

THE SUNFLOWER



The native wild sunflower stands tall and proud on the Kansas prairie. Turning and facing the sun as it grows, it can take the heat and brave the wind when it blows. With dignity, beauty and brilliance, the sunflower serves as a symbol of faith, strength, and resilience.

In 1903, the Kansas Legislature placed into law a decree that the Helianthus (or wild native sunflower) would become the official state flower and floral emblem of the state. The flower was regarded then — as it is now — as a symbol of Kansas and its people. The enacting Legislation is quite poetic:

WHEREAS, Kansas has a native wild flower common throughout her borders, hardy and conspicuous, of definite, unvarying and striking shape, easily sketched, moulded, and carved, having armorial capacities, ideally adapted for artistic reproduction, with its strong, distinct disk and its golden circle of clear glowing rays — a flower that a child can draw on a slate, a woman can work in silk, or a man can carve on stone or fashion in clay; and

WHEREAS, This flower has to all Kansans a historic symbolism which speaks of frontier days, winding trails, pathless prairies, and is full of the life and glory of the past, the pride of the present, and richly emblematic of the majesty of a golden future, and is a flower which has given Kansas the world-wide name, "the sunflower state": therefore,

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas: That the helianthus or wild native sunflower is hereby made, designated and declared to be the state flower and floral emblem of the state of Kansas. — K.S.A. 73-1801



Sunflower Foundation is proud of its name, its namesake's history, and what it symbolizes. Native wild sunflowers dot the landscape of our campus, and guests can find them in pictures, paintings, sculptures, and the architecture when they visit our Nonprofit Center. Like the sunflower, the foundation remains resilient in its efforts to empower nonprofit organizations to advocate for a healthier future for their communities and our state. And like its devotion to the sun, we are faithful in our mission to serve as a catalyst for improving the health of all Kansans.

