



Sunflower Foundation

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Billie Hall, President/CEO of Sunflower Foundation, announces plans to retire in early 2024

**Longtime leader set to step down after 22 years at helm
of Topeka-based health philanthropy.**



TOPEKA, Kan. – After serving as president and CEO of Sunflower Foundation for more than 22 years, Billie Hall has announced her plans to retire from the health philanthropic organization in early 2024.

Hall, who assumed her duties in August 2001 following the organization’s incorporation in 2000, is the only CEO in the foundation’s history.

“Billie has given the foundation over 22 years of outstanding leadership, compassion and vision while developing mutually respectful and supportive relationships with our many partners,”

said Liz Sosa, Chair of the Sunflower Foundation Board of Trustees. “On behalf of the current members of the Board of Trustees and all those who have served in previous years, we thank her for her steadfast commitment and guidance and wish her a very fulfilling retirement.”

Sosa credits Hall with taking the Topeka-based foundation, whose mission is to serve as a catalyst to improve the health of all Kansans, from a concept to a nationally recognized and respected health philanthropic organization.

“We are grateful to Billie for her responsive and innovative leadership and commitment to serving all Kansans and the communities in which they live,” Sosa said.

Having the opportunity to lead the foundation as its founding CEO for two-plus decades has been an honor and privilege, Hall said.

“I am proud of the relationships we built across this vast state – so many inspiring Kansans determined to improve the health and well-being of their communities,” Hall said. “I take with me memories of these outstanding people, groups, nonprofits, and advocates.”

The foundation is committed to investing in mission-aligned nonprofits through grants, education, advocacy, collaborative learning, and capacity building. During Hall’s tenure, the foundation has awarded more than \$60 million in grants to organizations working to improve the health of individuals and communities across Kansas.

More than just a grantmaking foundation, the organization has been a leader in statewide policy work in

support of key changes to improve the health of Kansans, as well as an advocate for strengthening the health care safety net and expanding access to behavioral health care.

Some of the foundation's most significant achievements and milestones during Hall's tenure include:

- Over the past two decades, the awarding of nearly \$12 million in capacity building grants to more than 330 health-related nonprofits;
- Advocacy work that led to passage of the Kansas Indoor Clean Air Act, which is credited with reducing secondhand smoke exposure and improving health;
- Adoption of the integrated care model in community health facilities across the state, greatly expanding access to behavioral health services;
- Implementation of more than 225 public trail projects in 85 counties, which have increased Kansans' access to physical activity and connection to the outdoors, as part of the Sunflower Trails program;
- Support for strengthening and expanding food security systems and, more recently, partnering with health clinics on a statewide Food is Medicine initiative that aims to help patients better manage chronic disease through proper nutrition;
- The development and subsequent opening in 2021 of the Sunflower Nonprofit Center, which serves as the foundation's corporate office and promotes collaborative learning and partnerships by offering state-of-the-art meeting space and additional resources that support the needs of organizations whose work aligns with the foundation's mission.

A native of Topeka, Hall earned her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Washburn University in Topeka and a Master of Science in Public Health from the University of Missouri. She has spent her entire career in health care and public health.

Prior to taking the helm of the foundation, Hall served as a public health educator for the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, was founding director for the first specialty women's health center in Topeka, was vice president for public affairs for the Kansas Health Institute, helped establish the Quality Review Organization for Kansas, and served as a consultant for nonprofit organizations, health plans and the Kansas Medicaid managed care program.

She is a former chair of the Grantmakers in Health Board of Directors and a current member of the Greater Topeka Partnership Board of Directors.

"I leave the foundation in a time of new possibilities, with an evolving portfolio of investments across Kansas that improve health, food security, and access to trails; a growing nonprofit center; a dedicated board of directors and a remarkably talented staff; and innovative partners, who inspire us to think creatively and explore new directions," Hall said. "The past is important, but it is really all about tomorrow. I could not be more excited about the next chapter for the Sunflower Foundation."

As for her retirement plans, Hall is looking forward to spending more time with her grandchildren, gardening, reading, traveling, and catching some of her favorite musicians in concert.

The Sunflower Board of Trustees has retained Kittleman & Associates, LLC, to recruit the organization's next CEO. In the coming weeks, the firm will launch a national search, and applications will be exclusively received by Kittleman.

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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](#).

ABOUT KITTLEMAN & ASSOCIATES, LLC

Celebrating its 60th Anniversary, Kittleman is unrivaled in its combined years of nonprofit search expertise, represented by its extensive experience in human service and community health care; private, family and community foundations; public gardens, arboreta and land preserves; museums, science centers and historic sites; national charities and international NGOs; and conservation, environment and wildlife. For more information, visit [**https://www.kittlemansearch.com**](https://www.kittlemansearch.com).