



# Sunflower Foundation

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MEDIA CONTACT**

Brett Riggs

[briggs@sunflowerfoundation.org](mailto:briggs@sunflowerfoundation.org)

785.232.3000 Ext. 113

## **Kansas Grantmakers in Health award \$25,000 in grants in memory of former Kansas Health Foundation CEO Steve Coen**

**Organizations in Sedgwick, Stafford counties receive grants addressing food insecurity**



**Former Kansas Health Foundation CEO Steve Coen, who passed away in February, had a particular passion for causes that addressed food insecurity and access to healthy foods.**

grants express gratitude and appreciation for his leadership in helping bring attention to some of the most pressing health issues facing Kansans. The grants will be made through the KGIH Opportunity Fund, which was established by the funders at the Topeka Community Foundation.

“Steve cared deeply about food security and ensuring that all Kansans had access to healthy food. He was especially concerned about underserved and rural communities that had limited or no access to grocery stores,” said Billie Hall, Sunflower Foundation CEO. “Under his leadership, the Kansas Health Foundation established the Kansas Healthy Food Initiative, a public-private partnership that has been instrumental in increasing Kansans’ access to healthy, affordable food.”

Common Ground Producers and Growers collaborates with nonprofit organizations and a network of local producers who work to provide fresh, locally grown food for distribution in underserved areas of Wichita and Sedgwick County.

Stafford County Economic Development, a nonprofit organization, was instrumental in building a new grocery store in Coen’s hometown of St. John. The public-private partnership has helped the community maintain a local grocery store and improve the resiliency of the local food system.

TOPEKA, Kan. – Kansas Grantmakers in Health, a collaborative network of the state’s six health care foundations, is pleased to announce the awarding of \$25,000 in grants to a pair of organizations that work to address food insecurity and access to healthy foods – causes important to the late Steve Coen, the former Kansas Health Foundation CEO who passed away in February and for whom the grants memorialize.

The CEOs of the Health Forward Foundation, REACH Healthcare Foundation, Sunflower Foundation, United Methodist Health Ministry Fund and Wyandotte Health Foundation – all members of the KGIH network of healthcare foundations in Kansas – have announced a \$15,000 grant to Common Ground Producers and Growers in Sedgwick County and a \$10,000 grant to Stafford County Economic Development.

The KGIH partners are providing the grants in memory of Coen, their longtime colleague and friend, and hope the

During his years at the Kansas Health Foundation, Coen championed programs, initiatives and public education aimed at securing state and local policy change on child health and well-being, public health infrastructure, access to healthy foods and other critical health issues. He was a longtime member of KGIH, which collaborates on public policies, grants and projects with statewide reach and shared concerns.

“Steve was a mentor, friend and colleague to me, and during his tenure, the Kansas Health Foundation and REACH partnered on many projects of mutual interest to maximize our collective impact,” said Brenda Sharpe, CEO of REACH. “His leadership style was just the right balance of active listening and strategic action, and he is deeply missed.”

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#### **ABOUT SUNFLOWER FOUNDATION**

Sunflower Foundation was established in 2000 as a statewide health philanthropy with a mission to serve as a catalyst for improving the health of all Kansans. The foundation believes that a thriving, sustainable nonprofit sector contributes to healthy communities, and we are committed to investing in mission-aligned nonprofits through grants, education, advocacy, collaborative learning, and capacity building. To learn more, visit the [Sunflower Foundation website](#).