

“THE POWER OF ONE”

The Kansas Association for Youth @ 75 years

One person can make a difference – and everyone should try. – *President John F. Kennedy*

Oh, what a difference one person can make...

In the mid-1940's, at the height of WWII, a civics teacher named Wanda May Vinson, and her students were discussing the opportunities they had for meaningful participation in life and their obligations as a citizen. As the conversation continued, their enthusiasm soon turned to the possibility of forming an organization for Kansas secondary school students that would be centered around character-building, leadership-training and providing service to their school, community, nation and world. This idea was embraced by the Kansas State High School Activities Association and in 1946, the Kansas Association for Youth (KAY) was founded.

The power of one person, doing the right thing for the right reason and at the right time is the greatest influence one can make.

For the past 75 years, thousands of Kansas students have been given valuable life lessons as they assumed their citizenship responsibility and embraced service to others. Of many life lessons, they have discovered that:

- **One person, one organization. Both have the ability and the opportunity to reach out to others and lend a helping hand - because they can!**
“I am only one; but still, I am one. I cannot do everything, but still, I can do something. I will not refuse to do the something I can do.” -*Helen Keller*.
- **I Can, We Can.** “If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one”. – *Mother Teresa*. Doing something, no matter how small, is better than doing nothing at all! It all matters and makes a huge difference.
- **Everyone has value & everyone is important!** “Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.” -*Archbishop Desmond Tutu*.
- **Work Made Fun Gets Done.** It's all about your spirit and attitude – attitude is everything and while that might be a little cliché, it is absolutely true. Work hard, have fun and make a difference.
- **To the world you may be one person – but to one person you may be the world.** How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single *moment* before starting to improve the world. –*Anne Frank*
- **“As you go, so goes the club”** – *Wanda May Vinson, KAY Founder and Director (1946-1982)*. Never underestimate what you can do to motivate and inspire others. Your leadership is the power of one harnessing the power of many.

The 2021-2022 school year will mark the 75th year of the Kansas Association for Youth. As we celebrate this important milestone in our organization, let us be reminded of all that has been done by KAY members and all that is to come. Every member of the KAY program has the power to lead by example – to serve as a positive role model for others –to be the change they want to see in the world! When we lead through our example, the possibilities are endless and the impact on others is immeasurable.

And perhaps one of the best things about the KAY program is that once you have stepped up to lead and serve others, “it is in you”. It becomes a part of who you are and what you will model throughout your life. **ONCE A KAY, ALWAYS A KAY!**

