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MEDIA ADVISORY  
January 6, 2020

## **Kansas Association of City/County Managers Honor Members for Service and Excellence and set 2020 Leadership**

In December, the Kansas Association of City/County Managers (KACM) met to recognize excellence in public service and honor members of the profession for their years of service. Each year, KACM members meet to choose one member who are exemplary members of the city-county management profession. This year, KACM honored Susan Sherman, Assistant City Manager for the City of Olathe with the Buford M. Watson, Jr. Award for Excellence in Public Management in Kansas.

According to her nomination, Susan is one of KACM's most accomplished and decorated local government managers. She has received two very prestigious International City-County Management Association (ICMA) awards (the 2006 Assistant Excellence in Leadership Award and the 2014 Career Development Award) and has served on the Board of Directors for both ICMA and KACM. Susan has led her organization from within for 30 years by developing the trust of co-workers and elected officials to do some of the nation's most innovative local government work. More importantly, Susan has helped develop a generation of local government leaders who are inspired by Susan's enthusiasm, commitment, and integrity. Susan represents the best of what the profession offers to society.

“The Buford M. Watson Jr award is such a special award for KACM members,” said Sherman. “It symbolizes a person and a career that we hope our professional career will emulate. It includes professionalism, mentorship, and the highest ideals of our profession. I am so honored to be listed with the many inspiring leaders that have been awarded this in the past. This is truly a pinnacle moment for me in my career.”

The Association honored Ernestor De La Rosa, Assistant to the City Manager for the City of Dodge City with the Early Career Excellence Award. Ernestor began working fulltime in 2014 as Assistant to the City Manager. In this role he excelled working on legislative issues and policies. He focused on the City's coordination to expanded efforts to work with the United States Custom and Immigration Services (USCIS)



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and the Mexican Consulate. In 2018, he took on more responsibilities with human resources and was promoted to Assistant City Manager for Dodge City in 2019. He supervises both the Public Transportation and the Human Resources Department; he also continues to serve as the Legislative Affairs Director. He works diligently with our federal delegation on legislative affairs such as immigration, transportation and in areas that impact our renewable energy project revenues. Ernestor was appointed by Governor Kelly to serve on FORWARD/Long-Range Transportation Plan Advisory Group as a representative for the City of Dodge City and the Kansas Hispanic & Latino American Affairs Commission.

“I am humbled to be recognized with this award and grateful to be able to serve Dodge City and to work in such a rewarding profession,” said De La Rosa. “I thank my mentors and my colleagues for their help along the way.”

Three long-term city management professionals in Kansas were honored for their service to cities. Cherise Tieben, City Manager for the City of Dodge City; John Deardoff, City Manager for the City of Hutchinson; and Jay Wieland, City Manager for the City of Paola, were given the Career Achievement Award for their years of public service.

Kathy Sexton, City Manager for the City of Derby, was named the President of the Kansas Association of City/County Managers for 2020. Kathy has been the City Manager for Derby for 15 years. Prior to her tenure in Derby, Kathy was Assistant County Manager of Sedgwick County Government from 2001 to 2006. Kathy worked in the governor's budget office in Topeka (1992-1995).

“As President of KACM in 2020, I look forward to working on several initiatives aimed at helping communities build on their traditions of strong partnerships between elected officials and professional managers,” said Sexton. We have new Senior Advisors to mentor new managers and advise communities in transition. We plan to honor some of the best managers in Kansas with Life Membership while also establishing a scholarship fund to support young people as they further their education in pursuit of serving counties and cities in Kansas.”

Becky Berger, City Manager for the City of Atchison, was selected as the Vice President of KACM for 2020. Jonathan Mitchell, City Manager of the City of Hoisington was named Secretary. Nathan Law, City Administrator for the City of Louisburg, was named the Treasurer.

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*Established by municipal officials in 1910, the League of Kansas Municipalities is a voluntary, nonpartisan organization of over 500 Kansas cities. The League works for its member cities through advocacy, legal advice, education and other services. Follow the League of Kansas Municipalities on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#)*