

## 2024 Awards Presented at Holiday Lunch

### Lee I. Pickering Award for Excellence

The Lee I. Pickering Award for Excellence presented to Steve Noll at the Holiday Brunch on December 14, 2024, whose years of work saved the Boone-Hays Park on East 63rd Street and is a fine example in this era of an NSDKC leader whose perseverance to get things done for the organization is endless. Even when he went through an extended period of intense pain while waiting for a medical replacement, his attendance and participation at meetings and events never wavered. His willingness to lend his many talents to all aspects of NSDKC's broad range of events and operational questions on the Board, is rendered unselfishly. Steve Noll has been the most persevering and consistently contributing person to the organization as any member. Steve goes above and beyond consistently in his willingness to serve NSDKC. Following his year as the president in 2018, Mr. Noll has continued to serve the organization with several years on the Outstanding Kansas Citian Committee. Similarly, Steve has chaired the Nominating Committee multiple times. He has been on the NSDKC Advisory board, as well. Perhaps Noll's most significant contributions to the organization are: (1) Providing free meeting space to both the Board and its Committees; and (2) Providing free long-term storage, in secure space, for the organization's records at no cost. Steve Noll epitomizes the continuous assistance, advice and counsel to The Native Sons & Daughters of Greater Kansas City.

### James Anderson Historic Preservation Award

This award is presented to Dewayne Knott, of Smithville, Platte County, Missouri at the NSDKC Holiday Brunch, December 14, 2024. He has a long history of preserving history. In 2014, as Commander of the Smithville American Legion Post, he obtained a steel relic from the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the Twin Towers at the World Trade Center in New York City. He anonymously submitted a monument design to recognize lives lost: fire fighters, law enforcement, first responders and Good Samaritans who responded selflessly to rescue victims. On September 11, 2018, at the same time as the attack, the inspirational memorial he designed (a 21-foot steel rail from Tower One rising at a slope within an etched granite square from a dark hole in the ground into the light of day) was dedicated on Main Street. Kaw Point (the confluence of the Kansas and Missouri Rivers) has long been recognized by the National Park service for significant relevance to local Native American tribes. From 2003, Dwayne championed environmental cleanup efforts to remove metal drums, old cars and toxic waste from Kaw Point. He received \$10,000 from a "Back to the River" grant which enabled clean up, plus construction of a boat ramp to access the river. Native Kansas limestone which was donated in 2007 to build a gathering place near the Point. Native American tribes displayed their tribal flags topside in a semi-circle, closed by an educational kiosk. Upon his return from military deployment in Iraq, he served on the Board of Friends of Kaw Point for several years. Mr. Knott serves on the Valor Ranch Board in support of Veterans, also on the Smithville Historical Society Board, Smithville Chamber of Commerce Board and Smithville American Legion Board. Dewayne served in the Air Force for 37 years, retiring as Lt. Colonel. He holds the rank of Eagle Scout and reenacted in Lewis and Clark bicentennial celebrations in 2008 and 2024. He is a playwright, actor, and published author. He is married to an Iraq War Veteran, Major Christine Knott, Air, retired. Together in Smithville, they serve America!