

## 2025 Board of Directors

**Chair: Chuck Passannante**  
*Community Volunteer*

**Immed. Past Chair: Pat Gearhart**  
*Simmons Bank*

**Secretary: Adam Pogue**  
*Spirit AeroSystems*

**Treasurer: Gail Johnson**  
*Community Volunteer*

**Steve Cox**  
*Community Volunteer*

**Cynthia Cross**  
*Cox*

**Kim Dinkel**  
*Community Volunteer*

**Lisa Farris**  
*Community Volunteer*

**Stephanie Galichia**  
*Community Volunteer*

**Julie Gentile**  
*Community Volunteer*

**Doug Hayes**  
*Cox Machine*

**Pete McKernan**  
*Community Volunteer*

**Katie Porter**  
*Cargill*

**Gary Proffitt**  
*Community Volunteer*

**Megan Reichenberger**  
*K5 Enterprises LLC*

**Hale Ritchie**  
*Community Volunteer*

**Jim Walters**  
*Community Volunteer*

**Claudia Yaujar-Amaro**  
*AB&C Bilingual Resources, LLC*

## Rainbows United Charitable Foundation Board of Directors

**Chair: Steve Cox**  
*Community Volunteer*

**Vice Chair: Helen Healy**  
*Community Volunteer*

**Secretary: Stephanie Galichia**  
*Community Volunteer*

**Treasurer: Dan Peare**  
*Hinkle Law Firm*

**Pat Gearhart**  
*Simmons Bank*

**Hale Ritchie**  
*Community Volunteer*

**Steve Yager**  
*Kirby Yager Financial*

## Rainbows United, Inc.

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Wichita, KS 67220  
316.267.KIDS (5437)

2258 N. Lakeway Cir.  
Wichita, KS 67205

409 N. Main  
El Dorado, KS 67042  
316.320.1342



# The Canvas

## 2025 Kansas Legislative Session: Advocacy in Action

The 2025 Kansas legislative session has been fast-moving, with proposals that could significantly impact children with special needs and their families.

In a shifting political landscape, outcomes remain uncertain—but here are a few key bills we're closely monitoring:

### Special Education Funding:

The House has proposed a \$10 million increase in special education funding—well below the \$73 million recommended by Governor Kelly.

### Oversight of KDADS Changes:

HB 2240, which passed the Senate with a veto-proof 29–11 vote, would require legislative approval before state agencies can expand public assistance programs or change services for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

While legislation may change, our Mission does not. We remain a steady voice for children who need us most, working to ensure every child and family has access to the care, education, and support they deserve.

Rainbows is committed to advocating for



Rainbows' Executive Leadership Team attended InterHab Advocacy Day and met with several legislators. Pictured are: Andy Walston, Mark Taylor, Lindsay Kral, Michelle Eastman, Senator Chase Blasi, Rachel Banning and Lisa Capps in Senate chambers.

the best possible outcomes, and we are grateful for the dedication of our elected officials as we move forward—together.

Thank you for your support,

Rachel Banning, President

## Welcome to the team



No stranger to events and building relationships, **Danae Hobbs is Rainbows' Events Specialist.** She comes to Rainbows from the Derby Chamber of Commerce where she was the Member Relations Manager.

In her role at Rainbows she's the point person for fundraising events including logistics, vendor coordination, and a bazillion details. "Being able to experience Blarney Breakfast first-hand with all the volunteers hard work and the community showing up in support of what we do for children and families was truly special," said Danae.

When her goddaughter was born with significant hearing loss, Danae learned what a benefit having Rainbows help families navigate a difficult, uncertain journey means.

A graduate of University of Arkansas, she plays pickleball at least twice a week and loves any activity that takes her outdoors with her Doberman, Mako.



**Meet Melanie Addington, Community Outreach Specialist.**

She jumped in helping with Blarney Breakfast and coordinating volunteers to meet Rainbows' many needs. "Every day is unique based on what volunteer activities or fairs or events we have going on," said Melanie. "I get to bounce between

different parts of my job every day."

With a background in journalism, university art education and film festivals, she is excited to be a part of the Rainbows' Development team. She'll be at community events helping develop relationships and spreading the word about Rainbows' services. She also makes sure volunteers receive a welcome orientation to Rainbows and feel appreciated for giving of their time and talents.

"I appreciate how much Rainbows can help families with developmental delays as early as birth," said Melanie. Her son was diagnosed with Autism in middle school, which gives her an extra understanding of what services mean to families.

She loves watching and making movies in addition to watching Thunder and Los Angeles Kings hockey with her boyfriend.

## Volunteer opportunities

Volunteering at Rainbows is a fantastic way to give back to the community. From Blarney Breakfast and Fashion Passion events to helping with fun activities in the classroom, we have a job that suits your skills. Whether you want to work directly in the classroom, read to kids in our library, or help tend our community garden, we can work with your schedule.

Do you have a therapy animal? Let us know! The kids love getting visits from trained animals. If you want to work from home and have a strong passion for sewing or baking, we can use your help!

Contact Melanie Addington today to learn more about how you can take part at 316.425.4647 or [maddington@rui.org](mailto:maddington@rui.org) or visit <https://rainbowsunited.org/volunteer/> to learn more.

A promotional poster for the 'Avant Garde Fashion Passion' event. The poster features a stylized illustration of a woman in a red top and blue skirt. The text includes the event title, the Rainbows logo, a QR code, and contact information for reservations. It also lists event and honorary chairs and the date, Thursday May 8th.

*Avant Garde*  
**fashion passion**  
because helping children is always in...  
**RAINBOWS**  
RESERVE YOUR TABLE NOW  
RSVP TO [CEMERY@RUI.ORG](mailto:CEMERY@RUI.ORG)  
EVENT CHAIRS: WILL & CYNTHIA CROSS  
HONORARY CHAIRS: GEORGE & JOCELYNE LAHAM  
SAVE THE DATE  
THURSDAY MAY 8