

# Kansas Roads Scholar Program

Promoting a Skilled Workforce for Kansas Public Works and Road and Bridge Agencies

*Anyone can benefit from professional and job skills development, and so do their employers. The Kansas Roads Scholar Program is designed to do just that — for employees of public works agencies in local governments. The program enhances skills and knowledge of equipment operators as well as those who supervise others, or aspire to management in public works operations.*



## What is it?

The Kansas Roads Scholar Program is a professional and skills development program of the Kansas County Highway Association (KCHA) and the Kansas Chapter of the American Public Works Association

(APWA), with support from the following partners: Kansas Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP), Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Kansas Association of Counties (KAC). The program delivers 36 different courses with around 200 hours of instruction to promote a skilled workforce for Kansas public works agencies. It is designed to increase knowledge of road and bridge management and maintenance procedures and improve technical, supervisory, and managerial skills. The courses are designed to be affordable for local agencies in Kansas.

## Who can participate?

Any Kansas public works employee is invited to participate.

## Does this program certify qualifications?

No. Completion does not certify a standard of performance. However, each certificate states that the participant attended the required courses.

## What are the different certificate levels and what is needed to earn a certificate?

The Program has three levels and a "safety star" program, detailed on the next page. The list of courses required for each certificate is developed by a committee of Kansas public works professionals. The courses, offered by Kansas LTAP and KAC and are designed to give a comprehensive overview of the level's specific area of expertise, whether technical,

supervisory, or administrative/executive skills.

A certificate is awarded to an individual who participates in all required courses for that level within 6 years of the date of enrollment for that level. (Courses completed 3 years prior to enrollment can be grandfathered in.) A person can be enrolled in more than one level at the same time, if desired. Courses may be taken in any order, at any time. In general, a certificate must be earned for the preceding level in order to obtain a certificate at the next level. Individuals with more than 5 years of public works administrative experience may choose to skip Level I and proceed to Level II. Please submit a request to the Kansas LTAP Program.

## How to apply for each level?

It's easy. Complete the application form and pay a one-time nonrefundable application fee of \$35 (required for each level). The fee provides funds to monitor the progress of enrollee. Enroll online or download an application at: <https://kutc.ku.edu/roads-scholar-home-page>.

## How often are courses taught?

Courses are offered in an ongoing basis across the State, at least every other year. Roads Scholar partner Kansas LTAP maintains a master calendar. For more information go to <https://kutc.ku.edu/roads-scholar-home-page>.

## How are the courses tracked?

Kansas LTAP tracks attendance and reports participant completions to KCHA and APWA for program recognition.

For questions about course completion, or the Roads Scholar Program in general, contact Kristin Kelly at LTAP, (785) 864-2594, [kbkelly@ku.edu](mailto:kbkelly@ku.edu). Learn more at <https://kutc.ku.edu/roads-scholar-home-page>.



## 1 Roads Scholar –Technical Skills

Enhances the knowledge of general public works maintenance and construction methods, safety practices, and how local government is organized and operated as it applies to quality public service.

Courses:

1. Culverts, Drainage and Levee Maintenance
2. Risk and Liability Issues
3. MUTCD for Technicians
4. Snow and Ice Control
5. Road Maintenance (choose two of the following three)
  - Gravel Road and Street Maintenance
  - Asphalt Road and Street Maintenance
  - Concrete Road and Street Maintenance
6. Workplace, Equipment and Job Site Safety
7. Foundations in Customer Service
8. Government 101 (choose one of the following two)
  - County Government 101
  - City Government 101

Elective Courses: Bridge 101 and Introduction to GIS

(These are not required).

## 2 Advanced Roads Scholar – Supervisory Skills

Develops supervisory skills for persons engaged in public works maintenance and construction activities. Pre-requisite: Level 1 Roads Scholar certificate or 5 years of public works administrative experience with approval to skip Level I.

Courses:

1. The Fundamentals of Supervision
2. Legal Aspects of Management
3. Problem Solving for Effective Supervision
4. Communication Skills for Effective Supervision
5. Managing Employee Performance
6. Providing Employee Safety
7. Enhancing Cooperative Work Relationships
8. Public Works Issues I & II

Elective Courses: Making Safer Roads, Bridge Maintenance, Culvert Management, and Advanced GIS (These are not required).



Snow and Ice Control (Level I Course)

## 3 Master Roads Scholar – Executive Development

Enhances management and administrative skills for those who are, or aspire to be, a county highway administrator, county or city engineer, or public works director.

Required Courses:

1. Fundamentals of Leadership
2. Budgeting and Finances
3. Overview of Human Resource Management
4. Effective Community and Media Communication
5. Project Planning and Management
6. Effective Management of Intergovernmental Relations
7. Legal, Permitting and Regulatory Processes
8. Asset Management and Cost Accounting
9. Local/State Project Coordination
10. Overview of Engineering Functions in Public Works

Elective Course: Select a course of your own and request approval from Kansas LTAP.

Master Roads Scholar recognition is awarded to individuals who have either: 1) completed Levels I and II of the Roads Scholar Program and the courses listed above; or 2) have 5 years of experience in public works administration and have completed Level II and the courses listed above in the required 6-year time period. Level II and Level III may be taken simultaneously.

## \* Safety Star Program

Enhances the knowledge of safety related basics. This program is intended for City Street Superintendents and County Road Supervisors, but also includes any public works individuals that are interested in safety. There is no pre-requisite required. Completion of the course work below earns participants a safety star certificate.

Courses:

1. Workplace, Jobsite and Equipment Safety (Level I)
2. Risk and Liability Issues (Level I)
3. Engineering Functions in Public Works (Level III)
4. MUTCD for Technicians (Level I)
5. Low Cost Safety Improvements (webinar)
6. Road Safety Assessments (webinar)
7. Making Roads Safer (LTAP class)

## How Much to Budget for Roads Scholar Training

Are you interested in enrolling your staff members in the Kansas Roads Scholar Program but want to know how much it will cost? Here is your answer. The cost for taking Roads Scholar classes depends on which entity is teaching a particular course (LTAP, KAC, or TASK). The rate for program expenses for the Level I Roads Scholar is around \$605 Level II around \$625, and Level III around \$950. Registration fees cover instruction, materials, and lunch (for LTAP and KAC classes). Note: There is a time limit of six years to complete each level from the date of application. Courses taken up to three years prior to the application date can apply toward that level. If you have any questions, contact Kristin Kelly at Kansas LTAP at (785) 864-2594 or [kbkelly@ku.edu](mailto:kbkelly@ku.edu). Enroll today! <https://kutc.ku.edu/roads-scholar-home-page>.



Jeremiah Corpening, Lyon County receives his Levels II & III Roads Scholar certificates during a County Commission meeting.

### Kansas Roads Scholar Advisory Committee Members

#### APWA-Kansas Chapter:

Frank Abart, City of Emporia  
Michael Haeffele, City of Ottawa  
Tod Salfrank, KDOT Bureau of Local Projects

#### Kansas County Highway Association:

Keith Browning, Douglas County

#### Kansas LTAP:

Lisa Harris  
Kristin Kelly

#### Kansas Association of Counties:

Randall Allen  
Norm Bowers  
Dorrie Sullivan

## Testimonials

“The information and the courses in the Roads Scholar Program are aligned with everything that we come in contact on a regular basis in Public Works. Whether it is new products on the market or the best way to get the job done, all are discussed thoroughly so we can do the best job possible with our resources. The Supervisory courses in the Level 2 program really give insight on the best way to get the most out of our employees and how to be a real asset to our organization from a leadership standpoint. The course discussions open your eyes to the right way to be a leader/mentor in the workings of public service. I feel the courses offered through the Roads Scholar Program are a great investment in our people, and people in all levels in a department can benefit from taking all levels of the training (even through the top ranks of management) to get a good feel for all the different aspects of what we do in providing public service.”  
— Ryan Fine, Heavy Equipment Operator, Franklin County

“The Kansas Roads Scholar Program is a real benefit to me and our county. The class materials are well organized and the little flip books come in handy when needing a quick reference whether it’s the do’s and don’ts of a road supervisor or needing to know the weights for materials used in paving and sealing. The instructors are not “talking heads” but rather explain things by real life experiences. You gain an understanding about all of the funding that is out there, explained by KDOT Local Projects. The Kansas Roads Scholar Program also lets you meet personnel from other counties and learn how they do things in their counties.”  
— Darren Williams, Assistant County Engineer, Barton County

“The Kansas Roads Scholar Program has been a very valuable tool for the City of Burlington’s street department. It is very affordable and provides all of the employees a chance to better understand the functions of public works from differing perspectives. I personally have been able to go through the complete program and have acquired my Level 3 certificate. Taking Roads Scholar classes is a part of each employees annual work plan in the department, and I have seen the value that it provides with more of a buy-in from the employees. I would highly recommend this program to any city or county personnel that can attend.”  
— Doug Mast, Street Superintendent, City of Burlington