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Kansas ranks 7th nationally for volunteer spirit



Matt Bell - AP

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In good times and bad, people of all ages in this part of the country have always rolled up their sleeves and opened their pocketbook to help others in need.

And a newly-released report from Volunteering and Civic Life in America shows the strength of the region's volunteer spirit.

In the study that measures the volunteer rate on a state-by-state basis based on 2015 data, Kansas ranked seventh.

While that was down two places from the previous year, the numbers were still trending well compared with the rest of the nation.

In 2015, the study noted, 31 percent of adults in the state spent some time helping with religious activities, youth and educational activities, and social and community service projects. That compared with 35 percent in 2014.

But, Kansas volunteers put in more hours — about 77 million hours helping out, or about 6.39 million more hours than they did in 2014. In addition, those hours served equaled \$1.8 billion in service time and other contributions, the non-profit organization said.

“The fact that we have remained in the top ten rankings for volunteerism year over year is a positive testament to the kinds of friends and neighbors we have here in Kansas,” said Nola Brown, executive director of Volunteer Kansas.

Other data points about Kansas in the study:

- Baby Boomers in Kansas ranked ninth

nationally for volunteerism; college students ranked 18th; Millennials ranked number 10, as did parents; and veterans ranked number seven.

- Nearly 60 percent of residents donated \$25 or more to charity in 2015.
- Nearly 70 percent of residents engaged in informal volunteering, such as doing favors for neighbors.

Among cities, the Kansas City area, which covered both sides of the state line, ranked ninth in volunteering activity among large cities. Wichita ranked 23rd among mid-size communities, the study said.

Utah ranked number one in the volunteering survey, followed by Minnesota, Wisconsin, South Dakota, Idaho, and Nebraska. Missouri was ranked 24th.

Overall nationally, about 25 percent of the population volunteered for something in 2015, equating to 7.9 billion hours of service, the study said.



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