



MOCAN

MISSOURI COLLEGE &
CAREER ATTAINMENT NETWORK



KCCAN

KANSAS CITY COLLEGE &
CAREER ATTAINMENT NETWORK
AN INITIATIVE OF MOCAN



SHARED POWER, PURPOSE, AND PROGRESS

A Community Strategic Plan

*to Increase Postsecondary Attainment
in Kansas City*

Kansas City College & Career Attainment Network

DECEMBER 2025

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A SPECIAL THANK YOU

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SHARED POWER, PURPOSE, AND PROGRESS

A Community Strategic Plan to Increase Postsecondary Attainment in Kansas City

The creation of the **Kansas City College and Career Attainment Network (KCCAN)** marks a critical investment in the future of all Kansas Citians. This initiative, launched by the Missouri College and Career Attainment Network (MOCAN), focuses on increasing postsecondary attainment and upward economic mobility across the Kansas City metro. KCCAN is driven by an urgent reality: only 13% of students from Kansas City's low-income high schools will ultimately earn a college degree if current graduation rates hold.¹ This disparity locks individuals out of economic mobility and stunts regional prosperity.

AT LOW-INCOME HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE KANSAS CITY REGION:

85%

HIGH SCHOOL
GRADUATION



51%

COLLEGE
ENROLLMENT



30%

DEGREE
COMPLETION

13%

COLLEGE
DEGREE
ATTAINMENT

This community strategic plan reflects **KCCAN's central goal of raising the attainment rate from 13% to 23% by 2030**, an ambitious aspiration that is only possible through collective investment and strategic collaboration.

WHY KANSAS CITY, WHY NOW?

In Kansas City, the commitment to postsecondary attainment is yielding tangible results and building momentum. The economic returns to education continue to rise across the region, where workers with a postsecondary credential consistently earn substantially more and experience lower rates of unemployment than those without.² This success is critical, as regional demand is rapidly increasing: by 2032, 65 percent of jobs in Missouri will require

education and training beyond a high school diploma, with 30 percent requiring a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Recognizing the critical role that postsecondary education plays in economic growth and mobility throughout the state, the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development (MDHEWD) released an [updated strategic plan](#) in 2025. It affirmed Missouri's commitment to an ambitious statewide attainment goal of "60 for All" – ensuring that 60 percent of Missourians have a high-quality certificate or degree by 2030. While significant progress to this goal has been made, only 52

percent of Missourians currently hold such a credential, with rates dropping to 32.5% for Black Missourians and 33.8% for Hispanic Missourians.

The Kansas City metro also faces a significant postsecondary attainment gap. According to the Urban Education Research Center (UERC) at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC), longitudinal data suggests that only about 27 percent of freshmen entering public high schools in the three-county region will earn a college degree. This gap is even wider for students attending low-income high schools in the region. According to UERC, 85 percent of students at these schools graduate from high school, 51 percent of those who graduate enroll in college, and 30 percent of those who enroll complete college.³ If those rates hold, only about 13 percent of students from low-income schools will earn a college degree.

This glaring disparity demands immediate and coordinated intervention. The good news is that Kansas City already possesses many of the assets needed to close this gap. These assets include:

- **A growing economy and employer community** eager for skilled talent and willing to collaborate
- **A robust philanthropic sector** willing to invest strategically in initiatives that promote upward economic mobility in the region
- **Committed K-12 and postsecondary institutions** dedicated to improving student outcomes
- **A powerful nonprofit and community-based organization (CBO) sector** forming strong partnerships with educational institutions

The Kansas City College and Career Attainment Network (KCCAN) recognizes that a cross-sector group of influential organizations can greatly enhance their effectiveness and scale their impact by connecting into a strong network. KCCAN was created to foster collaboration across the region and drive collective progress toward shared goals.

WHY MOCAN?

As an established statewide attainment network, MOCAN was invited to launch a local Kansas City initiative due to the organization's deep experience creating and growing similar local efforts. Through a merger in 2022 between the Missouri College Access Network and St. Louis Graduates, the current MOCAN was formed. MOCAN's signature initiatives have provided needed supports for practitioners, including the Professional Development Institute, which trains half of all school counselors in Missouri.

As an initiative of MOCAN, KCCAN's shared focus is to increase postsecondary access, affordability, and completion particularly for students living in low-income communities. Through their shared core values, MOCAN will guide how KCCAN convenes, trains, and organizes community partners to drive impact.



MOCAN CORE VALUES

- ▶ Student-Centeredness
- ▶ Data-informed decision-making
- ▶ Racial and socio-economic equity
- ▶ Collaboration

KCCAN will serve as the Local College Attainment Network (LCAN) for the Kansas City metro. LCANs are common national models for community-based reform, functioning as intermediary organizations that bring together institutions, K-12, community-based organizations, and employers. LCANs can help align resources, eliminate silos, and drive equitable outcomes at a regional level, ensuring students can successfully navigate the journey from high school through postsecondary completion.

As an active and trusted entity in the Kansas City region, MOCAN's organizational infrastructure and existing relationships will allow KCCAN to efficiently organize partners – positioning KCCAN to drive a unified regional approach needed to tackle Kansas City's attainment gap.

COLLECTIVE IMPACT

KCCAN is an initiative born out of community. The idea of forming a local college and career attainment network arose from MOCAN's strategic planning conversations with colleagues in the KC metro. The group of stakeholders recognized that despite pockets of exceptional work happening across the city, there was a shared interest in working more closely together to scale impact. Follow up conversations amongst additional stakeholders confirmed this and highlighted the critical need to specifically enhance college access and support services for students living in low-income communities.

Using the Collective Impact model to frame KCCAN's work is a natural extension of this community-based approach. **Collective Impact (CI) models organize stakeholders** from different sectors to solve a specific social problem using a common agenda.

The CI model is defined by five key conditions:

- **Common Agenda:** All participants have a shared vision for change, including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it.
- **Shared Measurement:** All participants agree on how success will be measured and collect data consistently to track progress and hold each other accountable.
- **Mutually Reinforcing Activities:** Each participant undertakes specific activities that support and coordinate with the actions of the others.
- **Continuous Communication:** Consistent and open communication is required to build trust and ensure continuous adjustments to strategy.
- **Backbone Organization:** A separate organization is needed to manage, coordinate, and support the entire initiative.

The first in step positioning KCCAN for long-term impact is creating a common agenda, a community strategic plan, grounded in a clear theory of action, to clarify what regional stakeholders are committed to achieving together, and how.

COLLECTIVE IMPACT | PROMISING EXAMPLES

KCMO: By establishing a shared goal, using common data tools to track completion, and aligning the resources of over 25 members of the K-12, nonprofit, and philanthropic sectors, the MOCAN-led KC FAFSA Initiative led to a 15.4% increase in year-over-year FAFSA completions in KC (MO) and 12.5% increase in KC (KS) in 2024-25, outpacing both state averages. This successful initiative paved the way for KCCAN's development.

Tennessee: The establishment of KnoxAchieves in 2008 was a triumph of collective impact, succeeding by forming crucial local partnerships among schools, community colleges, volunteers,

and businesses to offer both a last-dollar scholarship and mandatory mentorship. As the program expanded statewide into TNAchieves, it consistently relied on this decentralized, partnership-driven administration to manage the student support requirements efficiently across various counties. This robust, proven model of leveraging local commitment and volunteer networks provided the essential blueprint for state policymakers. Its effectiveness ultimately led to the creation of the TN Promise in 2014, designating TNAchieves as the official partner to manage the mentorship component and solidifying the collective impact approach as a national model for college access.

FROM IDEA TO REALITY

KCCAN PLANNING PROCESS



Following creation of the KCCAN Steering Committee, MOCAN hired **KCCAN’s inaugural Strategy Director, Dr. Mako Miller**, to lead the overall initiative. Soon after, **Elizabeth Munteer became KCCAN’s inaugural Advising Director**, charged with leading a team of College & Career Advisors to be embedded in all six high schools in the Kansas City Public School district.

Taking KCCAN from idea to reality required a considerable amount of capacity from a relatively small staff. To bridge this gap, MOCAN partnered with Education Strategy Group (ESG), a mission-driven consulting firm focused on driving economic mobility through educational attainment, to facilitate a community strategic planning process. MOCAN selected ESG on the basis of its prior experience supporting state and local CANs across the country, facilitating the development

of strategic plans for impact organizations, and developing Missouri’s [Adult Learner Strategic Plan](#).

Throughout spring and summer of 2025, KCCAN convened over 75 stakeholders from over 40 organizations representing K-12, postsecondary education, workforce and community-based organization in Kansas City. Through a series of four workshops, ESG and KCCAN led these stakeholders through an iterative, participatory process to develop a shared community theory of action and strengthen community relationships by grounding them in shared purpose.

Each session built on the previous one and included group discussions and breakout sessions to gather more individualized feedback.



DR. MAKO MILLER
Inaugural Strategy Director,
KCCAN



ELIZABETH MUNTEER,
Inaugural Advising Director,
KCCAN

75 STAKEHOLDERS
40 ORGANIZATIONS
1 DYNAMIC PLAN

It was invigorating to see the knowledge and passion in one room! I was just so grateful for the chance to connect, network and contribute.

- KCCAN WORK SESSION ATTENDEE



- **KCCAN Kickoff Event:** Attendees were briefed on the current state of postsecondary attainment in Kansas City by the Urban Education Research Center (UERC). They then participated in an ecosystem mapping exercise to determine both strong pre-existing connections and where effort should be focused in order to incorporate voices who were not currently at the convening. The resulting gap analysis identified the types of expertise needed in follow-up work sessions.
- **Work Session #1 - Outcomes:** During the first work session, attendees established a shared vision by identifying three to five measurable long-term outcomes to be impacted by KCCAN’s strategic plan. For each ultimate outcome, participants then identified a set of two to three nearer-term outcomes they believed would serve as drivers of the ultimate outcomes.
- **Work Session #2 - Activities:** At the second work session, attendees drafted a set of activities for each ultimate outcome that KCCAN and partner organizations could undertake to drive impact.
- **Work Session #3 - Roles & Relationships:** At the final work session, attendees provided final adjusting feedback on the theory of action. Attendees then clarified the roles needed to operationalize and sustain impact and identify volunteers and nominees to participate in workgroups.

Between sessions, the MOCAN and KCCAN leadership teams worked closely with ESG and the KCCAN Steering Committee to discuss stakeholder feedback and refine the developing theory of action so that subsequent work sessions were focused and interactive.

WHY HAVE A THEORY OF ACTION?

Effective collective impact starts with a common agenda, which means coming together to define the problem and create a shared vision to solve it.⁴ For KCCAN, that common agenda is a theory of action.

A theory of action builds on a vision, but goes a level deeper, articulating not just the changes you want to see in the world, but also the activities you will undertake to bring them about. **A clear theory of action serves as a framework to guide action, measurement, and strategic refinement** over time.

Although some use the terms interchangeably, KCCAN's theory of action is *not* a theory of change. A theory of change is broad, outlining *all* the activities and changes needed to drive a particular outcome. The KCCAN theory of action is narrower, outlining only the work that KCCAN and the KCCAN community will do to drive target outcomes.

Ultimately, KCCAN seeks to drive increased economic mobility through increased postsecondary attainment, but KCCAN's efforts alone will not be sufficient to help the community as a whole reach its full potential. Other community actors and entities share similar goals, and are already doing work – individually and collectively – to reach them.

With that in mind, the KCCAN theory of action builds on the strong work already taking place in the community. A few worthwhile goals and activities during the development process – for instance, mentorship, internships, and academic readiness – do not appear in the final theory of action. These are critical for the Kansas City metro to reach its attainment goal, and implementation of the KCCAN plan will amplify their impact.

THEORY OF CHANGE:

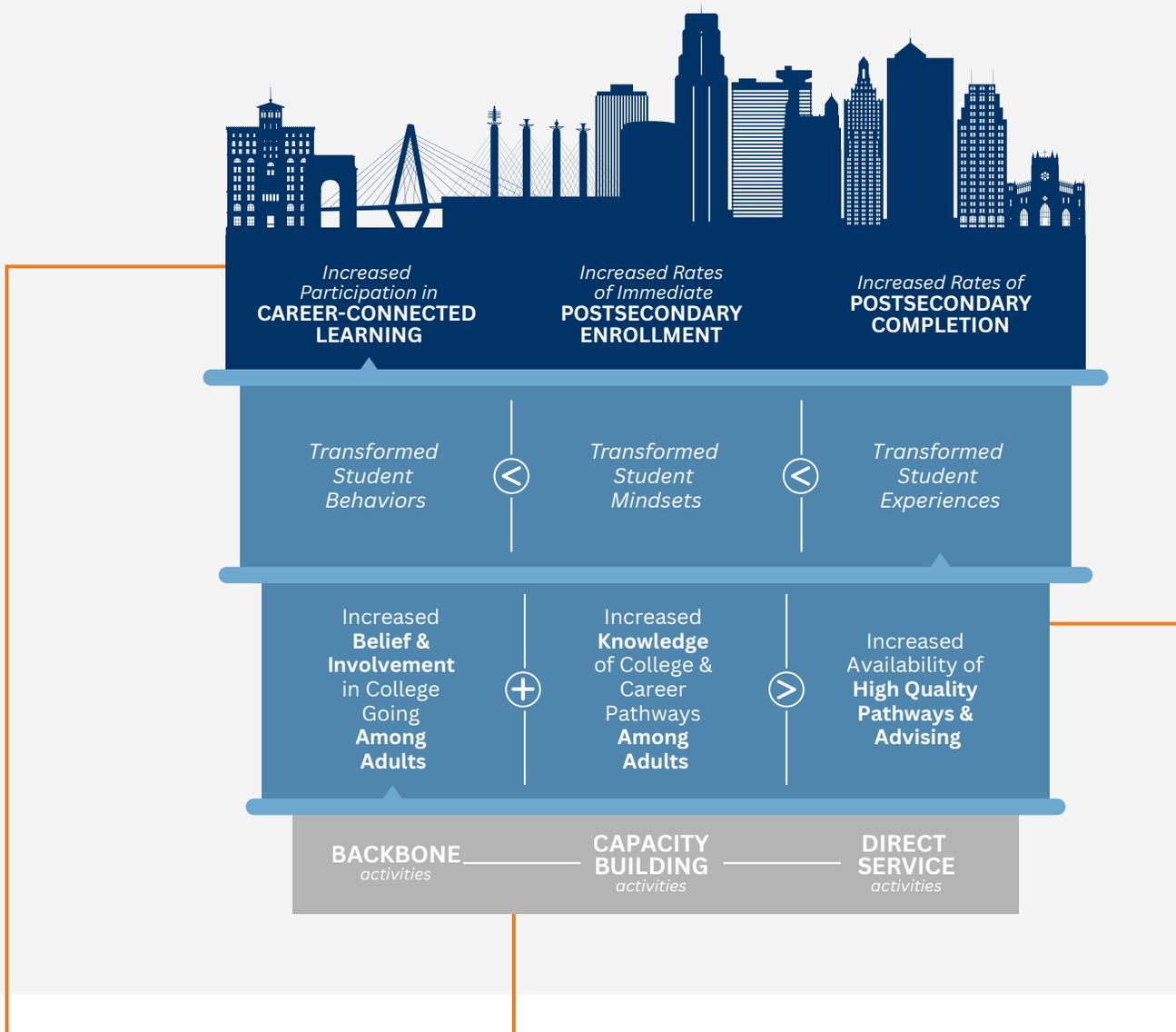
Everything that needs to happen for the goal to be achieved

THEORY OF ACTION:

What we're going to do to drive progress towards the goal

THEORY OF ACTION

A framework for directing, measuring, and actualizing change in our community.



ULTIMATE OUTCOMES

The long-term changes we want to see in the Kansas City metro area, which our entire theory of action is designed to drive. Ultimate outcomes are “big,” community-level outcomes that depend on a complex range of factors. We recognize that our ability to influence them is limited and indirect, but they are the reason we do what we do.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

These are nearer-term changes that precede and will drive the ultimate outcomes we care most about. These typically include changes in system conditions and in what students and adults (e.g., educators and families) know, believe, and do in order to promote college and career attainment. We try to directly influence these outcomes directly through our shared activities, believing that if we do, the ultimate outcomes we’re targeting will improve as a result.

ACTIVITIES

These are things (KCCAN and the KCCAN community) make or do to directly influence intermediate outcomes and indirectly drive ultimate outcomes. Local College Attainment Networks (LCANs) take a variety of approaches to driving student success, depending on context.

THEORY OF ACTION

A closer look: Defining key concepts

ULTIMATE OUTCOMES

Everything KCCAN does aims to advance economic mobility through college and career attainment for students from low-income backgrounds. Recognizing that financial barriers greatly impact all facets of college access, persistence, and completion, KCCAN will incorporate affordability considerations across all strategies. According to KCCAN's theory of action, this vision for greater economic mobility hinges on driving improvements in three ultimate outcomes:

ULTIMATE OUTCOME 1:

Increased Participation in Career-Connected Learning

KCCAN aims to increase the number of local high school students participating in meaningful career-connected learning experiences that deepen their understanding of and guide their exploration of workforce opportunities across the Kansas City metro. This work will be aligned with strong regional initiatives (e.g., [Market Value Assets](#).)

ULTIMATE OUTCOME 2:

Increased Rates of Postsecondary Enrollment

KCCAN aims to increase the rates at which local high school graduates enroll in postsecondary education programs that culminate in associate degrees, bachelor's degrees, and non-degree credentials (e.g., certificates, industry certifications, and occupational licenses, badges, and microcredentials) with value in the labor market.

ULTIMATE OUTCOME 3:

Increased Rates of Postsecondary Completion

KCCAN aims to increase the rates at which local high school graduates who enroll in postsecondary education programs complete those programs and earn the credentials associated with them.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

To impact these ultimate outcomes, KCCAN will pursue a set of nearer-term changes that we believe will help drive those outcomes.

Increasing Participation in Career-Connected Learning by...

↑ *Career Options & Pathways*

Increase student knowledge of possible careers, their career interests, and the educational pathways and credentials needed to enter into these careers.

↑ *Career Awareness & Exploration*

Expand availability of structured experiences to increase career awareness (e.g., industry guest speakers, career fairs, employer site visits) and facilitate career exploration (e.g., job shadows, mock interviews).

↑ *Career Advising Capacity*

Increase availability of high-quality career-connected advising in high school, including knowledge – among counselors and advisors – of careers available in the KC metro area, the skills and credentials needed to access those careers, and the educational programs that can help students gain those skills and credentials.

Increasing Rates of Postsecondary Enrollment by...

↑ *Access & Application*

Boost the number of students who apply to postsecondary programs (including 2-year, 4-year, and non-degree credentials) and complete key financial forms, like the FAFSA and scholarship applications.

↑ *Financial & Career Literacy*

Significantly increase student knowledge of the true cost and return on investment (ROI) of various postsecondary options (credentials, colleges, and majors), alongside helping them identify career interests and educational pathways.

↑ *College Knowledge*

Enhance student awareness of entry requirements, financial aid and scholarship opportunities, and available college access supports both during high school and the college transition.

↑ *Adult & Counselor Capacity*

Increase the knowledge and capacity of adults – especially counselors and families – regarding local career pathways, required credentials, and the affordability and ROI of postsecondary programs.

Increasing Rates of Postsecondary Completion by...

↑ *Program Progress & Completion*

Increase the percentage of students who understand and complete required credits and requirements "on time" toward their credential.

↑ *Credential Stackability & Workforce Relevance*

Enhance credential stackability (e.g., short-term to associate to bachelor's degrees), especially those applicable to high-growth, high-wage industries in the KC metro area. Ensure postsecondary programs align with workforce skills.

↑ *Career Connections & Social Capital*

Improve student knowledge of how to apply their skills and credentials to their intended careers, and provide opportunities for students to build relevant professional relationships and social capital.

↑ *Adult Capacity and Knowledge*

Increase the capacity and knowledge of key adults – especially college advisors and faculty – of careers available in the KC metro area, the skills and credentials needed to access those careers, and how to help students access those skills and credentials via postsecondary education.

ACTIVITIES

To drive these intermediate outcomes, the KCCAN community will leverage workgroups, which have been described as “the heartbeat of collective impact: where action occurs and goals are brought to life.”⁵ **KCCAN will begin with three workgroups**, each focused on one of the three ultimate outcomes the theory of action is designed to impact: Career-Connected Learning, Postsecondary Enrollment, and Postsecondary Completion. Each workgroup will prioritize specific activities to undertake, using this strategic plan as a guide.

The KCCAN community will also leverage workgroups and engage community members to develop a coherent measurement approach that aligns with these goals and its theory of action. At a high level, this approach will answer two main questions:

- To what extent did we implement the work we set out to do?
- To what extent did this work drive the change we intended to make?

Workgroups will be the primary driver of most KCCAN community activities. Each workgroup will include volunteer community members from multiple sectors (i.e., K-12, postsecondary education, nonprofit, and workforce) and be led by 2-3 co-chairs, which have already been identified. These workgroups will spearhead the activities described in this document, holding regular meetings and collaborating asynchronously to drive implementation. KCCAN’s direct advising program, led by Elizabeth Mounter, has been operating in KCPS since the start of the 2025-26 school year, and will continue to gain momentum going forward.

In early 2025, MOCAN created a steering committee of education and community leaders to guide the development of KCCAN. The KCCAN Steering Committee includes the individuals listed below.

KCCAN STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

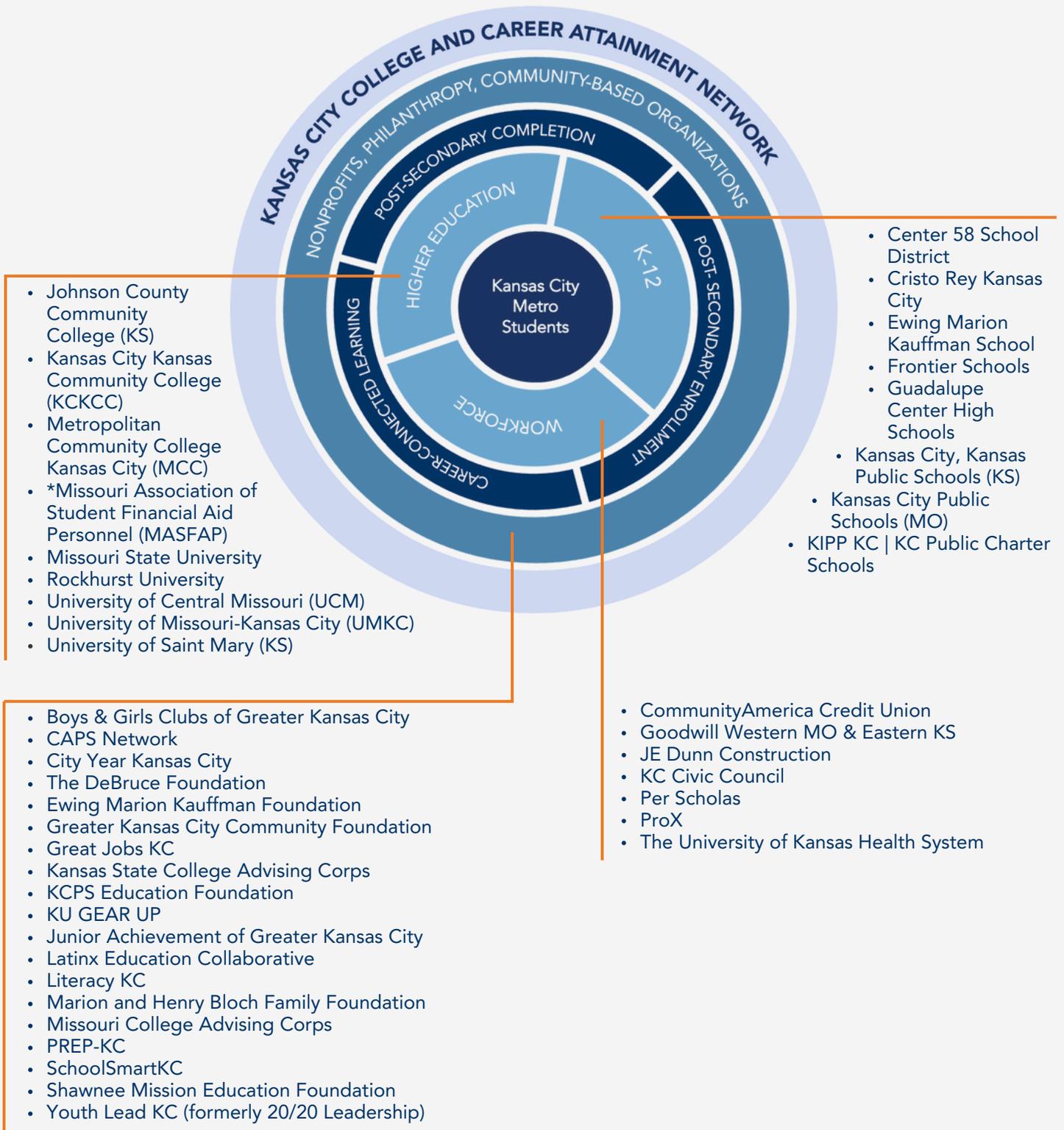
- **Victor Aguilar** - Officer of Postsecondary Access and Student Success, Kansas City Public Schools
- **Mary Clark** - Vice President, Impact & Opportunity, Metropolitan Community College
- **Collette Hadley** - Senior Director, Consulting Services, National College Attainment Network
- **Kristi Holsinger** - Senior Vice Provost for Student Success, University of Missouri-Kansas City
- **Camry Ivory** - Consultant
- **Ed Marquez** - Program Officer, Shawnee Mission Education Foundation
- **Robert Sagastume** - Impact Officer, College Access and Completion, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
- **Val Salazar** - Grantmaking Principal, Marion & Henry Bloch Family Foundation/H&R Block Foundation
- **Karly Scholl** - College Planner, CommunityAmerica Credit Union
- **Cherelle Washington** - Deputy Director, Missouri College and Career Attainment Network (MOCAN)
- **Laura Winter** - Executive Director, Missouri College and Career Attainment Network (MOCAN)

The KCCAN Steering Committee will provide strategic guidance, support, and feedback to the workgroups and help maintain overall alignment with the initiative’s goals. To maintain strong visibility and informed decision-making, at least one KCCAN Steering Committee member will participate in each of the three workgroups.

Throughout this process, some activities will be led by KCCAN; others will be led by partners. These activities will occur in three main areas: **Backbone Support, Capacity Building, and Direct Service.**

ECOSYSTEM MAP

Collaborating Across Sectors



*Postsecondary Educational Professional Organization

BACKBONE SUPPORT

This lever includes a variety of activities to manage, coordinate, and support the entire KCCAN strategic plan. Specifically, it includes **convening partners, creating shared informational resources, and building connective tissue** between related initiatives.

The KCCAN community will connect organizations and individuals across sectors, coordinate volunteer workgroups, and create and disseminate college and career attainment-related tools and information that the whole community can use to drive impact. As a backbone, KCCAN and its workgroups will:

- Facilitate convenings of organizational leaders across K-12, postsecondary education, nonprofit and workforce to jointly pursue systematic changes – including both program and policy – to increase college and career attainment across the KC metro region.
- Serve as a community hub for communicating and disseminating college and career attainment-related knowledge, news, and opportunities to students, families, and regional advisors and advising staff.
- Identify regional assets and gaps related to career-connected learning and postsecondary advising and develop concrete tools and resources (e.g., calendars, frameworks, toolkits) that organize the assets and address the gaps
- Spearhead shared regional measurement and data reporting

CAPACITY BUILDING

This lever focuses on the **design and delivery of professional development** to enhance college and career-related knowledge, skills, and behaviors among the adults in the education system who interact most closely with students. These adults include K-12 and college administrators, counselors and advisors, and teachers and faculty.

The KCCAN community will leverage workgroups to offer high-quality training and professional development to enhance college- and career-related knowledge, skills, and behaviors among regional educators and postsecondary advising staff. In particular, KCCAN will prioritize capacity building for K-12 educators, postsecondary educators, and nonprofit practitioners.

- **K-12 Educators:** K-12 school counselors, postsecondary advisors, and teachers working with regional high school students
- **Postsecondary Educators:** Academic advisors, career advising staff, and faculty from regional community colleges, universities, and other postsecondary education providers
- **Nonprofit Practitioners:** Staff from community-based organizations (e.g., PREP-KC, Boys & Girls Clubs, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Youth Lead KC) responsible for providing college and career advising services to students in K-12 and/or postsecondary education

These training and professional development opportunities will be grounded in a core “college and career” knowledge base, including, at a high level:

- Careers available in the Kansas City metro area
- The postsecondary education pathways to those careers
- How to support student access and success in those pathways

To help learners acquire and apply this knowledge base in ways that are relevant to their context, training will be differentiated by role, segment, and students served. Across all segments, capacity building will prioritize the needs of KCCAN’s target population: students living in low-income communities, particularly those who are Black, Hispanic, and rural students. It will also prioritize the needs of Black and Hispanic educators, who are often called and called upon to serve these students.

DIRECT SERVICE

This lever focuses on providing **direct postsecondary advising services to students** and facilitating student- and family-facing events and experiences to support the development of college and career-related knowledge, skills, and behaviors.

While workgroups of community volunteers will drive much of the work in this plan, adding more dedicated college and career advising staff to the regional ecosystem is critical. With that in mind, KCCAN hired its inaugural Advising Director, Elizabeth Munteer, in April 2025. Munteer leads an initial team of six full-time college and career advisors, who are embedded in six KCPS high schools.

KCCAN INAUGURAL COLLEGE & CAREER ADVISING TEAM



Deallon Walton
Southeast High School

Shannon Keys
Central High School

Amanda Obeso
*Paseo Academy of Fine
& Performing Arts*

Ayanna Castañeda
*Lincoln College
Preparatory Academy*

Janet Matos
Northeast High School

Andrea Brown
East High School

The KCCAN college and career advising team works hand-in-hand with KCPS and its partner schools, providing advising services directly to students and facilitating student- and family-facing events. To drive career-connected learning, postsecondary enrollment, and postsecondary completion, they will:

- Provide school-embedded 1:1 and small group-based college and career advising to students
- Facilitate student-facing college access events including college visits, FAFSA workshops, scholarship fairs, and college transition/summer bridge programs
- Facilitate high school speaker visits by alumni to help current students understand and “see” what it takes to succeed in college and career
- Facilitate family-facing workshops on “college and career knowledge,” with a focus on careers available in the KC metro area, the skills and credentials needed to access those careers, and the postsecondary education programs that can help students gain those skills and credentials
- Build relationships with local higher education partners and broker “warm handoffs” between them and matriculating KCPS graduates

Over time, the college and career advising team may increase in size, enabling it to support more schools and districts in the Kansas City metro.

MEASUREMENT

In alignment with its theory of action and mission to drive college and career attainment for students in low-income communities in Kansas City, the KCCAN community will aim to reach the following quantitative goal by 2030:

AT LOW-INCOME HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE KANSAS CITY REGION:

BY
2030

13%

23%

COLLEGE
DEGREE
ATTAINMENT

KCCAN aims to boost projected college degree attainment among students in low-income high schools in the Kansas City region by **10 percentage points in five years**. On average, each additional graduate will earn roughly \$400,000 (Associate degree) to \$1,200,000 (Bachelor's degree) more⁶, over their career, than they would have with a high school diploma alone. From a community standpoint, the average college graduate also contributes \$273,000 more, in taxes, and requires \$81,000 less, in government expenditures, over the course of a lifetime⁷.

If 7,000 students start as freshmen in low-income high schools in the Kansas City metro in a given year, 700 more would earn college degrees if the KCCAN community met its goal. That would **translate to between \$280 million to \$840 million in additional long-term economic gains for students**, and nearly \$250 million in economic gains for society – *for a single freshman cohort*.

KCCAN workgroups will help identify specific metrics to help track key Activities and progress toward Intermediate and Ultimate Outcomes:

- **Metrics related to Activities** typically track counts (e.g., the number of trainings held, counselors trained, students served) and outputs (e.g., the public release of a toolkit or dashboard). In alignment with its theory of action, the KCCAN community will seek to identify metrics to track activities connected with its three main functions: backbone support provider, capacity builder, and direct service provider.
- **Metrics related to Intermediate Outcomes** will help the KCCAN community understand the extent to which these activities are producing the near-term changes it intends to drive. In particular, we will explore metrics to track changes in what adults around students (e.g., school counselors), and students themselves, know, believe, and do to promote college and career attainment.
- **Ultimate Outcome metrics** will help track the extent to which the long-term changes that the KCCAN community cares most

about are occurring, as intended, in connection with its activities and near-term goals. For KCCAN, this means identifying metrics to track Career-Connected Learning, Postsecondary Enrollment, and Postsecondary Completion.

As the KCCAN community finalizes its measurement approach, it will balance what would be ideal with what is feasible, given current data availability and what it would take to collect additional data. It will begin by identifying a “core” set of high-level metrics that are highly relevant and available, at low cost, in the near term. Going forward, it will explore additional metrics to add depth, breadth, and detail.

In the first year following launch, the KCCAN community will incorporate data from these metrics into workgroup routines, public-facing reports and communications, network convenings, and learning opportunities for adults and students. Over time, measurement will help sharpen implementation, drive course corrections where needed, and – in the longer term – inform changes to the theory of action based on what has worked and what hasn't.

IMPLEMENTATION: THE ROAD AHEAD

This strategic plan is the KCCAN community's roadmap for regional impact, showing how partners from different parts of the Kansas City metro will come together to reach a common destination: increased college and career attainment for the community as a whole.

Kansas City can't afford to wait – and it won't. In December 2025, a KCCAN community summit celebrated the launch of the strategic plan and the official kickoff of KCCAN workgroups. Going forward, the workgroups will own key activities and report on progress quarterly.

The KCCAN community needs help from the whole community to turn these goals into reality. Help close the attainment gap for the 85,000+ students attending public high schools and 50,000+ students attending public colleges in the Kansas City metro. **Get involved by joining a workgroup or sharing your thoughts** on how this work complements your own. To get involved or just get in touch, please reach out to Dr. Mako Miller, KCCAN Strategy Director, at mmiller@mocollegecareer.org.

APPENDIX

This KCCAN strategic plan reflects the entire community's hopes, dreams, and priorities around college and career attainment. We are grateful to all of the individuals and organizations who helped craft it over a series of months. Plan development participants included:

MOCAN STAFF

- **Laura Winter**, Executive Director
- **Cherelle Washington**, Deputy Director
- **Trent Ball**, Senior Strategy Director, Completion
- **Kaitlyn Venta**, Strategy Director, Access & Affordability
- **Wendell Stapleton**, Program Manager, Completion

KCCAN STEERING COMMITTEE

- **Victor Aguilar**, Kansas City Public Schools
- **Dr. Mary Clark**, Metropolitan Community College
- **Collette Hadley**, National College Attainment Network
- **Dr. Kristi Holsinger**, University of Missouri-Kansas City
- **Camry Ivory**, Consultant
- **Ed Marquez**, Shawnee Mission Education Foundation
- **Robert Sagastume**, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
- **Val Salazar**, Marion & Henry Bloch Family Foundation/H&R Block Foundation
- **Karly Scholl**, CommunityAmerica Credit Union

KCCAN STAFF

- **Dr. Mako Miller**, Strategy Director
- **Elizabeth Munteer**, Advising Director
- **Andrea Brown**, College and Career Advisor
- **Ayanna Castañeda**, College and Career Advisor
- **Shannon Keys**, College and Career Advisor
- **Janet Matos**, College and Career Advisor
- **Amando Obeso**, College and Career Advisor
- **Deallon Walton**, College and Career Advisor

WORK SESSION PARTICIPANTS

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- **Chris Beggs**, Kansas State University
- **Rosisella Blakney**, Greater Kansas City Community Foundation
- **Dr. Lover Chancler**, University of Central Missouri
- **Christina Chandler**, JE Dunn Construction
- **Dr. Karin Chang**, Urban Education Research Center, University of Missouri-Kansas City
- **Jean-Paul Chaurand**, Marion and Henry Bloch Family Foundation/H&R Block Foundation
- **Ellen Clayton**, Ewing Marion Kauffman School
- **Teresa Collier**, Kansas City Kansas Community College
- **Jeremy Covey**, Center 58 School District
- **Cedric Deadmon**, Per Scholas
- **Rebecca Diemer**, University of Missouri-Kansas City
- **Megan Elsen**, University of Missouri-Kansas City
- **Solissa Franco McKay**, Real World Initiatives (ProX)
- **Goldie Gildehaus**, University of Missouri-Kansas City
- **Jessica Gomes**, KIPP KC
- **Trinity Griffin**, Civic Council of Greater Kansas City
- **Korri Hall**, KU GEAR UP KCMO
- **Phylicia Hampton**, Missouri College Advising Corps
- **Neal Harrison**, Kansas City Public Schools
- **Steph Hart**, Rockhurst University
- **Meaghan Higgins**, Real World Initiatives (ProX)
- **Jon Hile**, Kansas City Public Schools Education Foundation
- **JaVon Hill**, University of Missouri-Kansas City
- **Aimee Hirsch**, The University of Kansas Health System
- **Rachel Ibok**, City Year Kansas City
- **Jerron Johnson**, University of Missouri-Columbia
- **Mary Kate Kelly**, Great Jobs KC
- **Kayla Koenig**, The University of Kansas Health System
- **Dr. Mya Lawrence**, Johnson County Community College
- **Natalie Lewis**, Great Jobs KC

- **Karen Lombardi**, Rockhurst University
- **Ericka Mabion**, Kansas City Public Schools
- **Lisa Martinez**, KCKPS USD 500
- **Beth McCarthy**, PREP-KC
- **Lia McIntosh**, Civic Council of Greater KC
- **Isabella Mendez**, Latinx Education Collaborative
- **Davlon Miller**, University of Missouri-Kansas City
- **Shelby Moore**, University of Saint Mary
- **Gabrielle Moore-Jones**, Metropolitan Community College-Penn Valley
- **Marnie Morgan**, Youth Lead KC (formerly 20/20 Leadership)
- **Joyce Nguyen Hernandez**, Kansas City Public Schools
- **Gita Noble**, SchoolSmartKC
- **Dena Norris**, Metropolitan Community College
- **Salvador Ocampo**, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
- **Michael Padow**, Rockhurst University
- **Jessica Pearson**, University of Missouri-Kansas City & International Center for Supplemental Instruction
- **Nicole Pizzato**, CAPS Network
- **Iván Ramírez**, Latinx Education Collaborative/Revolución Educativa
- **Poet TI Sanders**, Frontier Schools
- **Keith Schoen**, Guadalupe Centers High School
- **Chris Shobe**, Metropolitan Community College
- **Ken Slover**, University of Saint Mary
- **Robin Smith**, DeBruce Foundation
- **Alayna Smith**, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
- **Ashley Squires**, Ewing Marion Kauffman School
- **Rabekah Stewart**, Missouri State University
- **Megan Sturges**, Junior Achievement of Greater Kansas City
- **Doug Swink**, University of Missouri-Kansas City
- **Stanley Taylor Jr.**, SchoolSmartKC
- **Candace Villanueva Greer**, PREP-KC
- **Yolanda Waldon**, Literacy KC
- **Nicole Walker**, Youth Lead KC (formerly 20/20 Leadership)
- **Dr. Drew Wilkerson**, Metropolitan Community College
- **Leah Youngren**, Urban Education Research Center, University of Missouri-Kansas City

ENDNOTES

¹Low income is defined by schools with at least 50% of students participating in the Free and Reduced Lunch program. The 13 percent figure cited was calculated based on students who enrolled one-year after high school graduation. UERC, 2025

²[Missouri Department of Education and Workforce Development, 2025](#)

³Low income is defined by schools with at least 50% of students participating in the Free and Reduced Lunch program. The 13 percent figure cited was calculated based on students who enrolled one-year after high school graduation. UERC, 2025

⁴[Collective Impact Forum](#)

⁵[Collective Impact Forum](#)

⁶[Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, 2021](#)

⁷[Lumina Foundation, 2015](#)

