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BioKansas Hires Recent KU Graduate to Lead Workforce Initiatives

The hire is reflective of the organization's commitment to helping industry develop a robust pipeline of qualified talent

Fairway, KS- April 11th, 2018 ---- BioKansas today announced that it has hired Dr. Alex Erwin as the organization's new Director of Talent Development & STEMM Education, effective April 2nd.

Alex recently defended her Ph.D. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from the University of Kansas, where she was a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow. As a graduate student at KU, Alex spearheaded the development of SEARCH, the first science careers symposium at the University, focused on helping graduate students navigate the difficulties of job markets, and was the founder and director of Jayhawks Breaking Barriers, a grant-funded and early-career scientist led program that increased awareness of the gender leadership gap in STEM in the region.

“Alex Erwin has already established herself as a thought leader in the development of innovative programs to bridge the gap between education and industry. The ideas and passion she'll bring to BioKansas will be a tremendous asset as we continue to develop unique programs to address one of the greatest needs our community and industry members have, namely, the development of a talented and appropriately skilled workforce in numbers large enough to supply the full scope of companies located across the region,” said Dennis Ridenour, President & CEO of BioKansas. “We are extremely pleased to have Alex join the BioKansas team and look forward to working with her to positively impact the region.”

“I became really passionate about scientific workforce issues as a graduate student when I experienced gaps between academia and industry first-hand. Life sciences is one of the fastest growing industries in our region and provides a lot of great opportunities for our young people both within and outside of STEM disciplines. I am excited to work to expand students' awareness and access to local employment in the life sciences. I am also eager to use my scientific background to advance the scientific enterprise in ways that have a social and economic impact in our region,” says Erwin.

In addition to her recent Ph.D. from the University of Kansas, Dr. Erwin is also a graduate of Missouri State University, where she received her B.S. in Microbiology in 2012.

About BioKansas: BioKansas serves as the voice of the bioscience community in Kansas, connecting, educating and advocating to grow bioscience jobs in human, animal and plant science technologies across the state. BioKansas is a member- and donor-funded 501(c)(3) public charity. BioKansas programs include monthly bioBreak networking events and educational programs that are open to people who are involved with and interested in the biosciences, health care and medical devices. BioKansas also runs

awards programs for students in high school through post-doc studies, including the BioGENEius Challenge. If you would like more information about BioKansas, visit <http://www.BioKansas.org>