Community improvement program changes name

Kansas PRIDE program now known as Kansas Community Empowerment

K-State Research and Extension news service

MANHATTAN, Kan. – A Kansas State University program that supports local governments and volunteers in making their communities better places to live and work is re-focusing its efforts.

Jaime Menon, co-coordinator of the program formerly known as Kansas PRIDE, said the group’s new name is Kansas Community Empowerment, which better reflects its “service model and relevancy.”

Menon said the change was made following the results of a statewide survey.

“Communities responded indicating their appreciation for the program, the educational opportunities it provides, and their feeling of empowerment to get things done locally,” Menon said.

At the core of the Kansas Community Empowerment mission is that communities identify what they would like to preserve, create or improve for their future. Then, according to Menon, working with the resources of K-State Research and Extension and the Kansas Department of Commerce, community volunteers pull together to create their ideal community future.

In the past, participating communities were marked by signs indicating their inclusion as a Kansas Pride Community; in the future, those signs will indicate their involvement in the Kansas Community Empowerment program.

“The Kansas PRIDE name will continue to exist in the form of our non-profit Board of Directors, Kansas PRIDE, Inc.,” Menon said. “This organization acts as the program’s steering committee, raises and distributes funds for community grants, provides recognition opportunities, and evaluates program needs.

She added that communities currently in the program do not need to implement immediate changes in their local efforts.
“Local community groups have always had the option to call themselves whatever they feel fits best in their effort to succeed,” Menon said. “All local organizations can remain as is and participate in the Kansas Community Empowerment program.”

In addition to K-State Research and Extension and the Kansas Department of Commerce, the Kansas Community Empowerment program is a partnership with the Kansas Masons and the non-profit Kansas PRIDE board.

Menon said the program’s website address – www.kansasprideprogram.ksu.edu -- will remain active until a new site is established.

Questions regarding the Kansas Community Empowerment program can be sent to Menon by email, KSCE@ksu.edu.

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More information:
Jaime Menon or Jan Steen
785-532-5840
pride@ksu.edu

Story by:
Pat Melgares
785-532-1160
melgares@ksu.edu