

December 2019

## Toys For Tots

The 36th annual “[Toys For Tots Ride](#)” in support of USMCR, presented by A.B.A.T.E. of KS District 4 will take place on Sunday, December 1st. The ride starts at 2pm and registration opens at noon. The ride will start at Walmart South, 1301 SW 37th Street, in the North parking lot and go through town to American Legion Post 400, 3029 NW US HWY 24. All one needs in order to participate is a new toy. These will be given to the Marine Corps for distribution to needy children in the Topeka area. To celebrate this year’s ride will be drawings for prizes along with hot drinks and homemade cookies provided by Papan’s Landing Senior Center.



## Clearing Criminal Records Study

Can your criminal record be expunged? This is the question that the Access to Justice Lab at Harvard Law School has partnered up with [Kansas Legal Services](#) to find out. They launched a study exploring the effectiveness of criminal record clearing on housing and employment stability in Kansas. Their study views two hypotheses: 1. The existence of a criminal record, even a record devoid of convictions, acts as a significant barrier to stable housing and employment opportunities. 2. Lack of stable housing and lack of stable employment are serious risk factors for recidivism and re-offense.

Through the study on these hypotheses they may be able to establish evidence that the existence of a criminal record is a severe barrier to a successful re-entry strategy for justice-involved individuals. This study will be used to also locate successful strategies that overcome these barriers for those with a minor or outdated record can acquire housing, employment, and educational opportunities without hindrance. Participants in the study are linked with free, local legal services to aid in the record clearing process. If you would like to help with this research, then here are a few ways:

- Refer to Kansas Legal Services individuals with outdated charges and/or arrests who are looking to expunge or seal their criminal records
- Spread the news of this study/expungement opportunity with your clients.
- Share this information with others and organizations to help gather information for the study and to aid others in clearing their criminal records.

Individuals who are interested in participating can be directed to the Kansas Legal Services at 1-800-723-6953 or their [website](#). A [reference chart](#) can be used to understand the eligibility process. Partners will screen for eligibility and direct participants to the appropriate representative to handle their specific case. To find out more about this study contact Renee Danser at [rdanser@law.harvard.edu](mailto:rdanser@law.harvard.edu) or (617)496-7992.



## New Year For H.O.P.E.

With the new year just around the corner everyone is starting to make a list of their new year resolutions. On that list should be [H.O.P.E.](#), Helping Ourselves to Prosper Economically. This is a free 6 to 12-month program through HCCI and United Way of Greater Topeka that offers families and individuals a personalized plan to reach financial self-sufficiency. Through this program participants work with a team of professionals to increase goal attainment, better money management skills, improved savings debt levels, and credit scores. Contact Teresa Baker at 785-234-0217 ext. 310 or visit [www.hcci-ks.org](http://www.hcci-ks.org) for more information.



## Members

AARP Tax Services | [Blessing Boxes of Topeka](#) | [Brewster Place](#) | [CASA of Shawnee County](#) | [City of Topeka Fire Department](#) | [Community Action](#) | [Cornerstone of Topeka](#) | [Doorstep](#) | [Downtown Topeka](#) | [E2 Communications](#) | [Envista Credit Union](#) | [Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce](#) | [Harvesters](#) | [Heartland Visioning](#) | Hi-Crest NIA | Historic Topeka East NIA | [Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging](#) | Jefferson Square NIA | [Kansas Volunteer Commission](#) | [KTWU](#) | Max Wilson | [Meals on Wheels](#) | North Topeka West NIA | [Shawnee County K-State Research and Extension](#) | Tennessee Town NIA | [The Villages, Inc.](#) | [Topeka LU-LAC Senior Center](#) | [Topeka Metro Transit Authority](#) | [Topeka Rescue Mission](#) | [Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library](#) | [Valeo Behavioral Health Care](#) | Shawnee County Fair Board | Shawnee County Department of Corrections

