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**THE VOLCKER ALLIANCE, MID-AMERICA REGIONAL COUNCIL,
AND THE JOHNS HOPKINS CENTERS FOR CIVIC IMPACT WIN THE
GEAR CENTER CHALLENGE GRAND PRIZE**

A \$300,000 grand prize will go towards upskilling federal managers in the Kansas City region

NEW YORK, NY (September 10, 2019) – The [Volcker Alliance](#), the [Centers for Civic Impact](#) at Johns Hopkins University (Civic Impact), and the [Mid-America Regional Council](#) (MARC) have won the [Government Effectiveness Advanced Research \(GEAR\) Center Challenge](#) grand prize. The \$300,000 prize was awarded by the US General Services Administration (GSA) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and will support a collaborative effort to “upskill” 250 federal practitioners in the Kansas City region in data management, open data, performance management, advanced analytics, and community engagement. The winning project will leverage the Volcker Alliance’s newly established [Government-to-University](#) (G2U) Regional Coalition in Kansas City to implement the project.

“We are grateful to GSA, OMB, and the judges of the GEAR Center Challenge. This award is an extraordinary vote of confidence from the GEAR Center team in the Volcker Alliance and in our G2U Initiative,” said Thomas W. Ross, president of the Volcker Alliance. “We plan to quickly move the project forward and capitalize on the momentum from winning this significant award.”

Through its work with more than 140 governments, Civic Impact has developed a robust training curriculum that incorporates cutting-edge approaches to help government practitioners build critical skills around the use of data to solve problems and achieve mission goals. Civic Impact has trained more than 4,000 government practitioners but, to date, has reached very few from the federal government. The collaborative’s winning proposal will allow Civic Impact to customize its existing training curriculum around data use and management for federal learners and develop recommendations for replication.

Through its G2U Initiative, the Volcker Alliance is building sustainable regional networks of governments and universities to enable the regular, ongoing connection of governments’ human

capital and research needs with regional university talent and capacity. The Alliance is implementing a G2U Regional Coalition in Kansas City and in other locations. As the lead agency for the G2U Coalition in Kansas City, the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) has the capacity to convene the stakeholders needed to succeed in this effort and will lead on-the-ground implementation during the project period and beyond.

“The G2U Regional Coalition in Kansas City appreciates the importance of investing in the development of a federal workforce that is proficient in emerging and mission critical skills,” said David Warm, executive director of MARC. “Winning the GEAR Center Challenge will propel forward the work we are doing through G2U to demonstrate fast results that can be replicated in other regions and for other sectors of government.”

“At the Centers for Civic Impact, we have amassed substantial knowledge about effective strategies to help public sector practitioners use data for decision-making and accountability at the local level,” said Beth Blauer, executive director of Civic Impact. “We expect this collaborative effort in Kansas City will help us generate a roadmap for scaling our upskilling efforts in the federal context and nationally.”

The Volcker Alliance, Civic Impact, and MARC proposal was selected from over fifty submissions to the GEAR Center Challenge and was one of three proposals to win the grand prize.

The Volcker Alliance advances effective management of government to achieve results that matter to citizens. We envision a public sector workforce with the experience, preparation, and commitment to ensure that government is accountable and delivers with excellence. Visit volckeralliance.org to learn more. Follow us on social media [@VolckerAlliance](https://twitter.com/VolckerAlliance) and [subscribe](#) to the Volcker Alliance newsletter for the latest news and developments. The Volcker Alliance is a 501(c)(3) organization.

The Centers for Civic Impact at Johns Hopkins University offers governments and nonprofits the latest in policy research from the Center for Applied Public Research and public sector training from the new GovEx Academy. These efforts are bolstered by the academic and research expertise of Johns Hopkins and the university’s Zanvyl Krieger School of Arts & Sciences. For more information, visit civicimpact.jhu.edu/.

The Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) is a nonprofit association of city and county governments and the metropolitan planning organization for the bistate Kansas City region.



MARC provides a forum for the region to work together to advance social, economic and environmental progress. MARC promotes regional cooperation and develops innovative solutions through leadership, planning and action. MARC serves the nine-county Kansas City metropolitan area, which includes 119 separate city governments. For more information, visit MARC.org.

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