

To: Central Kansas media  
From: Golden Belt Community Foundation  
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For immediate release with four photos

TAGLINE: Kara Jecha  
TAGLINE: Chelsea Steffen  
TAGLINE: Jim White  
TAGLINE: Baudilio Hernandez

SUGGESTED HEADLINE: Golden Belt Community Foundation appoints new board members

When the Golden Belt Community Foundation (GBCF) recruits new members for its board of directors, goals include representation from across its service area and varied backgrounds.

These goals were attained with recent appointments to the board, said Christy Tustin, executive director.

"We strive to serve each county in our territory," Tustin said. "Each person brings expertise and passion in service to their counties and the communities in those counties.

"Our new board members are a perfect fit for our board," she continued. "They are enthusiastic and want to do what is best for their neighbors today and long into the future."

The GBCF's territory includes Barton, Pawnee, Rush and Stafford counties.

Recently appointed board members are Kara Jecha, Chelsea Steffen and Jim White, all of whom will officially begin their service July 1. Baudilio Hernandez has served for several months.

**Kara Jecha**

Kara Jecha, Timken, is no stranger to the GBCF but she has taken her involvement to a new level.

Jecha chairs the Forever Rush County Committee and works directly with the GBCF to raise funds for that endowment.

"Being the chair of our Rush County group and collaborating with Christy and her amazing staff has truly opened my eyes to the importance of a Foundation that gives hope and an avenue to a better future," Jecha said. "The GBCF does just that.

"I want to be even more involved to enhance lives not only in Rush County but also in Pawnee, Stafford and Barton counties. I have a deep love for rural Kansas. The GBCF can only improve our little corner of paradise."

Jecha's goal is to continue educating the public about the Foundation's "creative and impactful work in promoting grant-funding opportunities."

Jecha is a 1983 graduate of Otis-Bison High School. She earned a bachelor's in office administration in 1987 and master's in business administration in 2006, both at Fort Hays State University.

"Since the time I spent typing weekly bulletins for Peace Lutheran Church starting at age 14, I have always provided administrative support to upper management, as well as many councils and boards of directors," Jecha commented.

She has worked at Golden Belt Telephone Association in Rush Center for 23 years.

### **Chelsea Steffen**

Chelsea Steffen, Larned, has "always been impressed with what the Foundation has accomplished in the communities it serves. I am excited to be a part of that now.

"I want to help the Foundation continue to be visible in our four counties and showcase the programs that can help Pawnee County. The Foundation has been successful over the years and I want to be a part of its future projects."

Steffen grew up on a farm just outside Larned and earned a bachelor's degree in ag-finance at Oklahoma State University. She returned home in 2011 and started working on her family's farm as the bookkeeper.

"My brother and I started our own farming enterprise in 2013 and my husband and I bought Clock Realty & Insurance in 2019," Steffen said, noting she also contributes to the office at Ward Feed Yard.

"This background in finance and accounting can help me serve the Foundation," Steffen commented. "I hope I can help strengthen the numbers through collaboration with my fellow board members."

### **Jim White**

Jim White, Larned, said GBCF provides quality services to the towns and counties in its territory.

"The Foundation offers avenues to funding important projects and services that are needed," White said. "I have been involved with several businesses and service clubs that received support from the Foundation.

"My goal is to help the Foundation continue to bring its mission statement to life," he added. "We want to achieve all current goals and find new opportunities to benefit local and area residents."

White graduated from Fort Hays State University with a bachelor of arts degree. He started his professional career in sales but for 42 years he was in the banking industry.

For more than 33 of those years, White was vice president of First State Bank & Trust Co. in Larned. He retired from First State at the end of last year.

"My career provided opportunities to work with local individuals and businesses," White commented. "I also have been involved with several organizations and boards of directors, helping with fundraising and promoting my community. I will bring what I have learned to the Foundation."

## **Baudilio Hernandez**

Baudilio Hernandez, Great Bend, wants to serve "because each board member brings different strengths, talents and abilities to the organization. As a Hispanic, I think I can contribute something different.

"When board members merge their skills toward the vision of the Foundation, it creates a synergy that makes the whole board greater than the sum of each individual's contribution," he added. "I believe my contribution is crucial to our community because the Hispanic population is growing in the Golden Belt."

He seeks to enhance the GBCF's mission and "represent our Hispanic community to raise awareness of different populations that might not know about all the resources that exist in their communities."

Hernandez is director of Hispanic Engagement and Recruitment at Barton Community College. He is an American citizen, born in Mexico; his parents are from Mexico. Hernandez has lived in Great Bend for 29 years.

He earned his bachelor's in business administration from Fort Hays State University and owns two agricultural-related businesses.

"I believe my background will help serve the Foundation because I represent a new culture here that is changing in many aspects," Hernandez commented. "I am here to offer guidance and assistance to the Foundation and its board about the changes we are experiencing as a community and a nation."

At \$22.2 million in total assets and more than 180 funds under management, the

Golden Belt Community Foundation has been connecting people who care to causes that matter since 1996. Golden Belt Community Foundation exists to provide non-profit organizations in central Kansas with a permanent source of support and to serve as a vehicle for charitable giving for donors. GBCF serves the counties of Barton, Pawnee, Rush, and Stafford. For more information about Golden Belt Community Foundation, call (620) 792-3000 or visit their website at [www.goldenbeltcf.org](http://www.goldenbeltcf.org).



Chelsea



Kara



Jim



Baudilio