

KSU to direct project to promote Kansas health

K-State News Service

Kansas State University and the Kansas Health Foundation are collaborating to make Kansans healthier. A new venture, "One Health Kansas," will promote awareness and understanding of the interconnections among human, animal and environmental health.

The Kansas State University Foundation accepted the award for the project, which is funded for three years for a total of \$2,292,308.

"One Health Kansas" will be directed by Lisa Freeman, associate vice president for innovation, K-State Olathe Innovation Campus, and Beth Montelone, associate dean, College of Arts and Sciences, and interim scientific director, Biosecurity Research Institute.

"The project has two components," Freeman said. "The first is to build the pipeline of future public health professionals and the second is to provide broader and more in-depth education for current and future professionals. This will develop a public health workforce capable of addressing emerging and re-emerging zoonotic diseases. In addition, 'One Health Kansas' will enable K-State to develop new collaborations focused on infection prevention with Stormont Vail HealthCare and the Olathe Medical Center.

"One Health Kansas is an exciting opportunity for K-State to utilize its strengths in collaboration, communication and integration," said K-State President Jon Wefald. "K-State will take a leadership role in promoting One Health concepts across the state of Kansas. Moreover, if K-State is selected as the site for the National Bio and Agro-defense Facility -- NBAF -- this award will help meet NBAF's workforce needs and allow more of our best and brightest graduates to stay in Kansas."

"To achieve these outcomes, the project will create a series of outreach and education programs to be delivered on K-State's Manhattan campus and at partner community college sites, including Dodge City, Johnson County and Kansas City, Kan.," Montelone said.

"It also will link current master of public health programs offered by the University of Kansas and K-State and promote curricular sharing between these to enhance both. 'One Health Kansas' will provide continuing education opportunities for current public health officials to supplement their knowledge of One Health topics."

"One Health Kansas is a truly innovative and cutting-edge program, and one that has limitless potential for both Kansas State University and the state of Kansas," said Steve Coen, Kansas Health Foundation president and chief executive officer. "With its focus on building a pipeline of future public health professionals, as well as studying the emerging issue of zoonotic diseases, this program is one the

Kansas Health Foundation is proud to support."

"The Kansas Health Foundation has a long history of supporting Kansas State University through their gifts to the KSU Foundation," said Gary Hellebust, president and chief executive officer. "This historic gift not only brings our partnership to a new level but also demonstrates their confidence in K-State's ability to positively impact public health across our state."

These programs will build on a United States Department of Agriculture Higher Education Challenge Grant previously awarded to K-State under the direction of Freeman, Montelone and others.

The USDA project "Pathways to Public Health" will result in development of an introductory public health course offered jointly with the community college partners; a summer undergraduate residency experience in public health, and establishment of five year combined bachelor's/master of public health degrees at K-State.

"One Health is a concept endorsed by the major national organizations representing physicians, veterinarians and public health professionals," Freeman said. "Collaboration among these groups is needed in Kansas, so that citizens of our state can understand and manage the complexity associated with emerging zoonotic diseases, globalization of the food system, blurring of the urban-suburban-rural interface and many other challenges affecting the health of Kansas children and adults."