



### THE FARMER

Mara Strayer, Lawrence, KS  
Carnegie Building, southeast side

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**T**HE FARMER is a 9-foot steel sculpture that celebrates Kansas agricultural history and the dedication of our farmers. Symbolizing Kansas's farming heritage with wheat elements and an antique wheel, this sculpture's rusted finish and blend of humor combine with industrial and natural motifs and reflect both time's passage and Strayer's unique artistic style.

Strayer, a University of Kansas graduate in graphic and jewelry design, has explored various creative avenues, with welding as her current focus. Running a one-woman shop, she takes great pride in crafting large metal sculptures. Reflecting on her work, she shares, "My mom often says, 'Mara, you're a hard worker!'" This sentiment echoes her favorite stories—those of characters overcoming adversity, much like her own choice of the demanding skill of welding, which, based on her mom's perspective, is fitting.