks, and Northwest Tech President Ben Schears testified before the House Higher Education Budget Committee. The committee voted unanimously to approve HB 2290. On March 2, the House passed 2290, 121-2, and forwarded the bill to the Kansas Senate where the Ways and Means Committee is scheduled to work the bill.

You can follow us online at [fhsu.edu/affiliation](https://fhsu.edu/affiliation).

## Kansas Small Business Development Center celebrates its 40th anniversary

The Kansas SBDC helps new entrepreneurs realize their dream of business ownership and assists existing businesses in their efforts to remain competitive. SBDC services enable Kansas entrepreneurs to make better, more informed business decisions, avoid costly mistakes, and prepare thorough and complete business plans needed both to obtain financing and to effectively manage their operations.

A remarkable 40-year legacy of the SBDC system in Kansas



Not ones to rest on its laurels, the Kansas SBDC plans to expand its efforts and impact across the state. In the days ahead, look for Director Greg Jordan and his team to expand upon emerging partnerships, including one first piloted in southeast Kansas that provided an SBDC-trained and funded part-time advisor to the

economic development team in Finney County. Jordan's team is also expanding the SBDC's menu of advisory services to include cybersecurity training (in conjunction with FHSU's new Cybersecurity and Technology Incubator) and financial planning assistance for small businesses seeking capital to start or grow their business.

About Kansas' SBDC Network - In 1996, Fort Hays State University was awarded the grant contract to lead the network of eight SBDCs at universities and community colleges across Kansas. For more on the FHSU-led Kansas SBDC network, go to [fhsu.edu/ksbdc](http://fhsu.edu/ksbdc).

### **Career Services delivers for FHSU grads**

FHSU Career Services is dedicated to connecting students to employers throughout the region. As businesses and other organizations face the challenge of attracting and training successful employees, FHSU contributes its resources toward building a dynamic Kansas workforce.

With a 94 percent successful placement rate for FHSU 2021-22 graduates, FHSU is well ahead of the national average of 86 percent (as reported by the National Center for Education Statistics in 2017.) In addition, in the critical disciplines of nursing and elementary education, more than half of all graduates are employed within the state of Kansas.

FHSU's career fairs bring students and employers together in one location to explore internship and employment opportunities. Career services offer both industry-specific and all major fairs. In addition, Career Services enables direct contact between FHSU online students and potential employers.

Since August 2022, more than 300 employers and nearly 800 students have participated in career fairs at FHSU. Industries targeted for event participation during the 2022-23 academic year include applied technology, agriculture, accounting and finance, speech-language pathology, education, health and wellness, and the Werth College of Science, Mathematics and Technology.

Career Services also contributes to FHSU students' career readiness through resume and cover letter assistance, mock interviews, networking, workshops, and its Tailored for Tigers professional clothing closet.

### **FHSU completes General Education program revamp ahead of schedule**

FHSU will implement the new KBOR General Education Framework in Fall 2023, a full year ahead of the Fall 2024 target established by the Board. The new program addresses all the requirements of the KBOR Framework, ensuring that students can easily transfer general education credits to and from FHSU.

The KBOR General Education Framework invites institutions to designate six of the 34 total program course load on issues and learning outcomes that best serve the students at their university. FHSU has adopted **Critical Thinking and Personal and Professional Development** as the University's Institutionally Designated Areas.

FHSU's decision to focus on Critical Thinking and Personal and Professional Development reflects the University's commitment to making general education relevant and meaningful to all FHSU students. Courses meeting the learning outcomes for Critical Thinking will focus on skills necessary for effective reasoning, persuasive argumentation, and powerful writing. Courses that meet the Personal and Professional Development learning outcomes will guide students to develop the skills necessary for effective goal-oriented decision-making for continuous personal and professional growth.



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