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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2026

## News L&T

news@liberalfirst.com

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### SCUW ...

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of my difficulties. I had an amazing foster family. I had amazing social workers. I did decide I wanted to do social work later on, and it was when I was in the program, I remember I wanted to work in addictions at first."

Gaytan earned her Associate of Science degree from Garden City Community College, her bachelor of social work from Fort Hays State University and her master of social welfare from the University of Kansas.

In the work for her bachelor's degree, Gaytan said she tried to focus on addiction, but as she started working in that area, she started realizing the underlying mental health issues and the lack of people helping the Hispanic community and providing services in Spanish.

"I decided I was going to go ahead and pursue my master's degree and become a therapist," she said. "It was then when I thought I was going to do addictions, but I started falling in love with play therapy and really helping support women. That's what guided me to start pursuing more of that focus."

Gaytan was born and raised in Garden City and proudly embraces her heritage with family roots in Mexico. Her personal and cultural background deeply informs

her commitment to advocacy, social justice and increasing access to mental health services for underserved populations.

In addition to her clinical work, Gaytan is actively engaged in community leadership and advocacy. She serves as a member of the Garden City Cultural Relations Advisory Board, the board of directors for Girl Scouts of Kansas Heartland and the Garden City Community College Endowment Association. Through these roles, she works to strengthen community engagement, support youth development and promote cultural inclusion.

Outside of her professional work, Gaytan enjoys spending time with her family, attending local sporting events, volunteering in her community and cheering on the Kansas City Chiefs. Gaytan is passionate about reducing the stigma surrounding mental health and is committed to empowering individuals and families to overcome obstacles, navigate challenges and build meaningful, resilient lives. This is some of what she wanted to bring to the recent United Way event.

"I'm hoping people will at least be able to gain that self-compassion and understanding of it's okay for us to go through struggles," she said. "We just have to be kind to ourselves and understand at the end of the day, we're women. We all struggle, but we can come together. We can get support, and once we start focusing on our needs, we'll be able to have more mental stability."



## Seward County UNITED WAY

Likewise, Gaytan said she hopes events like the one in Liberal make a big impact on those who attend.

"What I've noticed in the past is we miss out on even basic knowledge of mental health," she said. "A lot of times when I do these presentations, I'll have people tell me 'I had no idea some of my normal stressors were some of the things I was dealing with.' I also give people insight on things I've encountered, things I've lived through, and when people are able to relate and connect

in that way, it becomes really helpful."

This, Gaytan said, is the type of impact that can happen to anyone.

"If it can happen to me, it can happen to you, and I feel during these events, people come out feeling more motivated and more understanding," Gaytan said.

Gaytan said the experiences from her youth have served well as therapist.

"I went through some personal issues as well," she said. "I actually dealt with some sexual abuse that made me fall into the

juvenile delinquency."

Gaytan said she had a mix of emotions as she prepared to talk to the audience and during the presentation as well.

"It doesn't matter how many times I've done this," she said. "It's very nerve-wracking. At the end of the day, I just hope whatever I do say comes across well and people get a better understanding of themselves and eliminate a little of that stigma that remains with them."

### Home show ...

Continued from Page 1

Sharpening, Ashley Furniture, and many, many more. There will be a lot for people to look at, and there will be something for everyone. I also have to give some praise to the Seward County Activity Center staff, they are absolutely amazing to work with every year because they help us set everything up, and we have vendors tell us after every show how much they enjoy coming to Liberal because the facility is so nice and so well managed."

The annual event is a great opportunity for shoppers, Collins said.

"Like I say with all of our shows, where else can shoppers go and visit 80-plus businesses at one time in one space? If you're just planning on browsing around, or if you're seriously considering purchases, this show is a great event to look around and see the different possibilities for home improvement and gifts and spring decor," Collins said. "Shoppers will be able to go through so, so many different businesses, and all of them are from around this area, so it's a great way to support smaller businesses. For a lot of people, this event is truly a one-stop shop."

While the event is a busy time for the KSCB-The Legend staff, Collins said there is also a lot of fun to be had.

"We enjoy all the vendors who have become basically family throughout the years, we get to see them every year and it's great to catch up with them," Collins said. "It's also the start of a new season and we get that big chance to bring

**Springfest HOME SHOW**  
APRIL 25 & 26  
SEWARD COUNTY ACTIVITY CENTER

businesses and potential customers together, which is always the goal of our shows. Planning for these shows is truly an ongoing process, and we always get calls from people asking if this or that vendor will still be in their usual spot this time around, or whether or not this or that vendor will be back for this show. There are people who plan around this show so they can maximize their time at the show, and it makes us feel good having that much interest."

Collins added she enjoys seeing the contrast between the spring show and the holiday show that happens in the fall.

"The overall setup of both shows is the same in terms of bringing everyone together, but with the fall show, people are thinking more about making their homes pretty and festive for the holiday season and/or getting Christmas gifts,"

Collins said. "Whereas with the spring show, people are thinking more about what to do outdoors and what improvement projects they can get done since the weather's getting warmer. There's excitement with both shows, but what the people are excited about is different. The holiday show usually conjures up those Christmas memories and ideas for decorations and presents and all of that, while the spring show makes people think more of being outdoors, so seeing our vendors adjust their booths to reflect the seasons is awesome. Each show has a different feel, and I absolutely love that."

Overall, Collins said, she expects another successful show.

"I think we'll have another big show, and I expect everything will go smoothly and go well. I expect all the vendors will do a lot of good

business, they're all excited and ready to show off their respective wares," Collins said. "I also hope the weather that weekend will allow people to come, we always joke we have a better show when the weather's not the best because that means people won't be working outdoors, so they'll want to come to the show and take a look at everything. And as always, I want to say 'Thank you' to the community and surrounding areas for their support, because we would not be able to do these shows without that support. We would love to have everyone possible come out and if you're a business owner, maybe you'll get inspired to have a booth of your own at a future show. Just come out and see everything, or come out and bring some of your wares, because like always, there will be something for everyone."

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