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**Evaluation of the
Kansas Health Foundation
Tobacco-Free Campuses Initiative
201001008B**

Final Comprehensive Report

Prepared for

Kansas Health Foundation

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Executive Summary

The Kansas Health Foundation (KHF) established the Supporting Tobacco-Free Campuses Initiative, which aimed to provide grant funding for up to 16 institutions of higher education to support planning for and implementation of policy strategies that create a comprehensive tobacco-free environment. Tobacco-free campus policies have been shown to be effective at preventing initiation of tobacco use and reducing exposure to secondhand smoke and are recommended by *The Community Guide* and the American College Health Association (ACHA). KHF engaged RTI International to evaluate this initiative to address the following evaluation questions:

- What policy changes resulted from the funded activities?
- What program activities were conducted to successfully implement tobacco-free policies?
- What are the facilitators and barriers to implementing comprehensive tobacco-free policies at institutions of higher education in Kansas?

RTI conducted a review of grantees' applications and a review of the institutions' existing tobacco-related policy before receiving the grant, where applicable, and the policy after the grant activities were completed. In addition, we conducted key informant interviews with the project leads at each funded institution approximately one month after grant funding ended.

From September 2014 to June 2019, KHF funded six institutions through the Supporting Tobacco-Free Campuses Initiative, all of which ultimately developed and implemented a tobacco-free campus policy during their grant periods. Institutions conducted various program activities to achieve policy change, including:

- Holding **internal meetings** with the tobacco-free campus **coalition or task force and other key stakeholders**
- Convening **town hall style meetings with the wider community** and other key stakeholders to discuss the pending policy changes
- Buying **signage or other promotional materials to communicate the policy** changes to students, faculty, staff, and campus visitors
- Contracting with Ty Patterson as a consultant for policy development and implementation

Institutions described many of the same facilitators and lessons learned documented in the literature, suggesting that the experience of Kansas institutions is similar to the experience of other institutions in the United States. Overall, institutions noted that policy change takes time and sometimes longer than they expected. Several institutions noted that the following factors facilitated the process of developing, implementing, and/or enforcing their tobacco-free campus policy:

- **Being ready to handle resistance** from groups opposed to tobacco-free campus policies
- Tailoring the process to their institution, including **audience-specific messaging** to communicate the policy to students, faculty, staff, and campus visitors and respond to feedback from resistant groups
- Utilizing **student-led** and **multidisciplinary teams**
- Utilizing **experience from other funded institutions** and fostering those connections

Overall, institutions that received funding were able to successfully utilize the grant mechanism to complete their planned activities. The Kansas Health Foundation's Tobacco-Free Campuses Initiative provided key resources, both monetary and technical assistance-focused, that contributed to the ability for institutions to develop, implement, and/or enforce tobacco-free campus policies.