

Rosowsky interview (courtside) with Wyatt Thompson, Learfield/K-State Athletics, prior to K-State/OSU MBB game, Feb. 2, 2022

**Thompson:** I've heard that K-State has a new initiative focused on economic prosperity. Can you tell me about the plan?

**Rosowsky:** Certainly, Wyatt. We're really excited about this. K-State has launched a new initiative to drive economic prosperity across the state, in all 105 counties, rural and urban. This plan not only positions K-State as an economic engine for Kansas, but *commits* our university to lifting people, families, businesses, and communities across the state, helping us build a sustainable and prosperous future for Kansas.

It's a ten-year plan, with ambitious goals. Three thousand new jobs and three billion dollars of new investments into Kansas. But this bold plan is built around Kansas values and Kansas sensibilities. Like I said, we are really excited.

**Thompson:** How will K-State succeed in adding thousands of jobs and billions of \$\$ to the state?

**Rosowsky:** The key will be creating new partnerships – with the state, with our communities, and with the private sector – and then leveraging K-State's academic and research strengths in key areas for our state (agriculture, food, and animal sciences).

These partnerships will allow us to invest strategically in our research, technology commercialization, and outreach programs. We want to create new jobs and new companies based on our research and discovery at K-State, but we also want to attract new and existing companies to Kansas *because* of what we are doing at K-State (our faculty and our research, our statewide engagement, and of course, our talented students, the workforce of tomorrow).

K-State graduates are known to be among the best in the nation, Wyatt. Companies love to hire our graduates and are seeking ways to have greater access to them. One way to do that is for them to establish an office in the state, even on our campus or in our community. K-State's new Edge Collaboration District, located on the north edge of our main campus, provides an exciting space for companies to co-locate with our researchers, our specialized facilities, and our students.

Finally, Wyatt, we want to tap into the needs, and the energy, and the ideas of Kansans across the state, in all 105 counties. We want all Kansans to be a part of our commitment to innovation, to entrepreneurship, and to economic prosperity. We will create new pathways and opportunities for rural farmers, cattlemen, growers, local business owners, and community-based economic development organizations to access K-State's resources and capabilities. In this way, our Economic Prosperity Plan is for *all* Kansans.

And Wyatt, with these new public and private partnerships, we will be able to invest in areas of excellence for K-State and areas that align with our state's highest priorities (agriculture, food, animal sciences). And through these strategic investments and targeted programs, we can make Kansas globally competitive in these critical areas.

The key will be focusing existing and new resources in areas that matter most to Kansas and to Kansans, and remaining laser-focused on creating jobs and attracting new investments into the state. We can do this. Together, we can do this.

**Thompson:** What is the role of higher education in the economy? How is K-State uniquely positioned to help Kansas thrive?

**Rosowsky:** Our great public research universities are economic engines for their states. They are also our greatest workforce development programs and our greatest innovation engines. K-State is a top research university, and one of our oldest and most distinguished public universities. But it is our land grant mission that uniquely positions us to take on and achieve the bold goals of our Economic Prosperity Plan.

K-State is proud to be Kansas' land grant university. In fact, we were the first operational land grant university in the nation. Building on that proud heritage and our world-renowned programs, we are crafting a NEW land grant mission, for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, that will specifically include building economic prosperity in our state.

Our research strengths (agriculture and food systems, animal science and biodefense) map directly onto our state's highest priorities. And these map directly onto areas having the greatest potential for Kansas to become globally competitive. K-State is really excited to be leading this new initiative for Kansans and for Kansas.

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