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NEW JOHNSON COUNTY EDUCATION RESEARCH TRIANGLE AUTHORITY MEMBERS NAMED

JCERT tax has made significant contributions to Johnson County's academic, research and business communities

Incoming chair recaps first eight years of JCERT impact

OLATHE, KAN. (March 27, 2017) – Carl Gerlach, mayor of Overland Park, Kansas, has been named chairman of the Johnson County Education Research Triangle Authority.

Four other metro-area elected officials have been named to four-year terms on the JCERT Authority. They are:

- Kansas Sen. Julia Lynn, appointed by Gov. Sam Brownback.
- Kansas Sen. Melissa Rooker, appointed by the University of Kansas.
- Leawood Mayor Peggy Dunn, appointed by the University of Kansas.
- Olathe Mayor Michael Copeland, appointed by the Kansas Board of Regents.

These new Authority members join Gerlach, Johnson County Commissioner Jason Osterhaus and Johnson County Community College Trustee David Lindstrom, who are beginning their second four-year terms.

[JCERT](#) was created in late 2008, when Johnson County voters approved a 1/8-cent sales tax to advance academic, research and business endeavors at its three partner organizations, the [KU Edwards Campus](#) in Overland Park; [K-State Olathe](#) and the [University of Kansas Clinical Research Center](#) in Fairway.

“When Johnson County voters approved JCERT, they underscored their commitment to investing in higher education that supports the region’s life sciences economy,” Gerlach said. “JCERT has created new economic development opportunities and is helping to meet employers’ needs for skilled workers in life sciences, animal health and food safety.”

The JCERT tax generates more than \$15 million annually, which is divided equally between its three academic partner organizations. JCERT is on track to achieve its originally projected economic impact of more than \$1.4 billion in its first two decades.

JCERT results are numerous. Gerlach highlighted these achievements, in particular:

KU Edwards Campus

- With JCERT funds, the KU Edwards Campus launched four bachelor's degree programs, seven graduate degrees and two certificates, all in business, engineering, science and technology.
- JCERT funding supported construction of the KU Edwards Campus's 75,000-square-foot, \$23 million BEST Building, which opened in 2012. The 17 new classrooms and conference center allowed the university to expand its graduate and undergraduate offerings to an additional 1,000 students.
- The KU Edwards Campus has awarded 130 students with \$375,000 in JCERT scholarships since 2010.

K-State Olathe

- JCERT dollars allowed Kansas State University to construct a local campus to serve Johnson County and the Kansas City metro area. The campus, which recently celebrated its five-year anniversary, features a \$28 million, 108,000-square-foot facility that houses research labs, classrooms and event spaces.
- Since 2011, K-State Olathe's K-12 science education programs have engaged more than 16,600 students from Johnson County's six public school districts (and others in the greater Kansas City area) in educational opportunities related to enhancing STEM skills.
- In the 2015-2016 academic year, K-State Olathe's enrollment increased 37 percent, in part because of its 11 graduate degrees and four graduate certificate offerings. Its December 2016 graduating class included the first master's degree graduates from K-State Olathe's food science program.

University of Kansas Clinical Research Center

- The [University of Kansas Cancer Center](#), part of the Clinical Research Center, achieved designation from the National Cancer Institute. Pursuit of the NCI designation is expected to create 3,600 jobs and \$2.5 billion in economic development by 2018. Since obtaining NCI designation, the University of Kansas Cancer Center has opened 122 new clinical trials with more than 1,400 patients participating, received \$69.8 million in research funding and screened more than 2,240 people in prevention trials.
- The [University of Kansas Alzheimer's Disease Center](#), also part of the Clinical Research Center, became a nationally designated center, receiving a five-year, \$6 million grant from the National Institutes on Aging. In 2016, its national NIA designation was renewed for five years and the Center received an additional \$9 million. It is one of only 31 nationally designated Alzheimer's Disease centers.

- JCERT research funding has helped [HylaPharm](#), a spinout company of the University of Kansas and the University of Kansas Medical Center, develop its patented HylaPlat™ drug, a form of injectable targeted chemotherapy for cancers in dogs that could lead to human trials. In early 2016, the company received a \$300,000 Small Business Innovation Research contract from the National Cancer Institute to repurpose an existing drug for the treatment of breast cancer.

Following are examples of JCERT's plans to maintain momentum:

- K-State Olathe is working with KU Med, Shawnee Mission Medical Center, Olathe Medical Center and Children's Mercy Hospitals to develop a first-of-its-kind international comparative medicine model, aggregating and sharing data from human and animal clinical trials.
- The KU Cancer Center hopes to earn Comprehensive Cancer Center designation, the NCI's highest designation, this year. Of the 5,000 cancer treatment centers nationwide, only 1.3 percent have this distinction. A decision is expected in May 2017.
- In May, K-State Olathe will host a 2017 Research Showcase, a large-scale networking event that will highlight the breadth of research expertise and resources that are available for public and private corporate partners through Kansas State University.
- KU Edwards and K-State Olathe will continue to add academic and certificate programs designed to meet Kansas City area workforce needs.

"JCERT is doing exactly what it was designed to do: invest in Johnson County's academic, research and business community," Gerlach said. "Much has been achieved, and it's exciting to see what is to come as the JCERT academic partners and their programs continue to grow."

For more JCERT information, visit www.jocotriangle.com, read the JCERT [blog](#) and follow JCERT on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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About JCERT

The Johnson County Education Research Triangle was created in 2008 when the county's voters supported a 1/8-cent sales tax. Today, the tax generates more than \$15 million annually to advance academic, research and business endeavors at its partner organizations: the [KU Edwards Campus](#) in Overland Park, the [K-State Olathe Campus](#) and the [University of Kansas Clinical Research Center](#) in Fairway. JCERT is expected to deliver more than \$1.4 billion in economic impact this generation. For more information, visit www.jocotriangle.com and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).