

2025 JOHNSON COUN DEMOCRATIC GALA

AUGUST 16, 2025

Join us on social media using #foreverthefreestate



JOIN US FOR THE ASTENDANCE OF ASTENDANCE OF THE PROPERTY OF TH

An extra \$25 ticket unlocks a DJ, drinks, and all sorts of surprise fun.

Need to get a ticket? onecau.se/jocodemsgala2025



TONIGHT'S PROGRAM

with emcee Hailee Bland-Walsh

6:00	VIP and cocktail reception
6.55	Seating for dinner

7:00 | Call to order by KDP Chair by Jeanna Repass

| 2025 Candidate introduction

| Dinner service begins

| Remarks by Party Chair Deann Mitchell

| Opportunity to give

| Remarks by

- Lenexa Mayor Julie Sayers
- Johnson County Chairman Mike Kelly

| Keynote remarks by Gov. Martin O'Malley

SPECIAL GUESTS



Jeanna Repass

Chair, Kansas Democratic Party



Deann Mitchell

Chair, Johnson County
Democratic Party



Julie Sayers

Mayor, City of Lenexa



Mike Kelly

Chair, Johnson County Board of Commissioners



Martin O'Malley

Martin O'Malley began his public service on the Baltimore City Council in 1991, rising to become mayor in 1999, where he gained national attention for data-driven crime reduction strategies. In 2006, he was elected governor of Maryland, serving two terms and championing progressive policies like marriage equality and immigration reform. In 2023, President Biden appointed him commissioner of the Social Security Administration, where he led modernization efforts and improved service delivery.

Johnson County Democratic Party Forever the Free State Gala

THIS EVENING'S HOST

Hailee Bland Walsh

Hailee Bland Walsh is a Johnson County-based entrepreneur, movement-builder, and political organizer. As founder of City Gym, she has created a nationally recognized space for community and belonging. An early and longtime supporter of Rep. Sharice Davids, Hailee helped shape the grassroots effort that flipped Kansas' 3rd District and kept it blue.

Whether it's empowering personal development, fighting for reproductive freedom, or helping elect trailblazing candidates, Hailee shows up with heart, hustle, and a deep belief in what's possible.

WITH **APPRECIATION** TO OUR 2025 GALA COMMITTEE

Chair Deann Mitchell Vice Chair Wes Garrison Secretary Allison Polanis Jessica Persson Kristen Blackton Cole Robinson Danielle Robinson Kevin Burke

Forever the Free State logo designed by Pablo de Palacios.

FUND THE NEED



Claire Reagan

Olathe School Board

MEET OUR 2025 CANDIDATES

Fairway City Council Kelly-Ann Buszek	Roeland Park Mayor Michael Poppa
Emily Snyder	Roeland Park City Council Tom Madigan*
James Hafner	∣ Jen Hill*

Tanya Keys* | Harold Morales

Shawnee City Council | Steele Reynolds Gardner City Council | Dawn Kirtley Kelly Johnson | Eric Persson

Leawood City Council | Matt Peppes Morgan Rainey | Sarah Meuli Erin Aldridge

> Blue Valley School Board | Sonya Evans* Mitch Lohr

| Rachel Rubin Gina Knapp* Lenexa City Council | John Michael Handley* **| Dave Benson**

> Nicole Wasson De Soto School Board | Lucy DeWitt

Avery Bell Calley Malloy*

Merriam City Council | Amy Rider* | Brandi Jonasson*

I Reuben Cozmyer[∗] Gardner-Edgerton School | Julie Aldridge

Mission Mayor | Sollie Flora* **Board | Sam Dominguez**

Mission City Council | Sam Komosa | Keith Davenport

| Kayla Schiller Olathe School Board | Julie Steele* Ben Chociej* Shawnee Mission School | April Boyd-Noronha*

Olathe City Council | Kevin Deneault **Board**

Overland Park Mayor | Curt Skoog* Spring Hill School Board | Autumn Coleman-Overland Park City | Logan Heley* Marconett

> Council | Melissa Cheatham* Steve Miller

| Amy Scrivner I Ted Beauchamp WaterOne Board Member | Kay Heley* I Tom Carignan

Jennifer Gunby | Amy Antrim

Alexandria Washington | Jill Westra*

Lee Cross*

JCCC Board of Trustees | Chad Carroll Prairie Village City | Cole Robinson*

> Council | Ronald Nelson* | Shelby Bartelt | Geoff Holton I Nathan Vallette Dawn Rattan*

Betsy Lawrence

*Incumbent

I Jim Sellers

In 2024-25, the Johnson County Democratic Party:

- hired a new **Volunteer Coordinator** to recruit, train, engage, and utilize our vital volunteer team.
- **built community** with events such as debate watch parties, Filing Day Party, and Volunteer Appreciation Events.
- **sent mail** directly to all registered Democrats in Johnson County.
- **texted** all registered Democrats in Johnson County in advance of Election Day.
- **refurbished** the office, making it a safe and comfortable place for volunteers to work.

The results are clear: YOUR SUPPORT GETS MORE DEMOCRATS ELECTED IN JOHNSON COUNTY!

YOUR **CONTRIBUTIONS**MAKE IT POSSIBLE

- Mail
- Texting
- Yard signs
- Three staff members
- Year-round office
- Candidate training
- County-wide outreach events



A SPECIAL **THANK YOU** TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS

AD ASTRA SPONSORS

Jennifer Day

Pipefitters 533

COTTONWOOD SPONSORS

Ann Baum

Jon and Sarah Baum

Wes Garrison

Dennis Miller for Kansas

Deann Mitchell

Sharice for Congress

David Westbrook for Shawnee Mission School Board

IBEW 124

Laborers 1290

Mid America Carpenters Regional Council

Operating Engineers 101

United Auto Workers 31

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JAYHAWKER SPONSORS

Cross Law Firm
Julie Sayers for Lenexa & Brandon Woodard for Kansas
Sykes for Senate

SUNFLOWER SPONSORS

Christy Davis for US Senate

Renee Dinsmore &

Dr. JP Greenwood for WaterOne

Barry and Renee Grissom

Mike Kelly for Johnson County

Betsy Lawrence for Prairie Village

Ethan for Kansas

Cindy Holscher for Kansas

Jarrod and Heather Ousley

Susan Ruiz for Kansas

Matt Schoonover for Olathe

Marlys Shulda

Curt Skoog for Mayor

Bob Southard

Jerry Stogsdill for Kansas

Dean Vakas for Olathe

Nathan Vallette for Prairie Village

AFL-CIO &

Allied Trades District 3

Kansans for a Democratic House

Kansas Senate Democrats

Senate District 8 #1

Senate District 8 #2

Senate District 10 #1

Senate Distirct 10 #2

Senate District 35

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ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Stephanie Clayton for Kansas
Jay Highfill
Cindy Neighbor for Kansas
Vanessa Riebli
Greater Kansas City Building and Trades

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JOHNSON COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY **EXECUTIVE BOARD 2024-26**

Deann Mitchell, Chair

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Mark Adams, Treasurer

Allison Polanis, Secretary

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Kristen Schultz, SD37

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Ernie Lunsford, At-Large

Jennifer Day, At-Large

Vanessa Riebli, At-Large

Claire Reagan, At-Large

WITH GRATITUDE TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Hundreds of dedicated volunteers connect with thousands and thousands of voters every year. Our volunteers are the heart of our organization and the reason for our success.

THANK YOU!