

WELCOME TO OUR
KQ Newsletter
we're so glad you're here!

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear KCSEA Members and Supporters,

As we usher in a new year, it is with mixed emotions that we bid farewell to our esteemed KCSEA President, Dustin Whitaker. Over the past few years, Dustin has been instrumental in helping to restore the Kansas Child Support Educational Association. His leadership has brought fresh energy, innovative ideas, and a renewed sense of purpose to our organization. Under Dustin's direction, KCSEA had our first conference after a ten year hiatus, gained many new members, strengthened our partnerships, and has reestablished itself as a vital resource for professionals in child support services. Dustin's dedication to our mission, combined with his collaborative approach, has created a solid foundation for KCSEA's continued growth and success. While we are saddened to see him step down, we are thrilled about his new role with the federal Office of Child Support Services. We thank Dustin for his unwavering commitment to KCSEA and wish him every success in this exciting new chapter.

This issue of the KQ newsletter is packed with updates and opportunities to engage with our shared mission. We are thrilled to announce the upcoming 2025 KCSEA Annual Educational Conference, which will be held June 12–13, 2025, at the Ramada by Wyndham Topeka Downtown Hotel & Convention Center. This year's theme, "Strengthening Partnerships for a Brighter Future," reflects our commitment to collaboration and innovation. The conference will feature a dynamic keynote session, three specialized breakout tracks—position-specific training, professional development, and CLEs—and a networking event designed to foster connections and inspire ideas. Be sure to save the date and join us for this exciting opportunity to learn, connect, and grow together.



Additionally, we encourage you to celebrate excellence within our community by nominating individuals and teams for our annual awards, which highlight outstanding contributions to child support services. We are excited to share information about the Jim Robertson Scholarship, which honors Jim Robertson's remarkable legacy and provides support to students pursuing higher education. For those looking to make a greater impact, consider volunteering for the Speaker or Exhibitors and Sponsors Committees. You can also contribute to our leadership by joining the KCSEA Board, with positions available starting in June 2025. Lastly, we invite you to support the 2025 KCSEA Conference by becoming a sponsor, contributing to the Jim Robertson Scholarship Fund, or donating items for our silent auction.

As we look ahead, let us remain committed to strengthening our partnerships and building a brighter future for the families and children we serve. Thank you for being part of this incredible community. Together, we can achieve even greater things in the year to come.

Warm regards,
Amy Shaum
Acting President, Kansas Child Support Educational Association

2025 KCSEA CONFERENCE

Bright Futures Ahead: Grab Your Shades for This Year's Conference!



BE A SPONSOR - MAKE THE FUTURE BRIGHTER!

Click "Accept" today to join as a sponsor and help strengthen partnerships for a brighter tomorrow. Let's make waves together!

ACCEPT



DON'T MISS THE EARLY BIRD PERKS!

Register by April 1 to secure your spot and enter for a chance to win a free 2025 conference T-shirt. Early birds shine the brightest!

SIGN UP >>

VOLUNTEER FOR THE 2025 KCSEA CONFERENCE

Not ready to become a member or join the board but want to dip your toes into getting involved? The Kansas Child Support Educational Association (KCSEA) is seeking enthusiastic volunteers for the 2025 KCSEA Conference: Strengthening Partnerships for a Brighter Future!

Volunteering is a fantastic way to:

- Expand your knowledge
- Connect with the child support community
- Demonstrate leadership potential
- Boost your resume



Your time and contributions make a difference. Volunteering is the perfect way to get started. Click the link above for more information and to get involved. Let's work together to strengthen partnerships and create a brighter future!

We Need Your Help!

We are currently looking for volunteers for the following committees:

Speaker Committee

- Secure speakers and relevant topics for the Annual Conference
- Create the schedule and coordinate moderators
- Organize speaker materials and bios
- Ensure all materials are uploaded to the conference app

Exhibitors and Sponsors Committee

- Build relationships with child support organizations and sponsors
- Manage the Jim Robertson Scholarship fundraiser
- Coordinate sponsor and exhibitor recognition during the conference
- Oversee promotional materials, including the conference app and website

SUPPORT THE SILENT AUCTION

We're also looking for donations to our Silent Auction, which directly supports the Jim Robertson Scholarship Fund. All proceeds empower students to further their education and carry on the legacy of service and commitment to Kansas families.

If you're interested in donating a gift basket or another item, please email: ali.robertson@ks.gov.

KCSEA MEMBERSHIP AND RENEWAL

ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT CHILD SUPPORT AND EAGER TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE? JOIN KCSEA OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

To become a KCSEA member you must be a current, former, or retired employee of:

- The Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF)
- A Kansas District Court Trustee
- A Clerk of the District Court
- The Kansas Office of Judicial Administration (OJA)
- A private law office dealing in family court
- A child support contractor or vendor



WHY JOIN KCSEA?

- Membership is required to attend the annual conference, connecting you with peers and industry leaders.
- Your family members can apply for the prestigious Jim Robertson Scholarship, exclusive to KCSEA members.
- Stay engaged with a network of professionals dedicated to improving child support systems in Kansas.



8 OPEN BOARD POSITIONS FOR 2026!

Ready to take your involvement to the next level? KCSEA is seeking passionate individuals to join our Board of Directors! With 8 positions open for 2026, this is your chance to shape the future of child support initiatives in Kansas.

We welcome **nominations from everyone**—whether you nominate a colleague or nominate yourself, we encourage all who are interested to step forward!

Be on the lookout for an email invitation to our March Board Meeting. This meeting is the perfect opportunity to:

- See how our Board operates
- Learn about Board roles and responsibilities
- Ask questions and explore how you can contribute

We welcome professionals of all ages and backgrounds, especially those looking to build their careers and make a lasting impact in the field of child support. Let your passion drive change—become a KCSEA Member or Board Member today!

WE WELCOME NOMINATIONS

Nominate yourself or a colleague! All self-nominations are welcome. Nominees must:

- Be an active KCSEA member at the time of nomination, throughout the election, and, if elected, during the term of service.
- To become a KCSEA member, visit our Membership page.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Nomination Deadline: April 15, 2025

Election: Held at the 2025 Annual Educational Conference

Each KCSEA member attending the conference will receive a ballot at registration. Votes will be tallied by the Nomination Committee, and the winners will be announced during the conference's closing ceremony. Nominees do not have to be present to win.

LEARN MORE





CELEBRATE EXCELLENCE: NOMINATE FOR KCSEA ANNUAL AWARDS

Each year, KCSEA recognizes outstanding individuals who make a meaningful impact in the Kansas Child Support community. This year, we've refined our award categories to better highlight the diverse qualities and achievements that define excellence in our field.

These changes reflect our commitment to celebrating the multifaceted strengths, dedication, and innovation of child support professionals. Whether it's a team achieving extraordinary outcomes through collaboration, a leader inspiring success with their energy and vision, or an individual going above and beyond to improve the program through dedication and service, we want to honor those who stand out.

Do you know someone who deserves recognition? Submit your nomination today and shine a spotlight on their achievements. **The deadline for nominations is April 15th.** Together, let's celebrate the individuals shaping a brighter future for Kansas families.



TEAM AWARD:

This award recognizes an entire team(s) for their outstanding work and accomplishments regarding but not limited to a unique collection story, largest lump sum, accuracy, customer service, program awareness, and collaborations. This team has impacted/improved the child support program, inspired others, and serves the best interest of children and families.



OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AWARD:

This award recognizes an individual that lifts those around them allowing the team to achieve greater outcomes. It may be because of their energy, positivity, or because of their breadth and depth of knowledge and willingness to help others. They go the extra mile for their team and the people they serve. They are incredibly enthusiastic about the child support program.



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE:

This award recognizes an individual that performed exceptional service in child support services. This is a person that is consistent and strives to do the best they can daily. Dependability and reliability describe them; they volunteer for extra committees or assist with caseload coverage. This can also be regarding a unique collection story, largest lump sum, accuracy, customer service, program awareness, and collaborations. This individual has impacted/improved the child support program, inspired others, and serves the best interest of children and families.



FORCE MULTIPLIER AWARD:

This award recognizes an individual that lifts those around them allowing the team to achieve greater outcomes. It may be because of their energy, positivity, or because of their breadth and depth of knowledge and willingness to help others. They go the extra mile for their team and the people they serve. They are incredibly enthusiastic about the child support program.



PROGRAM AWARENESS AWARD:

This award recognizes an individual or organization that has developed an innovative, effective approach and strategy to increase public awareness of the child support program or how child support enhances the well-being of children and families. Empirical evidence should be provided, if possible, to support the applicant's case that their program/strategy has had a positive impact on the awareness and use of the child support program.



INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP/COLLABORATION AWARD:

This award recognizes an individual or organization that has developed an innovative, effective approach and strategy to increase public awareness of the child support program or how child support enhances the well-being of children and families. Empirical evidence should be provided, if possible, to support the applicant's case that their program/strategy has had a positive impact on the awareness and use of the child support program.

[Click Here to View Rewards at KCSEA.org](https://www.kcsea.org/rewards)

HONORING A LEGACY: THE JIM ROBERTSON SCHOLARSHIP

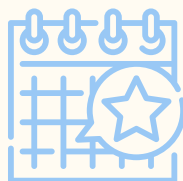
The Jim Robertson Scholarship celebrates the visionary leadership and transformative contributions of Jim Robertson, the longest-serving IV-D Director of the Kansas Child Support Services Program. Jim's legacy lives on through this scholarship, supporting students who share his commitment to serving Kansas families and their communities.



SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNT:

\$1,000 for the top two applicants

This nonrenewable scholarship must be applied for annually.



IMPORTANT DATES:

Application Deadline: April 15, 2025

Winner Notification: May 15, 2025



WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

To qualify, applicants must:

- Be a Kansas resident.
- Be a high school senior or a post-high school student continuing their education.
- Maintain a 3.0 GPA or higher (submit an unofficial transcript).
- Be connected to an active KCSEA member (current membership dues must be paid).
- Show a passion for pursuing a career that impacts children and families (explained in a 500-word essay).
- Provide letter(s) of recommendation.



APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

To apply, visit [KCSEA's website](#) and start the application process today! You'll need to submit:

1. Completed application form
2. Unofficial transcript
3. Letter(s) of recommendation
4. 500-word personal essay



RECOGNITION AND AWARD:

Scholarship recipients will be invited to attend the upcoming KCSEA Annual Conference, where they will be publicly acknowledged. If unable to attend, recipients can provide a photo and a statement about what the scholarship means to them, to be featured in KCSEA's Kansas Quarterly (KQ) Newsletter.



The purpose of the Jim Robertson Scholarship is to help defray the costs of a student's pursuit of higher education. Your donations make this possible.

Click below to donate to the Jim Robertson Scholarship Fund and help empower the next generation of leaders while honoring Jim's lasting legacy.

Together, we can make a difference!



H.R. 9076: SUPPORTING AMERICA'S CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ACT

Fifty years to the day after President Gerald Ford signed the legislation creating the federal child support program, President Biden signed H.R. 9076 (Supporting America's Children and Families Act) into law. This milestone legislation grants tribal child support programs the same access to critical enforcement information as states and territories, while also authorizing states to use contractors for child support services.

The bipartisan bill reauthorizes and strengthens child welfare programs under Title IV-B and IV-D of the Social Security Act through fiscal years 2025 to 2029. By enhancing resources, increasing funding, and addressing systemic challenges, the law aims to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and families nationwide.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:



Expanded Access for Tribal Programs:

Grants tribal child support programs equal access to enforcement tools and doubles funding for tribal court improvements.



Increased Funding:

Boosts allocations for programs like Promoting Safe and Stable Families, workforce development, and kinship navigator services.



Court Improvements:

Expands resources for state and tribal courts, supporting remote hearings and emergency preparedness.



Addressing Substance Use:

Provides additional funding for partnerships tackling parental substance use disorders.



Legal Representation:

Requires states to enhance access to legal representation for children and parents in child welfare cases.



Workforce Development:

Allocates funding to reduce caseloads, improve training, and retain skilled child welfare professionals.

H.R. 9076 passed with overwhelming bipartisan support in both the House and Senate and was signed into law on January 4, 2025. By addressing long-standing gaps in the system and prioritizing equity and access, the legislation represents a significant step forward in supporting children and families across the nation.

[Click Here To Read The Bill](#)