



CHOOSE COURAGE

24TH ANNUAL MIDWEST LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

Tuesday, April 21, 2026 | Overland Park Convention Center + Online

MIDWESTLEADERSHIPSUMMIT.COM

Choose Courage by Investing in Your Leaders

EMPOWER YOUR TEAM, INSPIRE YOUR COMMUNITY, AND BE PART OF A DAY THAT CELEBRATES BOLD LEADERSHIP



The defining moments in leadership begin with a choice: to speak when silence feels safer, to stand tall when the ground shifts, to begin again after a setback. At the **Midwest Leadership Summit**, courage is more than a theme. It is the foundation that helps us lead with integrity, confidence, and heart.

Each April, hundreds of professionals gather to connect, learn, and reignite their sense of purpose. Together, we explore how courage drives innovation, resilience, and authentic growth within organizations and across our community.

This year's theme, **Choose Courage**, invites leaders to face uncertainty with conviction and clarity. Attendees will hear from thought leaders who have navigated change and challenge, discovering how courage has shaped their influence and success. Expect a day filled with fresh insights, practical tools, and meaningful conversations that move leaders forward.

Sponsoring the Midwest Leadership Summit connects your organization with Kansas City's most engaged leaders and changemakers.

As a sponsor, you will:

- Be recognized as a supporter of bold, authentic leadership.
- Give your team access to inspiration and actionable tools through tickets to the Summit.
- Align your brand with an event that values growth, innovation, and collaboration.

Your partnership helps create a space where courage inspires change. Let's find the sponsorship package that fits your goals and connects you with today's most engaged leaders.

Contact **Kerry Gentry Hartnett**, Signature Event Manager, at kerry@centralexchange.org.

Who Attends the Summit?

COURAGEOUS LEADERS FROM EVERY FIELD

Each year, the **Midwest Leadership Summit** gathers over **1,100 attendees** from across Kansas City and beyond. The Summit brings professionals from all career stages, genders, generations, and disciplines, creating a collective energy that inspires reflection, learning, and genuine connection.

Attendees include emerging professionals, entrepreneurs, community leaders, and executives who come together to share experiences, exchange ideas, and challenge themselves to lead with intention.

More than **200 organizations** take part annually, representing a wide range of industries and perspectives. Whether attending in person or virtually, every participant becomes part of a thoughtful, forward-looking community that believes courage is not just a trait but a practice that grows stronger when shared.



The Agenda:

MIDWEST LEADERSHIP SUMMIT | TUES 04.21.25
AT THE OVERLAND PARK CONVENTION CENTER + ONLINE

8:00 AM | Registration, Continental
Breakfast Buffet, + Visit the CX
Marketplace (in-person only)

8:30 AM | Welcome + Morning Keynote

9:50 AM | Networking Break + Visit The
CX Marketplace

10:10 AM | Morning Breakout Sessions
(4 to choose from)

11:15 AM | Networking Break + Visit The
CX Marketplace

11:45 AM | Lunch (in-person only)

12:30 PM | Lunch-Time Activity

1:00 PM | Networking Break + Visit The
CX Marketplace

1:25 PM | Afternoon Breakout Sessions
(4 to choose from)

2:30 PM | Networking Break + Visit The
CX Marketplace

2:50 PM | Afternoon Keynote

4:00 PM | Sip 'n Shop Happy Hour
Reception (in-person only)

*All times are CST/UTC-6. **Agenda is subject to change.

Meet the Keynotes



CANDACE
DOBY

Candace Doby is founder of The Can-Do Company. She is a leadership development strategist, author of *A Cool Girl's Guide To Courage*, and professional speaker who works with organizations to create a culture of courage where employees spend less time and energy censoring and hiding themselves and more time performing at their highest potential.

Candace combines a decade of research on courage with her experiences traveling the world solo and a 16-year, award-winning marketing career — much of which was spent leading teams at Chipotle. This unique combination equips her with the actionable strategies she has shared with leaders across the globe to help them courageously speak up, step up and show up in the workplace. Her work has been featured on MSNBC, NPR and TEDx.

Candace is the creator of The Courage Hotline podcast and host of The Own Your Brilliance retreat.

Hayley Podschun is a Broadway star, screen actor, and in-demand keynote speaker who brings infectious energy, humor, and heart to every stage she steps on. From playing Glinda in *Wicked*, Tammy in *Hairspray* on Broadway and in the movie, alongside John Travolta, Queen Latifah and Michelle Pfeiffer, to guest hosting on QVC, Hayley has spent her life in the spotlight—learning how to perform, pivot, and thrive under pressure. A Kansas native who started working professionally at age 10, Hayley's career spans eight Broadway shows, national tours, film and TV appearances, and acclaimed regional performances. Today, she shares the “Whatever It Takes” mindset that helped her succeed in one of the most competitive industries in the world—empowering audiences to embrace change, lead with confidence, and go after their biggest dreams with grit and grace.

Whether she's sharing stories from backstage or lessons learned under the lights, Hayley leaves audiences energized, inspired, and ready to fly.



HAYLEY
PODSCHUN

2026 Midwest Leadership Summit Sponsor Levels:

	DIAMOND SPONSORS	PLATINUM SPONSORS	GOLD SPONSORS	SILVER SPONSORS	BRONZE SPONSORS	COPPER SPONSORS	MARKETPLACE BOOTHS
Purchase Price:	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$15,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$3,500	Small Booth: \$175 Large Booth: \$350
# of Sponsorships Available:	4	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	35
# of In-Person Tickets Included:	50	40	30	20	10	10	--
# of Virtual Tickets Included:	25	20	15	10	5	--	2
EACH TICKET HOLDER RECEIVES:							
Access to all Session Recordings for up to 1-year after the main event	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
A Continental Breakfast, Plated Lunch and Happy Hour (in-person ticket holders only)	★	★	★	★	★	★	Small Booth: 1 box lunch Large Booth: 2 box lunches *Add'l lunches available for purchase
SPONSOR BENEFITS:							
Recognition in all event-day digital and printed materials	Logo	Logo	Logo	Logo	Logo	Company or Group Name	Company Name
Pre-event recognition on event webpage, emails, and social media	★	★	★	★	★		
One CX Marketplace booth (optional)	★	★	★	★	★		★
Ad placement in event workbook	Full Page	Full Page	Half Page				
Introduce a keynote session (“sponsored by” credit in workbook)	★						
Logo featured on workbook cover	★						
Attendee voucher for one CX program of choice in 2026.	★						

Every Act of Courage Starts with One Choice

JOIN US IN SHAPING A DAY THAT EMPOWERS LEADERS
TO LEAD BOLDLY AND CONNECT WITH PURPOSE

As a Summit sponsor, your organization helps create space for leaders to grow, connect, and inspire change. Your partnership signals confidence, commitment, and the belief that courageous leadership moves our community forward.

Whether you're ready to secure your sponsorship or want to explore the best fit for your goals, **contact Kerry Gentry Hartnett, Signature Event Manager, at kerry@centralexchange.org.**

CHOOSE COURAGE. MAKE YOUR IMPACT.



MidwestLeadershipSummit.com