



## Simone Cahoj

Wichita County Economic Development Executive Director



Simone was born and raised in Atwood, KS and grew up in Rawlins County, Kansas outside of Atwood on a farm.

She graduated from Rawlins County High School in Atwood in 2007 and from the University of Kansas in Lawrence in May 2011 with a B.S. in Business Management and Leadership with a concentration in Entrepreneurship.

In 2007, Simone was the first Ogallala Commons intern, interning again in the summer of 2008 in her hometown of Atwood. In 2009, she became the Intern Coordinator for Ogallala Commons and in the fall of 2010, she interned with Senator Jerry Moran in Washington D.C. then returned to Kansas in the spring. Simone has worked in many facets of economic development including working for the KU Small Business Development Center. Currently, she is the Wichita County Economic Development Executive Director.

As a sophomore in high school, Simone first learned about Ogallala Commons at a HomeTown Competitiveness Academy. Throughout her high school career, she continued to learn more about Ogallala Commons and interacted more with their board. As a senior in high school, Simone was asked to speak at an Ogallala Commons conference about why rural communities are good places to build careers. After that she asked about an internship to learn more about rural community economic development within Ogallala Commons and has been with the organization in some fashion since.