When we reach for our goals, we rise.
Dinosaur hunter Robert DePalma, a KU geology doctoral student, discovered a North Dakota fossil bed in 2013 that is believed to be a detailed freeze frame of the terrible moments right after the doomsday Chicxulub asteroid struck the Earth 66 million years ago, killing 75 percent of life. DePalma recently published his findings in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. 

Supporting our veterans
Military Times ranks KU as the No. 9 best college among public universities for veterans and military-affiliated students.

Faculty in national academies and associations:
1 - National Academy of Medicine
5 - National Academy of Engineering
1 - National Academy of Sciences
5 - National Academy of Inventors
7 - National Academy of Public Administrators
22 - American Association for the Advancement of Science Fellows

The University of Kansas is one of just 65 members of the prestigious Association of American Universities.

A KU English scholar has shaken up the world of medieval poetry by solving a 6-century-old manuscript mystery. Misty Schieberle, associate professor of English, has identified Thomas Hoccleve, a major 15th century poet, as responsible for hand copying a volume known as British Library MS Harley 219. Schieberle used handwriting analysis to identify Hoccleve — a major discovery because the poet is known to have copied only one other manuscript.

Why do we stand upright? Adrian Melott, professor emeritus of physics and astronomy, recently published a theory that starts with a series of supernovae between 8 million and 2.6 million years ago. The exploding stars led to more lightning strikes on Earth, resulting in widespread fires that forced early human ancestors from forests to grasslands. To see over the tall grasses, they began standing on two legs — and remained that way.
Trikafta, a new FDA-approved cystic fibrosis drug tested at the KU Medical Center, is a “breakthrough” and “game-changer” for the 70,000 people whose lives are shortened by genetic lung disease, says Dr. Deepika Polineni, who was in charge of KU’s part of the drug’s worldwide clinical trial. Polineni, a pulmonologist at the University of Kansas Health System’s cystic fibrosis care center, co-authored the study’s findings, which were recently published in two medical journals. The therapy holds the promise of dramatically increasing patients’ quality of life and life expectancy.

Mei He, assistant professor of chemical and petroleum engineering with a joint appointment in chemistry, has won a five-year $1.89 million early-stage research grant from the National Institutes of Health. The KU researcher says her team will investigate how 3D-biomimetic-tissue-engineered exosomes might be a new avenue to understand the long-distance, noncontact cellular communications that control our immune systems to fight cancer and other diseases.

Providing healing and research

The KU Cancer Center is one of 71 National Cancer Institute-designated cancer centers in the United States, allowing regional patients to be treated with the best care close to home.

KU Medical Center’s clinical health psychology fellowship, which emphasizes psychological care for people with cancer, has become only the 10th such postdoctoral training program in the nation to earn accreditation from the American Psychological Association.

The KU School of Medicine is one of only 40 of the more than 180 medical schools nationwide to offer a rural track for physician training. The Association of American Medical Colleges ranked KU’s medical school, which includes campuses in Salina, Wichita, and Kansas City, in the 96th percentile last year for producing doctors working in rural settings 10 to 15 years after graduation.

The KU Alzheimer’s Disease Center is one of only 31 NIH-designated centers.

School of Pharmacy ranks No. 7 in NIH research funding and has been in the top 10 for 24 consecutive years.
We lift and strengthen communities.

Improving outcomes
• $3.2 million federal education grant to KU’s Center for Research on Learning will help improve educational career outcomes for over 700 high school sophomores with learning disabilities or at risk of learning disabilities in three states.

• $1.4 million National Science Foundation grant will help a team of KU researchers to create an evidence-based STEM jobs training program for about 300 former female prison inmates, many who have children under age 18. The project will be led by Hyunjin Seo, an associate journalism professor who is the founding director of KU’s Center for Digital Inclusion and a fellow at the Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University.

Sarah Deer, a professor with joint appointments in women, gender, and sexuality studies and in public affairs and administration, has been inducted into the National Women’s Hall of Fame. Deer was recognized for her work on federal laws to protect Native American women from violence. She was named a MacArthur Fellow in 2014 and has been honored by the American Bar Association and the U.S. Department of Justice.

Businesses have entered into 131 active license agreements to commercially use KU inventions.

Amy McCart and Wayne Sailor, co-directors of KU’s Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT) Education Center, are co-principal investigators for a $17.2 million federal education department grant project to train 70 principals and boost school achievement in high-needs schools across the country.

KU researchers hope to boost Kansas’ struggling farm communities with the help of a $2.5 million National Science Foundation grant. Mary Hill, professor of geology, will lead the research team, which seeks to bolster rural resilience by exploring how to best employ renewable solar and wind energy, water treatment, and ammonia production into the farm economy.

42 active startup companies are the result of KU research.
We work for a clean, sustainable planet.

James Bever, above right, is a Foundation Distinguished Professor of ecology and evolutionary biology who is part of a $20 million Microbiomes of Aquatic, Plant and Soil Systems Across Kansas project funded by the National Science Foundation.

Students in Keith Van de Riet’s ARCH 509 design-build studio have won an international award for their outdoor Kaw Pavilion project, a rest area, outdoor classroom, and meeting space built in East Lawrence with recycled and donated materials. The studio won the student project award in the “Green Architecture” category for the Architecture Masterprize.

Four KU assistant professors have won separate CAREER grants from the National Science Foundation to fund their early-career research.

- Emily Arnold, aerospace engineering, won $609,000 to incorporate radar onto a helicopter-based unpiolated aerial system to gather data on two Greenland ice sheets.

- Juan Bravo-Suarez, chemical and petroleum engineering, won $500,000 to convert ethanol into valuable products such as acetic acid.

- Huaizhen Fang, mechanical engineering, won $500,000 to lead the research to create safer lithium ion batteries.

- Elaina Sutley, civil, environmental, and architectural engineering, won $500,000 to examine the role different types of buildings play in helping a community withstand disaster.

Beginning in 2020, all of the university’s electric power will be supplied by a Kansas wind farm.

Experimenting with sophisticated tools out of KU’s Integrated Science Building labs, two physics research teams are using separate National Science Foundation grants to collaborate and create a breakthrough material that could turn light into electric current with high efficiency. The teams are being led by Wai-Lun Chan, associate professor of physics and astronomy, and Hui Zhao, professor of physics and astronomy.

So-Min Cheong, a KU associate professor of geography and atmospheric science, co-wrote a recent United Nations report that warns the planet’s oceans are becoming warmer and more acidic as melting ice sheets drive up sea levels and harm sizable numbers of marine animals.

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Photos courtesy Keith Van de Riet
Christophe Royon, a world-renowned physicist who holds one of KU’s 12 Foundation Distinguished Professorships, is leading a group of KU physicists to further investigate quarks, the subatomic particles thought to be the universe’s building blocks. But are there even smaller states of matter? To seek answers, Royon’s team will probe the interactivity of quarks and gluons with a device installed at the Large Hadron Collider in Europe.

As part of NASA’s CubeSat initiative, KU’s KubeSat student organization is building a small data-collecting satellite — about the size of a loaf of bread — that will be launched in December 2020 on a SpaceX rocket from Vandenberg Air Force Base in Lompoc, California. KubeSat wants to build and launch a new satellite every two years.
The University of Kansas prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, sex, national origin, age, ancestry, disability, status as a veteran, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, gender identity, gender expression, and genetic information in the university's programs and activities. Retaliation is also prohibited by university policy. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies and are the Title IX coordinators for their respective campuses: Director of the Office of Institutional Opportunity & Access, IOA@ku.edu, Room 1082, Dole Human Development Center, 1000 Sunnyside Ave., Lawrence, KS 66045, 785-864-6414, 711 TTY (for the Lawrence, Edwards, Parsons, Yoder, and Topeka campuses); Director, Equal Opportunity Office, Mail Stop 7004, 4330 Shawnee Mission Parkway, Fairway, KS 66205, 913-588-8011, 711 TTY (for the Wichita, Salina, and Kansas City, Kansas, medical center campuses).