

CONTACT



Spring 2020

In touch with all things Cottonwood...



COTTONWOOD
INCORPORATED

We help people with disabilities shape their own future.

A Message from Our CEO



Greetings from all of us at Cottonwood. As we know all too well, the impact of COVID-19 over the past few months has turned our worlds upside down and significantly changed how we live and work. As Cottonwood acted quickly to make wide-reaching changes in service delivery and in order to meet the new challenges in front of us, I want to extend a sincere thank you to everyone impacted, including but not limited to family members, our staff, other providers, and most importantly the individuals we support. We appreciate your patience and willingness to trust us and work with us. A special thank you to board members, community members at large and local businesses who have contributed in so many ways to help ease the stress and anxiety our staff and the individuals we support are experiencing. Whether it was extra personal protective equipment, toilet paper, paper towels, lunches provided, words of support....we can't thank you enough for your support of Cottonwood. On behalf of all of us at Cottonwood, you matter in our lives each and every day. Be safe and stay healthy.

Sharon Spratt, CEO.

Board of Trustees

COTTONWOOD INCORPORATED

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Cottonwood, Inc. &
Salute Festival of Wine & Food



@cottonwood_inc



cottonwoodincorporated

CONTACT is published for the friends and supporters of Cottonwood, Inc. by the Community Relations and Development Department: Ettie Brightwell and Kari Bentzinger.

Cottonwood, Incorporated is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization that serves individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities. Cottonwood provides an array of employment options, onsite and in other parts of the community, residential, and case management services. Cottonwood is a member of Interhab, the Resource Network for Kansans with Disabilities.

Cottonwood is partially funded on a contractual basis with the Kansas Department for Aging & Disability Services. Cottonwood receives some funding from Douglas and Jefferson Counties. Cottonwood is an affirmative action equal opportunity employer. We do business in accordance with the Federal Fair Housing Law. (The Fair Housing Amendment Act of 1998)

Labeling and mailing services for this newsletter have been provided by men and women of Cottonwood.

An adapted version of this publication and other materials are available by calling 785.842.0550 or by visiting us on the web at www.cwood.org.

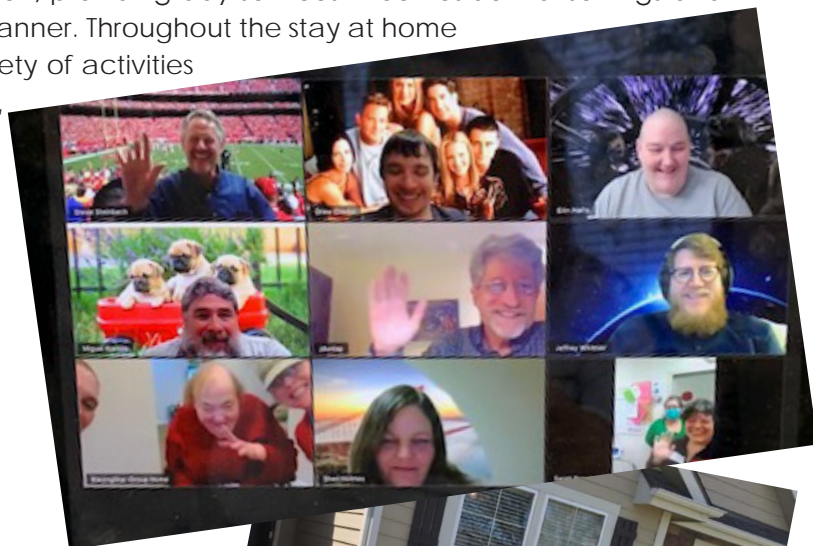
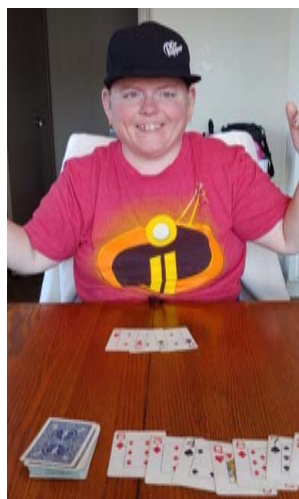


COVID—19—A New Normal?

Cottonwood has had a pandemic plan in place for over 15 years. Early in 2020, our Emergency Response Team took a hard look at the plan, tweaking it where necessary to deal with the looming COVID-19 pandemic and rolled it out to staff and consumers. And then on March 24, 2020, our daily routines at Cottonwood were turned inside out when Governor Laura Kelly issued a state-wide 'stay-at-home' order.



Our mission of helping people with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities did not change but how we delivered on that mission did! Our amazing staff quickly jumped into action, providing day services in our residential settings and supporting our consumers in a caring and compassionate manner. Throughout the stay at home order, our staff work with consumers in their home on a variety of activities including baking, cooking, board games, exercise classes, dance contests and artwork.



All of our homes have been equipped with technology to allow for video connections with health professionals and even allowing for all of us to check in with our friends across Cottonwood via computer. Together we will successfully navigate this uncharted road!

It Takes a Village of Superheroes

The Cottonwood staff are all Super Heroes—to each other, to the community at large and most of all to the people we support. When our service delivery structure was turned inside out in a matter of days due to the COVID—19 pandemic, our staff jumped right in, bringing our pandemic plan to life, moving to day services delivered in our group homes, working on the production lines to help Cottonwood remain strong by fulfilling its contract work, willing to switch shifts at a moment's notice, and most of all by caring for the people we support and their rising stress levels with compassion and resiliency.





Cookies brought smiles to these guys! Drew's dad surprised them and other residential homes with this special delivery!
Thank you, Dr. Logan!



Thank You!

Thank you, Nancy Harness!
Nancy is our new therapeutic horticulturist friend who put together the plant kits which have been warmly received by 35 of the people we support.

Thank You!



Thank You!



Thank You!



Thank you Miles Schnaer and Crown Automotive for delivering lunches to Cottonwood staff!



Thank You!



Thank you, Mandy van der Hoeven for the masks!



Stephanie Rasmussen, Sunflower MCO—surgical masks
Andy & Diana Vigna—disinfecting supplies
Pat Kimbrough—gloves
Gavin & Elsie Kriedler— toilet paper/paper towels
Trea Pepmiller- 100 fun, happy masks
Amy Aaron – Total Body Nutrition, meal replacement shakes
Source America - gloves and masks

Thank You!

Thank You!



Thank You!



We love you to pizzas!
Thank you Domino's Pizza!





JobLink



November - Joshua

"I have worked at Crowd Systems for all most 1 1/2 years. I scan tickets, welcome guests, and assist with inquiries. My co-workers & supervisors are great! And the fans are great too! I just love my job!"



December - Kendra

"I have worked at Dillons on Wakarusa for 10 years! I am a front end cashier. I like my job because I like helping customers, and I like the money so I can buy fingernails"



February - Damian

"I have worked at Goodwill Industries for 15 years! My favorite task is sorting books. I like my job because I get to listen to music (and dance)."



May Employee of the Month-Kyle

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

How long have you worked at Thriftway in Oskaloosa?

I have worked there for 2 1/2 years.

What do you do there?

I unload the truck, stock and face shelves, help put meat and vegetables out. I also use the compactor to crush boxes, clean shelves and carry out groceries for customers.

What is your favorite task to do at work?

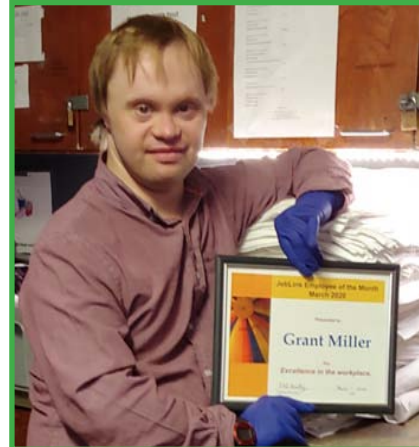
I like taking groceries out for customers.

Why do you like your job?

It's close to home. It gets me out among people and I make a lot of friends.

What advice can you give about being a good employee?

Listen to your boss, be on time and work hard.



March - Grant

"I have worked at 23rd St. Brewery for 13 years! I like rolling the silverware, my free drink and I like seeing the people I work with. My advice is be at work and work."



April - Caleb

"I have worked at Dillons since September 2018. I enjoy bagging and meeting people. I like the opportunity to connect with people. I met a guy from Turkey! Try your best and don't be afraid to ask questions."

JobLink candidates have a variety of skills and abilities with an array of educational levels and work experience. JobLink is your employment agency resource for dedicated and talented employees in the Lawrence, Kansas area. You'll find that we share your commitment to quality. For more information contact Phil Bentzinger 785-842-0550 or pbentzinger@cwood.org.

Congratulations to our Employers of the Month!

We appreciate your partnership!

November - Chick-fil-A
December - Texas Roadhouse
January - Paisano's
February - Papa Murphy's

March - Domino's Pizza
April - Popeye's
May - Wendy's (6th St)



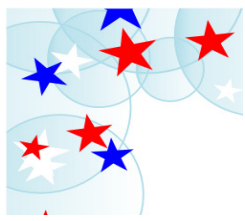
Project SEARCH: Making a Difference in the Lives of Students with Disabilities

Project SEARCH is a partnership between the Lawrence Public Schools, JobLink (Cottonwood's Supported Employment Division), the University of Kansas and LMH Health. The role of Project SEARCH is to provide learning opportunities for high school age individuals with disabilities in a competitive workplace. During a period of one school year, students participate in an employment and social skills curriculum, community-based instruction and three non-paid internships in areas of interest. Benefits to the students include diversity of job/ internship placements, the learning of competitive, transferable, and marketable skills, an increase in independence, confidence and self-esteem. While gaining necessary employability skills, students also learn appropriate social and communications skills, problem-solving and leadership techniques which they are then able to utilize in jobs in the community upon graduation from high school.

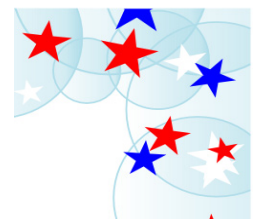
While learning the different jobs, students receive direct support from a JobLink job coach.

On completion of Project SEARCH, JobLink supports these young people with job development, coaching, and long term follow up in a vocation of their choosing.





8 MILLIONTH STRAP CELEBRATION!



On November, 18, 2019, Cottonwood celebrated the production of its 8 millionth cargo tie down strap for the Department of Defense. Many local, state and federal legislators, government officials and representatives from the military, our partners from Source America, trustees from the Cottonwood, Inc. and Cottonwood Foundation boards and vital members of the community joined Cottonwood staff and consumers to celebrate this momentous milestone. To give some perspective, 8 million straps laid end to end equals 30,303 miles. The circumference of the earth is 24,901 miles!





Foundation Board Members Allison Moore and Andy Vigna brought Aaron Rowe, Laird Noller Automotive, to tour Cottonwood.



Our friends from Tech Inc. in Hutchinson, Kansas

Craig Owens, City Manager

TOURS



Lexee Cruz and Nick Gideon, Silver Lake Bank



Tonganoxie High School



Janetlynn, Bank Midwest

We are very proud of the work that is done at Cottonwood to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Come see for yourself all that Cottonwood does.

If you are interested in finding out more about Cottonwood and/or touring our facilities, please contact Ettie Brightwell, Director of Community Relations/Development at (785) 842-0550 or ebrightwell@cwood.org.



Lawrence High Interpersonal Skills Class

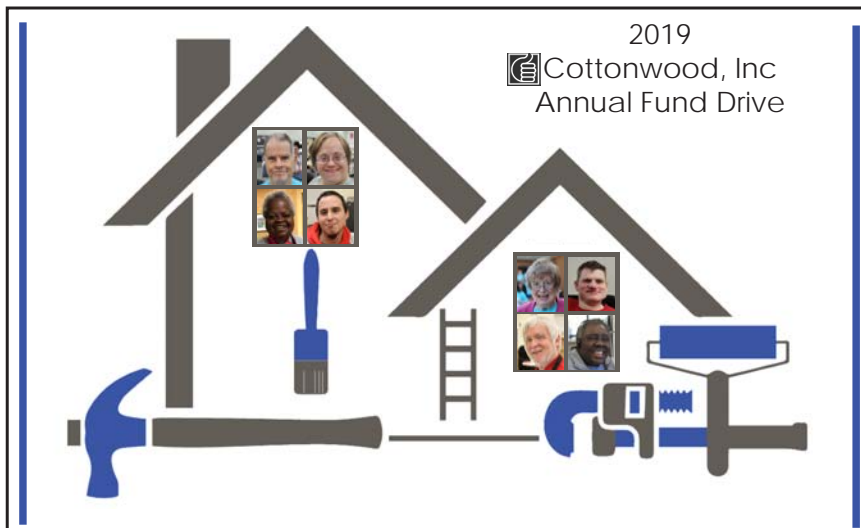


Lawrence High Interpersonal Skills Class



Boy Scout Troop #53

Thank You!



"The ache for home
lives in all of us. The safe
place where we can go
as we are and not be
questioned."

--Maya Angelou

A safe home is so important to our quality of life. Last year, we needed to do a long over-due upgrade to our four-plex, especially on the bathrooms and kitchens. With your help, we are able to create a fresher and more accessible environment for the residents of these units as well as provide on-going upkeep on many of our residential sites. Our residents take great pride in their homes and the updates help them feel even prouder and safer. We are truly appreciative of the generosity you have shown to Cottonwood and the people we support.

Ms. Lindsey Ahlen
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Ahlen
Dr. & Mrs. David Ambler
Mr. & Mrs. Darron Ammann
Mr. & Mrs. Steve Atzeni
Ms. Jill Baker
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Baker
Mr. & Mrs. Phil Bentzinger
Ms. Martha Berger
Ms. Cristy Bidinger
Ms. Marilyn Bittenbender &
Mr. Kelvin Heck
Mr. & Mrs. Zak Bolick
Ms. Johanna Branson
Ms. Ettie Brightwell
Ms. Theresa Browning
Ms. Lois Brubaker
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Mr. & Mrs. Harry Gibson
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Mr. & Mrs. Steve Gish
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Ms. Charlee Glinka
Mr. & Mrs. Kurt Goesser
Dr. & Mrs. Captain Gray
Mr. & Mrs. Don Gray
Mr. & Mrs. Al Hack
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Mr. & Mrs. Carl Locke
Mr. Daniel Logan &
Ms. Gladys Cofrin
Mr. & Mrs. David Longhurst

Mr. & Mrs. Ken Martinez
Ms. Shirley Martin-Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Ron Meyer
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Meyer
Mr. James Miller
Ms. Marsha Monica
Mr. Martin Moore
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Moore
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Mulinazzi
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Ms. Linda Boochever
Mr. Bob Simpson
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Sollars
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Mr. & Mrs. Steve Tesdahl

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Mr. Bruce Vaughn
Mr. & Mrs. Kevan Vick
Mr. & Mrs. Bob Vigna
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Vigna
Ms. Peggy Wallert
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Mr. & Mrs. Chuck Warner
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Ms. Cindy Williams
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Willis
Ms. Eleanor Woodyard
Mr. & Mrs. William Young
Mr. & Mrs. Dick Zinn
Mr. & Mrs. David Zupancic

THANK YOU!



We want to give a HUGE shoutout to our amazing and dedicated sponsors! Your support is invaluable to us- whether it is as a Salute! and/ or Golf sponsor or in the myriad ways you always support Cottonwood!

Thank
YOU!



Mike & Tana Ahlen



Sharon & Dennis
Spratt



A&H Air Conditioning & Heating Inc.
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Kurt Goesser State Farm Insurance
NIC, Inc.
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RCB Bank
River City Engineering
Rumsey-Yost
Scotch Industries
Silver Lake Bank
The Kirkpatrick Investment Group
The Trust Company
Truity Credit Union

What Staff Say About Cottonwood



"I love dancing it out with my peoples." - Jeff

"It's great to work at a place where the focus is on helping people become more independent, successful and fulfilled. We work really hard, but we also have fun along the way, which is the way it should be!" - Steve



Cottonwood will give you a welcoming work experience that deepens your appreciation for the diversity of our fellow community members, sharpens your problem solving strategies, hones your organizational skills, provides numerous teamwork and collaboration opportunities- the list is long. Cottonwood employment also ties in directly with many fields of study, social work, speech/language pathology, healthcare, etc.

Visit our website,
www.cwood.org and check out available positions today!

"I never had aspirations of working with people who had disabilities. All I knew was that I needed to be able to leave work each day and feel like I had accomplished something worthwhile. I was referred to Cottonwood by another employee and I'm thankful every day that he thought of me for my position. I can truly say I look forward to going to work each day because I know I'm going to spend my time around wonderful and creative people who push me to be my best. I have the opportunity to both learn new things and share my talents which I find extremely fulfilling. Cottonwood has improved my life in a variety of ways just by letting me be a part of the team."
- Keri



"Twenty years ago, I walked in the doors at Cottonwood, not knowing anything about Cottonwood, I just knew I needed a job other than being a deli clerk. I got hired on as a work service supervisor. I had no idea what I was getting myself into, but I wanted to give it my best shot. I learned that this is much more than a job, I was helping shape the future of adults with developmental disabilities. I loved it too. After 5 years of working at Cottonwood, I moved out of state but continue serving adults with developmental disabilities for 10 years. I moved back and I was given the opportunity to come back to Cottonwood. I've been working as a residential house manager for 5 years and I don't see myself going anywhere else. Thumbs up Cottonwood!!" -Melissa





"I like that I am helping others to find a job or gain a skill that results in our consumers feeling good about what they are able to do. I love the caring environment of our administration for providing benefits such as health insurance and paid sick time. My coworkers are fun and helpful. This is not just a job. It is a career that increases my self-esteem as I help others to increase their self-esteem." - Mary



"My work fills a large part of my life, the way to be truly satisfied is to do great work and love what you do, that's how I feel about my work here at Cottonwood." - Delilah



"I LOVE the diversity in our work environment along with the positive energy around the office. No one misses an opportunity to say "hello, how are you doing?" and actually mean it. I love working at Cottonwood!" - Heather

We ❤️ Cottonwood Staff

"Cottonwood is the most supportive place I have ever worked. My co-workers and bosses will drop everything to pitch in and help out. I never feel alone. Now add to that the incredible hugs and smiles we get every day from our consumers who are so happy to be here, so happy to have their jobs and their friends. They enrich all of our lives beyond measure. They allow me to see the world through their eyes which only see sunshine, even on cloudy days. I love working here!" - Penny



"Although I've lived in Lawrence all of my life, I was mostly unaware of Cottonwood's role in our community. Since joining the team in June of 2019, I have grown to love my job as the Health Support Clerk. I love my coworkers and the people that we serve. Our work is never boring and I feel truly appreciated each day that I am here. I like that I get to interact with lots of different people and that no one day is like another. Additionally, employees receive great support and leadership from the management team. On top of providing a positive and rewarding work environment, Cottonwood offers its employees great benefits. In particular, I am thankful for KPERS and the CSA enrollment option." - Elizabeth



Shaping Futures

Why I Give

"Carl Locke, Cottonwood, Inc. board member, introduced me to Cottonwood several years ago. Since I had a granddaughter with Autism, I had a true feeling for the consumers at Cottonwood and their impact on their families. I have had the privilege of playing a special guest at Cottonwood during the holidays. That is the best gig every year. The consumers are the best audience I have ever experienced.



I am impressed every time I walk around Cottonwood and see the friendly faces and the family-like environment in the work place. The consumers have made friends, are enjoying their work and feel that they are accomplishing something. I give financially and of my time to Cottonwood because I have seen the positive impact Cottonwood has on the people it supports. Would you join my family by financially contributing to Cottonwood? Believe me, this is a good cause, which needs our support. If you ever want a tour of Cottonwood to see firsthand what Cottonwood does, just contact me. 785-766-8227"

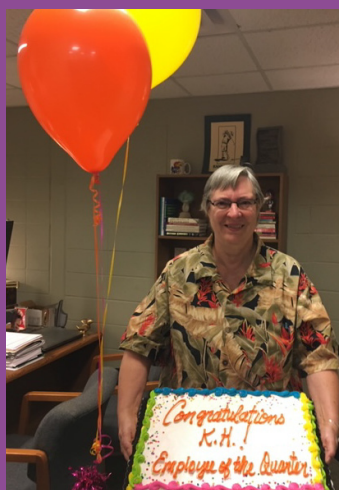
-Tom Mulinazzi



1st Quarter - Sara Filbert
Work Services Sewing Operator



2nd Quarter - HR Lentz
Work Enrichment Supervisor



3rd Quarter - KH Harris
JobLink Transition Consultant



4th Quarter - Corinna Wood
Work Enrichment Supervisor

Congratulations to these 2019 Employees of the Quarter!

Employees of the Quarter are nominated by their peers for their excellence in service and performance and their demonstrated support of Cottonwood's mission and values:

- Customer Satisfaction
- Teamwork
- Courtesy and Respect
- Self Determination and Personal Growth
- Community Partners
- Support

STAY CONNECTED!



Cottonwood, Inc.
&
Salute Festival of Wine & Food



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Follow Us! Like Us! Share Us!

You can make a lasting difference!

The Cottonwood Foundation is a charitable organization, and gifts are tax deductible. Contact Ettie Brightwell, Director of Community Relations and Development, at (785) 842-0550 to learn more about how you can have an impact on the lives of people with intellectual/developmental disabilities by making a donation. For more information about Cottonwood, Inc. as well as the Cottonwood Foundation, visit www.cwood.org.



Community Rewards Giving More Back to the Community!

Dillons is committed to helping our communities grow and prosper. Dillons Community Rewards makes fund-raising easy...all you have to do is shop at Dillons and swipe your Plus Shopper's Card!

Sign up today! Visit www.dillons.com



You shop. Amazon gives.

AmazonSmile donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases to Cottonwood, Inc. Support Cottonwood, Inc. by shopping at smile.amazon.com and designate Cottonwood, Inc. as your non-profit recipient.

Opportunities to shape the future

The Cottonwood Foundation is a separate but affiliated 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization established to facilitate the contribution of funds for the benefit of Cottonwood, Inc. The Foundation's purpose is to promote and further the advancement of services at Cottonwood. With increased competition for limited philanthropic funds, gifts have become even more critical to help ensure a long, healthy future for Cottonwood, Inc. Contributions to the Cottonwood Foundation can be made in a number of ways, including cash, securities, real estate and personal property, life insurance, retirement plans, in-kind gifts, and planned gifts through a will or trust. Each contribution makes a difference and helps ensure the future of Cottonwood.



ONE-TIME GIFT Your gift makes a big difference!



MEMORIAL & HONORARIUM
Honor your loved one with a gift today.



MONTHLY GIVING
Help shape the future of the people we support year-round with a monthly automatic gift.



QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DEDUCTIONS
Individuals who've attained age 70 1/2 may make QCDs.



PLANNED & ESTATE GIFTS
Learn how to leave a legacy through a Will or Trust.



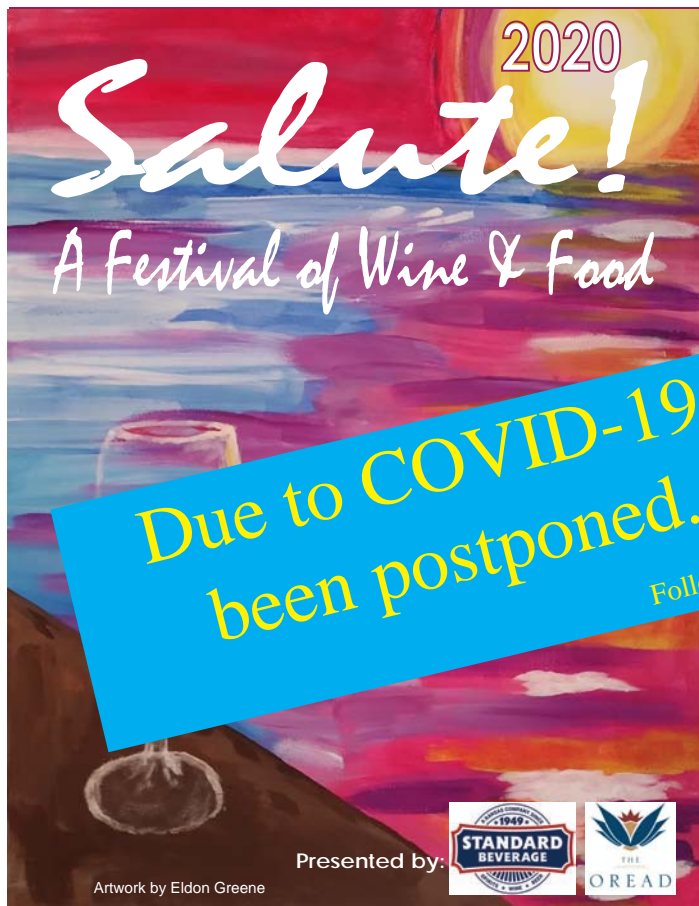
Company Match
Many companies offer a company donation match.



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Lawrence, KS 66047-3049

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Artwork by Eldon Greene

Presented by:



**SAVE
THE DATE**

Due to COVID-19 pandemic, Salute has
been postponed. More info to follow.

Follow us on Facebook!

Friday 10th 6:30pm

Grand Tasting & Auctions

The Oread Hotel

Saturday, July 11th 6:00-10pm

www.salutewinefest.com 785-840-1604

Attendees at all events must be at least 21 years of age with valid ID.

Salute is a benefit for

