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## **Creating A Future**

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## CREATING A FUTURE

Abraham Lincoln said, "The best way to predict your future is to create it." Flint Hills residents are applying imagination and original ideas to create a bright future for the region. Inspired by the beauty of the open landscape and an uncommon sense of community, creatives are making their way to (or back to) small towns — sharing their story of the Flint Hills through talents in art, engineering, technology, architecture, photography, and writing. And in return, they are creating new economic opportunities for themselves and the region. In Abraham Lincoln's time, Chase County founder Samuel Wood shared his message of enlightenment — from abolition to women's rights — through words in the newspapers he founded in Cottonwood Falls, Council Grove, and Emporia. Like Wood, today's creatives are following in the tradition of deep thought and bold action to create a *Future of the Flint Hills* that respects and enhances the unique culture and beauty of this place.

In this section of the *Field Journal*, Christy Davis examines how developing a "creative economy" could boost the *Future of the Flint Hills*. Tyler Sheldon takes us on a walk through the Flint Hills. Paula Haas explores how the creative economy is infusing new energy into one Chase County town. And we celebrate the native sunflower as the rich emblem of the majesty of a golden future.

OPPOSITE PAGE: PLACE (DETAIL) Amanda Maciuba