



***Kansas Vocational School/
Kansas Technical Institute
1895-1955***

Known as "the Tuskegee of the West" during the early part of the 20th century, the **Kansas Vocational School/Kansas Technical Institute** in Topeka, Kansas, for more than fifty years provided African American students in the Kansas region with both a liberal arts high school education and a variety of vocational training programs.

Initially organized in 1895 by two local African American school- teachers, Mr. Edward Stephens and Ms. Izie Reddick, as a kindergarten, sewing school and reading room, the school's vocational program expanded rapidly, earning financial support from the state legislature by 1899. A year later, Booker T. Washington became president of the school's Board of Trustees and appointed William R. Carter, a graduate of Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, to serve as the

principal of the school. Over the years, its vocational programs offered preparatory training in teaching, nursing, theology, agricultural studies, printing, tailoring, carpentry, music, home economics and auto mechanics. In 1943, when Western University in Quindaro, Kansas was closed, its vocational programs were transferred to KVS/KTI. After World War II, non-African Americans began to join the student body. In 1955, KVS/KTI closed, but its alumni established a legacy of duty, service and the pursuit of opportunities for betterment throughout their communities that has survived into the 21st century.

The Kansas Collection, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, supports teaching and research at the University by acquiring, preserving,

and providing access to historical materials relevant to the history of Kansas, its contiguous states, and the Great Plains.

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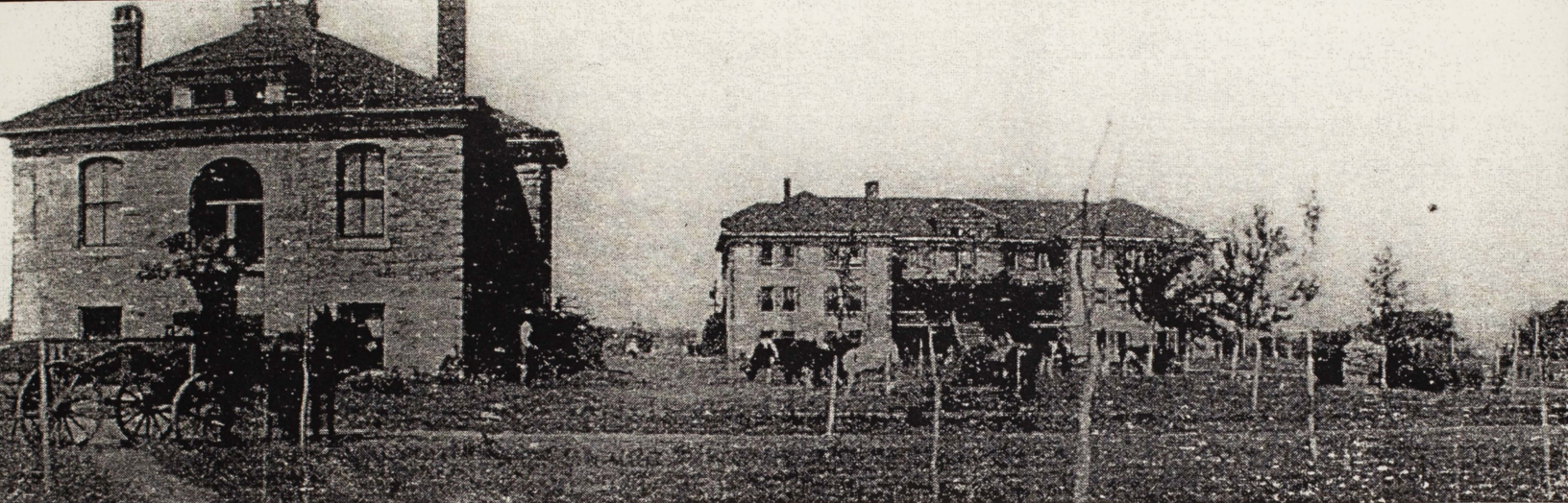
In 1985, the Kansas Collection greatly expanded its collecting program in order to increase opportunities for researchers interested in state and regional African American history. Since then, the library has amassed significant resources for African American studies in this region.

Your Help is Needed!

Time is running out—we need your help in further documenting the contributions of African Americans to the social and educational life of the state and the region.

We are still looking for written and photographic materials created and maintained by graduates of KVS/KTI that may be lying forgotten in file drawers, storerooms, basements and attics. These items, such as letters, diaries, class papers, scrapbooks, speeches, yearbooks, newspaper clippings, school programs, reminiscences, and photographs, will enhance the region's permanent historical record of KVS/KTI and the achievements of African Americans in the Kansas region.





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*The production of this brochure has been
made possible by the Dana K. & Sue
Anderson Kansas Collection Fund.*