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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wichita Joins City Bureau's Documenters Network to Bridge Gap Between Public and Public Meetings

Wichita, Kan. – The [Kansas Leadership Center](#), [Wichita Foundation](#) and members of the [Wichita Journalism Collaborative](#) are partnering with City Bureau, a nonprofit civic journalism lab, to bring the Documenters Network to Wichita.

The new participatory journalism initiative is making public meetings more transparent and accessible, training and paying Wichita residents to access the information they need to actualize the change they wish to see in their communities. Wichita is the first city in Kansas to offer the Documenters Network.

“Public meetings are workshops of democracy, where residents of every American community can witness, learn about, and act on the systems that impact their lives” said Max Resnik, City Bureau’s director of network services. “The Documenters Network is a tool designed to help residents access the information they need to get civically involved and have their voices heard.”

The [Documenters Network](#) is a new infrastructure for civic engagement that makes public meetings accessible to everyone. They train and pay residents to attend and document local government meetings and use the information they produce to keep local government responsive and help people organize for solutions to civic issues. Since it was established in 2018, this action-aligned network has trained over 2,200 Documenters who have covered more than 5,000 public meetings across 11 cities.

Wichita Documenters will scrape, standardize and share information on public meetings at the city and county-level — all in one central location.

“Participation in the Documenters Network strengthens the Kansas Leadership Center’s ongoing efforts to condition the civic environment in Kansas so citizens and organizations can make progress on tough challenges,” said Kaye Monk-Morgan, president and CEO of the Kansas Leadership Center. “This reporting hopes to educate the populace about decisions that impact our daily lives, thereby giving each of us the opportunity to share relevant opinions and ideas in a timely manner. People with reliable and accurate information are better able to exercise leadership in support of healthy, prosperous communities.”

While the Kansas Leadership Center is driving recruitment for this initiative and managing the grant for this collaboration, the Wichita Foundation has provided the funding to support this three-year project, which will cover the cost of hiring a project manager and Wichita documenters.

“Through this national and local partnership, we are investing in building a more informed and engaged community,” said Courtney Bengtson, Wichita Foundation’s chief strategy officer. “Wichita Documenters will empower community-driven documentation and make information increasingly accessible to all.”

Wichita Documenters is in collaboration with these Wichita Journalism Collaborative partners:

- [KMUW](#)
- [Planeta Venus](#)
- [The Community Voice](#)
- [The KLC Journal](#)
- [The Wichita Beacon](#)

Local residents are welcome to apply and join the community of civic-minded Wichita Documenters. Learn more at <https://kansasleadershipcenter.org/wichita-documenters/>.

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About the Kansas Leadership Center

The Kansas Leadership Center (KLC) is a first-of-its-kind nonprofit educational organization with a civic mission, national reputation and global reach. Founded in 2007 to foster civic leadership for stronger, healthier and more prosperous communities in Kansas and beyond, KLC receives core funding from the Kansas Health Foundation (a private, philanthropic organization). It partners with nonprofit organizations, government agencies, educational institutions, businesses and communities to build cultures that are healthy, productive and well-positioned to make measurable progress on daunting challenges and emergent opportunities. KLC Press publishes leadership books and The Journal, a nationally recognized, award-winning civic issues magazine.

For more than 16 years, KLC has built a strong and respected institution in Kansas designed to deliver leadership development and culture change at unparalleled scale. Now, organizations across the country and around the world look to us to provide resources and consultation to support their own aspirations for mission-driven leadership education. Learn more at kansasleadershipcenter.org.

About Wichita Foundation

The Wichita Foundation invests in people and ideas to spark change. Since 1986, the Foundation has partnered with individuals, families and nonprofits to build community through the Fund for Wichita and nearly 300 charitable funds. For more information, visit wichitafoundation.org.

About City Bureau

Founded in October 2015, City Bureau is a journalism lab reimagining local media. We do this by equipping people with skills and resources, engaging in critical public conversations and producing information that directly addresses people's needs.

Drawing from our work in Chicago, we aim to equip every community with the tools it needs to eliminate information inequity to further liberation, justice and self-determination.

The award-winning organization has been covered by some of the industry's top analysts including the [Columbia Journalism Review](#), [MediaShift](#), [Poynter](#), and [Nieman Lab](#). Learn more at [documenters.org](#).

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