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## **Governor Laura Kelly Announces Nearly \$2M to Boost Tourism Industry**

**TOPEKA** – Governor Laura Kelly today announced that Kansas Tourism, in partnership with the Patterson Family Foundation, is providing nearly \$2 million to eight tourism projects across the state to enhance the state’s growing tourism industry. Tourism Attraction Sub-grants for Kansas (TASK) were presented by Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of Commerce David Toland and Kansas Tourism Director Bridgette Jobe at an event on Thursday at Strataca: Kansas Underground Salt Museum in Hutchinson.

The tourism industry is the 9th largest employer in the state, generating \$11.8 billion in economic output annually and saving the average Kansan \$600 in yearly taxes.

“Kansas is increasingly becoming a destination state for tourists around the world – and these grants make that all the more true,” **Governor Laura Kelly said.** “By developing new and enhanced tourism attractions, we’re growing an industry that employs tens of thousands of Kansans, brings billions of dollars into our economy, and preserves our rich history for generations to come.”

The TASK program is administered by Kansas Tourism. The TASK program provides funding for public and non-profit groups to develop new tourism attractions or to enhance existing ones. The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation state grants provided \$1.5 million in funding, with an additional \$462,000 provided by the Patterson Family Foundation for awardees in rural counties.

“These grant recipients contribute greatly to the growth of sustainable and memorable travel experiences across our state,” **Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of Commerce David Toland said.** “We are investing in communities across Kansas because we know the value and benefit tourism dollars bring to our local, regional, and state economies.”

The TASK recipients and amounts awarded:

- City of Great Bend Convention & Visitors Bureau, Barton County, \$337,500
- Flint Hills Discovery Center, Riley County, \$200,000

- Grassroots Art Center, Russell County, \$172,226
- Horse Thief Reservoir Benefit District, Hodgeman County, \$299,918
- Johnson County Park & Recreation District, Johnson County, \$201,168
- Miners Hall Museum Foundation, Crawford County, \$337,500
- Strataca: Kansas Underground Salt Museum, Reno County, \$174,750
- The Nature Conservancy, Logan County, \$238,950

“The TASK projects being awarded elevate our visitor experiences and make Kansas an even greater tourism destination,” **Kansas Tourism Director Bridgette Jobe said.** “New and improved attractions bring more visitors to our state and local communities. These same visitors will dine at local restaurants, stay in hotels, and shop at local stores.”

Additional details and project descriptions can be found at <https://www.travelks.com/task-grant-awardees/>.

The TASK grant application process opened on January 14 and closed in mid-March. For more information, please visit <https://www.travelks.com/travel-industry/programs-and-resources/grants/> or contact Kansas Tourism grant program manager Taylor Hartshorn at [taylor.hartshorn@ks.gov](mailto:taylor.hartshorn@ks.gov).

A group photo of TASK grant recipients for media use can be found [here](#).

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