



Sunflower Foundation

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Sunflower Foundation hires Brett Riggs as new director of communications

Longtime Kansas newspaper journalist started new role on April 6



TOPEKA, Kan. – Sunflower Foundation is pleased to announce the hiring of longtime Kansas newspaper journalist Brett Riggs as its new director of communications. He started in his new role on April 6.

Riggs joins the foundation after having spent most of his 29-year career in the newspaper industry, including 24 years covering southwest Kansas news and sports at The Garden City Telegram, where he was managing editor for 16 years. He brings extensive multimedia, social media, media relations, communications, marketing and leadership experience to Sunflower Foundation, a statewide health philanthropic organization with a mission to serve as a catalyst for improving the health of all Kansans.

“We are excited to welcome Brett to the Sunflower Foundation. His background and passion for storytelling aligns with our longtime advocacy work in elevating the voices of Kansans who are making a difference in their communities,” said Billie Hall, president and CEO of Sunflower Foundation. “Brett not only brings a strong background in media and communications, but he also brings innovation, a commitment to learning and humility. We are proud to welcome him to the Sunflower team.”

In his new role, Riggs will develop and implement the communications and marketing strategy for the foundation, including the Sunflower Nonprofit Center. He will lead the creation, coordination and implementation of communication strategies that inform and educate key audiences about the foundation’s mission, initiatives, programs and activities.

“I am excited to be part of an organization that is committed to investing in programs, projects and initiatives aimed at improving the health of Kansans and the communities in which they live,” Riggs said. “Sunflower Foundation partners with many organizations and people across the state who are doing great things in their communities, and I can’t wait to share their stories.”

Riggs grew up in Garden City, Kan., and has lived there most of his life. After a stint as a news reporter for the Blue Springs Examiner in Blue Springs, Mo., he returned to his hometown, where he started with The Garden City Telegram as a sports writer, then later became sports editor. He went on to serve as the newspaper’s assistant managing editor, before being named managing editor in 2003. In that role, he oversaw the daily news operations for The Telegram for 16 years.

After leaving the newspaper, he served as a communications advisor for Centura Health, a Colorado-based health system serving Colorado and western Kansas. In that capacity, he managed media and public relations, internal communications and social media for three hospitals – St. Catherine Hospital in Garden City, Bob Wilson Memorial Hospital in Ulysses, Kan., and St. Mary-Corwin Medical Center in Pueblo, Colo.

While at Centura Health, Riggs helped promote health awareness campaigns on such topics as COVID-19, suicide prevention, cancer screening, diabetes, flu vaccinations, childhood immunizations, food security and wellness.

Most recently, Riggs worked in the automotive industry as marketing director for Western Motor Co., in Garden City, where he handled marketing, advertising, social media and community relations for one of southwest Kansas' most successful and recognized auto dealerships.

Riggs, who graduated from the University of Kansas with a Bachelor of Science in Journalism, was born in Oneonta, N.Y.

He and his wife, Dawn, are in the process of relocating to Topeka. The couple has two children: a son, Evan, 27, of Lawrence; and a daughter, Sage, 18, who will be a freshman at the University of Kansas in the fall.

Riggs can be reached at 785-232-3000 ext. 113, or by emailing briggs@sunflowerfoundation.org.

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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](#).