



Using P3 leverage, Kentucky Work Ready Skills Initiative gets traction aligning training with needs

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LANE ONE-ON-ONE: MARY ELLEN WIEDERWOHL Chief, Louisville Forward



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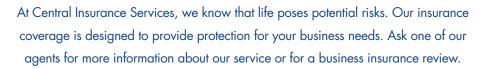


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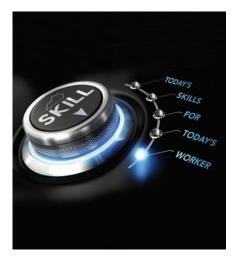
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## PERSPECTIVE

### WHITE HOUSE TRADE **TARIFFS – YES OR NO?**

So far the push is getting fairer deals for the U.S.

#### **BY PAT FREIBERT**

DEALLY, trade tariffs would be unnecessary. But if the introduction of a new U.S. trade doctrine, including the levying of tariffs, does nothing more than bring negotiating countries to the table, it could help establish parameters for a truly "free trade" process. It has already induced two of our largest trading partners to indicate they are willing to reconsider making the North America Free Trade Agreement more fair to American exporters and American consumers.

Recently, President Trump walked back his original call for blanket tariffs on imported steel and aluminum, for a revised plan providing for negotiated exemptions for America's allies. This new trade policy brought some of America's key trading partners to the negotiating table very quickly, specifically Mexico and Canada, who won exemptions. The U.S. hopes continuing talks offer a possibility for better NAFTA terms for American manufacturers and consumers. The European Union is also showing a willingness to talk about fairer terms for the U.S. and for American consumers.

While the benefits of reducing trade barriers among countries are obvious, there is really no such thing as pure "free trade." Strategic trade rules must be fair for everyone, and many economists believe the U.S. has increasingly not been accorded that fair treatment. The U.S. imposes fewer tariffs than almost any other country - half the average weighted tariffs imposed by China, onethird of those imposed by Mexico and one-quarter what India imposes. And in Europe, American-made autos are hit with a 10 percent tariff, four times higher than the tariff on European-made cars sold here.

Former lieutenant governor of New York Betsy McCaughey, now a political commentator, observes that under present international trading rules, American workers are being stung by "sucker trade," not free trade.

Stephen Moore, one of the economists advising President Trump on the recent tax-cut legislation, makes the point that many of our trading partners, especially China, are violating trade agreement rules "left and right and stealing American patents and



intellectual property. And they have been doing so for years with impunity." Moore also notes that China is estimated to be pirating more than a half trillion dollars' worth of American technology, inventions, drugs, vaccines and computer software each year. He says that is theft, and it cannot stand. Moore says he does not know if he would endorse Trump's trade doctrine, but that it's worth considering and not dismissing out of hand.

While there is every indication that Americans and American businesses and exporters are being unfairly treated under existing trade agreements, no help has been forthcoming from the World Trade Organization, whose membership consists of 164 mostly poor and anti-American nations empowered to impose binding trade rules. The U.S. gets the same hostile treatment there that it does at the U.N.

While the Chinese and others won't like the new U.S. trade doctrine, any tit-for-tat retaliation would undoubtedly hurt them more than the U.S. According to Moore, "If we lose access to their cheap goods and services, we pay more for clothes and toys and toothpaste at Wal-Mart. If they lose access to our markets, they crash into recession. Who loses more here?"

Unquestionably, unfettered trade across borders is good. Adam Smith taught the world that theory two and a half centuries ago. But every country must obey trade agreement rules for all sides to benefit. Why should those who violate the rules have unfettered access to the American market, the largest and most lucrative consumer market in the world? American trade policy needs to be designed to ensure that the interests of American companies and consumers are treated as fairly as those of our trading partners.



Pat Freibert is a former Kentucky state representative from Lexington. She can be reached at editorial@lanereport.com.

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## **FAST LANE** A compilation of economic news from across Kentucky

#### HAWESVILLE: \$116M UPGRADE AT CENTURY ALUMINUM TO RETURN SMELTER TO FULL PRODUCTION, ADD 250 JOBS



Century Aluminum's plant in Hawesville, Ky.

The announcement comes as great news for the Hancock County community, which was informed in 2015 that the plant – which at the time employed about 565 – was being

than 250 full-time jobs.

at the time employed about 565 – was being temporarily closed due to what the company called a "collapse in aluminum price brought on by Chinese overcapacity and the improper export of heavily subsidized Chinese aluminum products." Several weeks

**ENTURY Aluminum Co.** has announced plans to invest \$116.5

million for improvements at its

smelter in Hawesville that will create more

later, Century rescinded the decision to close but did reduce its operations to 40 percent of capacity.

The Hawesville plant was not the only one in the industry affected: According to a recent report by **The Washington Post**, the United States went from having 23 operational aluminum smelters in 1993 to only five by 2018, with only two running at full capacity.

Earlier this year, however, President Donald Trump announced plans to impose tariffs on steel and aluminum imports, which in turn triggered Century's decision to bring the Hawesville smelter back to full production and begin hiring more employees.

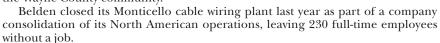
The improvements to the facility – which produces high-purity metal required for the defense, aerospace and electrical industries – will allow the company to remain competitive in the marketplace and increase capacity. Century plans to use the investment to upgrade its smelting technology and train new and existing employees to use the new equipment.

Century also operates a smelter in Robards, Ky. Once the Hawesville smelter returns to full operating capacity, the company will have more than 1,000 employees in Kentucky.

#### MONTICELLO: FITZGERALD INDUSTRIES HIRING 250 FOR NEW ALUMINUM AND STEEL TRUCK PARTS PRODUCTION PLANT

**ITZGERALD Industries** is investing \$6 million to reconfigure and equip the former **Belden Inc.** plant in Monticello, where it will establish operations to cut, form and weld aluminum sheet for the production of commercial-grade dump trucks. The facility also will form steel parts for use in fabrication of steel dump truck bodies.

The new plant will bring 250 jobs to the Wayne County community.



"The Fitzgerald family has made it their mission to invest in, partner with and create well-paying manufacturing jobs in the communities, particularly the rural communities, that others have left," said Fitzgerald Industries President Tommy Fitzgerald. "The Monticello project aligns perfectly with our mission."

Based in Sparta, Tenn., Fitzgerald Industries is wholly owned by the Tommy C. Fitzgerald Legacy Trust and has been in business for over 30 years. The family of companies – which includes Fitzgerald Truck Parts and Sales, Fitzgerald Glider Kits, Fitzgerald Peterbilt, Fitzgerald Collision and Repair, Fitzgerald Trailer Sales and Fitzgerald Towing and Recovery Equipment – employs more than 700 people in Kentucky and Tennessee.



A startup indoor farming company is investing more than \$44.5 million to construct a new facility on a reclaimed mine in Jackson, creating 121 new jobs.

**Hydroponic Farms USA** plans to build a new 42-acre facility that will use hydroponic and aeroponic technology to grow leafy greens, tomatoes, peppers and other produce.

The new jobs will include leadership, production and post-production roles. The company has formed a partnership with **Oz Agribusiness Projects and Investments Ltd.** (OAPI) and **Green Ag Technologies LLC** to manage and operate the facility.



A new hydroponic farm in Jackson will grow leafy greens, tomatoes, peppers and other produce.

"Bringing OAPI's Israeli greenhouse technology and expertise to Breathitt County has been a priority for our organizations since we first introduced Kentucky to the concept of high-tech agriculture over three years ago," said Curt Meltzer, chief operating officer of Green Ag Technologies.

Hydroponic Farms USA will follow a similar business model to **Kentucky Fresh Harvest**, which broke ground in Lincoln County in January 2017 and also is managed by OAPI. Currently, the company is working with major retailers and wholesalers to secure contracts to supply fresh produce year-round.

Kentucky Commissioner of Agriculture Ryan Quarles said the project is a good fit within the commonwealth's evolving agricultural profile.

"Kentucky has a long tradition of being a leader when it comes to agricultural innovation," Quarles said. "Whether it is no-till corn, industrial hemp or hydroponic farms like this one, Kentucky agriculture continues to thrive."

Construction is on the new facility is expected to begin in the fourth quarter of 2018.

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## **FAST LANE**

### **BUSINESS BRIEFS**

#### ASHLAND

■ Updates to **Kentucky Power**'s Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) will nearly double the number of low-income families who can be helped in 2018. A recent order from the Kentucky Public Service Commission increased customer



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contributions to the HEAP program from 15 cents to 30 cents a month. Kentucky Power agreed to match that contribution dollar for dollar with shareholder funds. Together, the program will generate nearly \$1 million this year to provide heating and cooling assistance to about 2,500 customers in the region.

■ The Kentucky Community and Technical College System board of regents has approved an associate in applied science degree in advanced integrated technology for **Ashland Community and Technical College**. Offering the new program was a direct request from **Braidy Industries**, which is developing a new aluminum manufacturing and stamping mill in Boyd County. The aluminum mill, located directly across from the ACTC Technology Drive campus, will employ 500-550 individuals. The focus of the AIT program is to train individuals in the field of advanced technology as it applies to plant operations.

■ King's Daughters Medical Center has become an affiliate of the University of Kentucky Markey Cancer Center, the state's only National Cancer Institute-designated cancer center. By being a part of the Markey affiliate network, King's Daughters will be able to offer patients in Eastern Kentucky, southern Ohio and West Virginia access to additional specialty care, including clinical trials and advanced technology, while allowing them to stay closer to home for their treatments. Including King's Daughters, the Markey affiliate network includes 20 hospitals around the state.



#### BARDSTOWN

■ Nearly two years after breaking ground, Lux Row Distillers held a grand-opening ceremony on April 11 for its new 18,000s.f. distillery. Situated on 90 acres in the heart of Bardstown, Lux Row includes a visitor center, barrel warehouses, a tasting room and event space. The distillery has a current production capacity of 20,000 barrels, with the capacity to increase to 50,000 barrels in the future. Lux Row produces straight bourbon brands, including Ezra Brooks, Rebel Yell, David Nicholson and Blood Oath.

#### **BOWLING GREEN**

■ Southern Recycling has broken ground on a new facility on Louisville Road in Bowling Green that will increase the company's capacity for paper, plastic and scrap-metal recycling for the region. Founded in 1985, Southern Recycling is the main recycling service provider for the region, serving more than 50,000 customers across south-central Kentucky and processing and shipping more than 25,000 tons per month of metal scrap and recyclables. The company, a subsidiary of Bowling Green-based Houchens Industries, currently employs 117 people across five processing facilities.

#### BURLINGTON

■ Louisville-based **Mills Supply** has purchased the assets of **Con-Quip/ Tristate Concrete Forms**, a Burlington company that has been a supplier of concrete building and remodeling materials for more than 35 years. Mills Supply is a family-owned supplier for the concrete and masonry industry and has been in operation since 1991.

#### COVINGTON

■ Covington-based Kentucky Federal Savings and Loan Association has signed a definitive agreement to merge with and into Cincinnati Federal. Based on financial data as of Dec. 31, 2017, the combined company would have total assets of \$201.8 million; net loans of \$163.1 million; total deposits of \$143.5 million; and stockholders' equity of \$22.3 million upon completion of the merger. The transaction is expected to close in the second half of 2018.

#### JAMESTOWN: SKILLED WORKFORCE HELPS JOMEL SEWING PLANT GROW QUICKLY

New Jersey company that produces mattress covers and other bedding products has opened a new plant in Jamestown, drawn by the skilled workforce and central location that Russell County provides.

JOMEL Seams Reasonable Inc. has invested \$422,000 to reconfigure and equip the former **GGF Heritage** manufacturing plant and is now operating with 14 employees who are primarily producing zippered



JOMEL's new Jamestown plant will primarily produce smooth-top mattress covers.

smooth-top mattress covers. Plans call for the workforce to eventually reach 30.

Company representatives said the large pool of cut-andsew talent in an area where **OshKosh** and **Fruit of the Loom** once employed hundreds of people made south-central Kentucky an attractive location. The new facility allows the company to grow along with the booming market for bed-ina-box mattresses that can be shipped directly to the consumer.

Plant Manager Steve Sanders, a 21-year employee of Fruit of the Loom, said the quality of workers makes the plant versatile.

"We've already learned that with the kind of sewing experience we have here, we can really do just about anything someone needs," Sanders said. "We've had various things brought to us and have been able to deconstruct that back to a pattern and replicate it in a matter of hours."

JOMEL also operates two plants in nearby Burkesville as well as a plant in North Carolina. The largest of the two Burkesville facilities manufactures quilted mattress covers and employs approximately 58 people. The other is a recently acquired company that produces moving blankets and employs a staff of 10.

#### FRANKFORT: FARMERS CAPITAL BANK TO MERGE WITH WESBANCO IN \$378M DEAL

RANKFORT-based Farmers Capital Bank Corp. has signed a definitive agreement to merge with and into WesBanco in a deal valued at \$378 million.

WesBanco, headquartered in Wheeling, W. Va., has approximately 172 banking centers across West Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Indiana and Kentucky, and also operates an insurance agency and a full-service broker/dealer. As of March 31, 2018, WesBanco had consolidated assets of approximately \$10.2 billion, deposits of \$7.2 billion, loans of \$6.3 billion and shareholders' equity of \$1.4 billion.

Through its bank affiliate, **United Bank & Capital Trust Co.**, Farmers has 34 banking locations in 21 communities throughout central and northern Kentucky. As of March 31, 2018, Farmers had consolidated assets of approximately \$1.7 billion, deposits of \$1.4 billion, loans of \$1.0 billion, and shareholders' equity of \$0.2 billion.

The merger has received unanimous approval by the boards of directors of both companies.

Upon completion of the merger, WesBanco will add one Farmers director to its board of directors, with all other current Farmers' directors being appointed to an advisory board for the central and southern Kentucky market. Farmers' President and CEO Lloyd C. Hillard Jr. will join WesBanco as chairman for the central and southern Kentucky market advisory board.

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## **FAST LANE**

#### **BUSINESS BRIEFS**

#### DIXON

■ Pioneer Plastics, a company that manufactures products for the restaurant, retail and appliance industries, is investing \$600,000 to purchase new equipment and renovate its facility in Dixon. The project will boost production capacity at the 100,000-s.f. plant, where it makes a wide range of products such as boxes, display cases, containers and dinnerware, and custom molding for companies such as **General Electric, Whirlpool, Pizza Hut** and **Hobby Lobby**, among others. The company currently employs a staff of 42 and plans to add another 17 jobs to support the expansion.

#### ELIZABETHTOWN

■ The **Central Kentucky Community Foundation** (CKCF) held a groundbreaking ceremony on April 20 for its new Home of Philanthropy, a place for nonprofits, businesses and organizations across a nine-county region to convene and collaborate. In addition to providing a dedicated space for organizations and businesses in Breckinridge, Grayson, Hardin, Hart, LaRue, Marion, Meade, Nelson and Washington counties to work together, the new space will serve as the permanent home for CKCF. The new location will be next to the **Hardin County Public Library** in Elizabethtown, on land owned by the foundation for nearly 60 years.

#### ERLANGER

■ Southwest Airlines has announced plans to launch daily nonstop air service from the Cincinnati/ Northern Kentucky International Airport



(CVG) to Denver. The new route will begin Aug. 7, utilizing the **Boeing 737** aircraft. CVG CEO Candace McGraw said passenger demand for the CVG to Denver route has grown more than 240 percent over the last five years, making Denver the fifth most popular destination from CVG. The airport is seeing overall traffic rise as well, with year-over-year passenger traffic up 17 percent for the first quarter of 2018 and cargo volume up 41 percent for the same time frame.

#### FRANKFORT

■ Deloitte, a global professional services organization headquartered in New York, has opened a new office in downtown Frankfort that will serve as an innovation hub focused on government, workforce and education policy; cloud-related technologies; integration services; and cybersecurity. Approximately 60 employees from the company's consulting and advisory practices are now based in the new Frankfort office, while another 50 audit and tax professionals are based in Louisville. Over the next several years, the company plans to add 10 to 15 new hires per year in the Frankfort office.

■ April 11 was a momentous day at **Buffalo Trace Distillery**, as the distillery rolled out its 7 millionth barrel produced since Prohibition and held an official dedication for the first of 30 new warehouses planned over the next 10 years. The expansion of warehouse capacity is part of the first large-scale structural expansion at the distillery's campus since the 1950s. Each of the warehouses will hold 68,800 barrels.



#### HIGHLAND HEIGHTS

■ Northern Kentucky University's College of Informatics has unveiled its new JRG Cyber Threat Intelligence Lab, a combination threat intelligence center and network cybersecurity laboratory completely funded by individual and corporate donors. NKU worked with top corporate security professionals to create a real-world environment for students to obtain hands-on learning. In addition to JRG, other major donors to the cybersecurity program

include Western & Southern Financial Group, U.S. Bank, Steven and Nancy Frank, and Great American Insurance Group.

#### LOUISVILLE

■ Allegiant has added a new nonstop flight to Jacksonville (Fla.) International Airport from Louisville International Airport. The new service will operate twice weekly (Mondays and Fridays), beginning June 8.

#### MOREHEAD: BARREL MANUFACTURER TO HIRE 220 FOR NEW \$66.5M COOPERAGE

Circle Strong and continued demand in the bourbon and whiskey industry, barrel manufacturer **Independent Stave Co.** has announced plans to build a \$66.5 million cooperage in Morehead that will create 220 new jobs.

ISC is already a member of the Morehead business community, having opened a stave mill there in 2015 that will supply materials for the new cooperage.



Independent Stave is building a new \$66.5 million cooperage in Morehead to meet ongoing demand from the bourbon and whiskey industry.

"The proximity to our stave mills as well as access to cooperage-

quality white oak in the surrounding area makes this the perfect location to build our third bourbon barrel cooperage," said Brad Boswell, ISC CEO and a fourth-generation cooper. "Rowan and the neighboring counties also provide a skilled workforce to draw from to make high-quality products in a technical environment."

ISC, a family-owned cooperage company headquartered in Missouri, owns seven stave mills: one in northeastern France and six in the U.S. Among its U.S. operations are the 105-employee **Morehead Wood Products** in Rowan County; **Benton Wood Products** in Marshall County; the 460-employee **Kentucky Cooperage** in Marion County; and the **Kentucky Bourbon Barrel** facility in Louisville, where the company is investing \$850,000 to move to a new location that will provide more space to meet increased demand. The Louisville project will add 35 new jobs over the next five years.

Plans call for construction on the new Morehead cooperage to begin in early 2019, with the opening anticipated for July 2021.

#### EASTERN KY: NEW PARTNERSHIP FORMS TO INCREASE TELEWORK OPPORTUNITIES



HE Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program (EKCEP) has announced a partnership with Teleworks USA and FlexJobs with the goal of increasing remotework opportunities across Eastern Kentucky.

"Teleworks USA was formed to help Eastern Kentuckians capitalize on available telework jobs," explained Michael Cornett, EKCEP director of agency expansion and Teleworks USA. "Since 2015, we've helped our clients in the region secure more than 1,400 remote-work jobs. By partnering with a company as well known and connected as FlexJobs, that can only boost our reach and allow us to connect that many more people to new telework jobs through the digital economy."

FlexJobs is a leading online service for people seeking remote, flexible schedule, part-time and freelance positions.

An initiative of EKCEP, Teleworks USA connects jobseekers with legitimate telework positions as well, but also provides free, accelerated workshops at each of the agency's eight Teleworks Hubs in the Eastern Kentucky region. The workshops prepare prospective teleworkers for jobs in the digital economy using hands-on curricula on technical support for smartphone and computer operating systems, customer service, soft work skills and digital literacy.

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## **FAST LANE**

#### **BUSINESS BRIEFS**

#### LOUISVILLE

■ Norton Audubon Hospital has completed the first phase of a four-year,



\$125 million expansion project that includes a three-floor tower with private critical care and progressive cardiac-care rooms, as well as an expansion of the emergency department. Remaining phases of the project will include additional emergency department beds, additional operating rooms and pre-/postoperative patient-care areas, an expanded cardiac catheterization lab, and exterior improvements.

■ Falls City Brewing Co. has opened a new taproom and brewery in Louisville's NuLu/Phoenix Hill neighborhood. The 3,900-s.f. taproom will seat more than 100 and is spread out over three different areas, including a "fun zone" with dart boards and a shuffleboard table and an event space for up to 50, named after company founder Ben Schrader, who launched the business in 1905. The new complex also features a 3,000-s.f. outdoor beer garden with picnic tables and a fire pit.

■ Louisville-based Humana Inc. has acquired Family Physicians Group, one of the largest at-risk providers serving Medicare Advantage and Managed Medicaid HMO patients in the Orlando, Fla., area. FPG includes 22 clinics located in four Florida counties and provides care for more than 22,000 Medicare Advantage patients. In a statement announcing the acquisition, Humana said the purchase advances its "strategy of helping physicians and clinicians evolve from treating health episodically to managing health holistically." Financial terms of the acquisition were not released.



■ Louisville International Airport has implemented a lower-cost, long-term parking option for travelers. An \$8 daily rate is now being offered in the credit-card lot, compared to the \$9 daily rate for the surface lot and the \$13 daily rate for garage parking (over four hours).

■ Louisville-based **Pro Communications** has acquired **The Pepper Group Ltd.**, a Louisville brand communications firm founded in 2005. As a result of the acquisition, Pro Communications – which has primarily concentrated on public/media relations in its 15-year tenure – will expand into a full-service marketing communications firm with a broad array of services, including some niche specialty offerings and disciplines. The Pepper Group is the second acquisition for Pro Communications in the past five years: In 2013, the company purchased **Promoter Inc.**, a move that enabled Pro Communications to expand into the convention and trade-show business.

■ United Collections Bureau Inc. is investing \$2.48 million to establish a new business process outsourcing and collection call center in the **River Ridge Commerce Center** in Jeffersonville, Ind., bringing 600 new jobs to the Louisville metro area by 2022. The jobs will have an average wage of \$18.22 per hour.

After two rounds of layoffs that cut more than 500 jobs over the last six months, barge manufacturer **Jeffboat** has announced that it will close the doors of its Jeffersonville,



Ind., facility for good on May 14. The company, which was founded in 1938 and was at one time the largest inland shipyard in the country, cited a surplus of barges as the primary reason for the shutdown and said it is less expensive for customers to purchase used barges rather than new ones. The closing will eliminate around 170 remaining jobs.

#### MOREHEAD

■ Morehead State University has announced plans to freeze tuition for the upcoming school year. "We understand our service region and the students and communities within it," said MSU President Jay Morgan. "We will continue to evaluate strategies and to look for ways to make higher education as affordable as possible to as many students as possible."

#### STATE: LEXINGTON PASTA OWNER NAMED KY SMALL-BUSINESS PERSON OF YEAR

ESME Romero, owner of Lexington Pasta, has been named the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2018 Kentucky Small Business Person of the Year.

The award recognizes small-business owners who demonstrate staying power as a business with at least a three-year history. Winners must also show growth in net worth, increase in jobs and



Lesme Romero

sales, product or service innovation, response to adversity and contributions to community-oriented projects.

Romero founded Lexington Pasta – a company that produces pasta for restaurants, farmer's markets, grocery stores and food distributors – in 2009. In 2013, he contacted the **Bluegrass Small Business Development Center**, a SBA resource partner, for guidance on ways to improve the company's productivity. The SBDC later assisted him in refinancing debt with an SBA loan and developing long-term goals. This enabled him to open an Italian café, bodega and a special-events venue in the same building where the pasta is made. Romero also teaches cooking classes and has added a commercial kitchen and food incubator.

"We wouldn't be where we are today without assistance from the SBDC and SBA," Lesme Romero said.

Other Kentucky entrepreneurs honored by the SBA include:

• Financial Services Advocate of the Year: Earl Twinam, First & Peoples Bank and Trust Company, Russell.

• Small Business Advocate of the Year: Tom Underwood, National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) – Kentucky, Frankfort

• Minority-Owned Small Business of the Year: Kathy Mills, Strategic Communications, Louisville

• Veteran-Owned Small Business of the Year: Alejandro Ramirez, Universal Spartan, Vine Grove

• Woman-Owned Small Business of the Year: Mavis Linneman-Clark, The Delish Dish, Covington



Kathy

Earl Twinam

Underwood Mills



Alejandro

Ramirez



Mavis Linneman-Clark

#### MARTIN: ARH BUYS MARTIN HOSPITAL, 4 CLINICS FROM KENTUCKYONE HEALTH

PPALACHIAN Regional Healthcare has signed a definitive agreement to acquire Saint Joseph Martin and its four rural health clinics in Floyd County from KentuckyOne Health.

Saint Joseph Martin is a 25-bed critical-access facility that has been in operation since 1947.



Following the acquisition closing – which is expected to take place by June 30 – ARH will take over all operation of the facilities. The hospital will operate as **ARH Our Lady of the Way Hospital**. Our Lady of the Way was the hospital's original name.

ARH is the largest health-care provider and single largest employer in southeastern Kentucky.

#### STATE: KY CHOSEN AS 1 OF 3 STATES TO CREATE WORKFORCE ACADEMIES

A S Kentucky's employers struggle to find employees with the skills they need, the **Kentucky Chamber of Commerce Workforce Center** is leading initiatives to solve the state's workforce crisis.

Kentucky is one of three states selected by the **U.S. Chamber Foundation** and the **W.K. Kellogg Foundation** to host statewide **Talent Pipeline Management Academies** to help address workforce issues. Tennessee and Michigan will also host TPM Academies.

As part of the effort, the Kentucky Chamber Workforce Center will hold meetings over the next two years to develop strategies to improve Kentucky's workforce issues. Participating employers, employer-led associations and education providers will receive training and build partnerships in order to connect employees and employers.

"For the economy to continue to thrive, it's critical for local businesses to be leaders in helping develop a 21st-century workforce," said Cheryl Oldham, senior vice president of the **U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation**'s Center for Education and Workforce. "Yesterday's education systems aren't meeting the needs of today's learners and tomorrow's workers. By coming together to develop a statewide strategy for closing the skills gap, business leaders will be equipped with the tools they need to hire and develop a strong workforce."

Beginning this month, the Kentucky Chamber's Workforce Center will begin traveling the state to discuss TPM and share information about the program and how its tools and resources can support the efforts of local communities, businesses and workforce leaders.

For more information about the Talent Pipeline Management Initiative or ways to get involved, visit TheTalentSupplyChain.org or contact Beth Davisson, executive director of the Kentucky Chamber Workforce Center, at bdavisson@kychamber.com.

#### LEXINGTON: TARGET TO OPEN STATE'S FIRST SMALL-FORMAT STORE NEAR UK

**ARGET** plans to open a new small-format store near the **University of Kentucky** campus that will be the retailer's first such store in the commonwealth.

The new 20,000-s.f.



store is scheduled to open in summer 2019 and will occupy the ground floor of the Hub on Campus Lexington, a luxury Target's new small-format store will be located on the ground floor of a luxury apartment complex on South Upper St., near the UK campus and close to downtown Lexington.

apartment complex. The store will offer a mix of items, including fresh produce, grab-and-go items and items for meal prep; dorm and apartment essentials; apparel and accessories for men and women; tech products and entertainment accessories.

The new location will also offer order pickup service, allowing customers to place their order online and pickup the items in store.

Target's new design is part of its strategy to reach new customers by locating near college campuses, urban areas and dense suburban neighborhoods. The company is on track to operate 130 small-format stores by the end of 2019.

### **BUSINESS BRIEFS**

#### **NORTHERN KENTUCKY**

■ Led by new demand at the **Ark Encounter**, fresh bourbon experiences, a lively culinary scene and new hotels, Northern Kentucky's travel and tourism industry logged record-breaking figures for 2017. At the annual meeting of the **Northern Kentucky Convention and Visitors Bureau**, officials announced that the region generated \$450 million in visitor spending in Boone, Kenton and Campbell counties, up from \$388 million in 2016. The region has seen six new hotels open in the last two years, with three more under construction. The new Ark Encounter saw more than 1 million visitors in its first year of operation and officials there expect that number to rise even higher for 2017-2018.

#### **OWENSBORO**

■ A new \$15.3 million facility to house the **International Bluegrass Music Museum** in Owensboro is scheduled to open Oct. 18-20. The museum's name is also being changed to the **Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame & Museum** to include the Hall of Fame, which has been part of the museum from the beginning.



#### PRESTONSBURG

■ Big Sandy Community and Technical College has formed a partnership with Bellevue University that allows BSCTC students the option to transfer all of their college credits toward an accelerated online bachelor's degree in a career-relevant field. Bellevue is an accredited private, nonprofit university in Bellevue, Neb.

#### RICHMOND

■ Beginning this fall, **Eastern Kentucky University** will offer an online bachelor's business administration degree with a general business concentration. The program is accredited by the AACSB International – The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business and will provide a full degree program, not just a degree completion option. The program is the second concentration option for online business majors through EKU: The business administration degree in risk management and insurance has been offered online since fall 2017.



#### WILLIAMSBURG

■ The University of the Cumberlands' School of Computer & Information Sciences has partnered with the Kentucky Department of Education to provide Kentucky high school students with the opportunity to earn college credit for high school information technology courses.

The program allows any high school student in Kentucky who is involved in an IT "career pathway" track to take any IT course outlined in UC's written agreement; once the student has earned six credit hours at UC, the IT classes they took in high school will be counted as a college credit on their UC transcript. The program, which is the first of its kind in Kentucky, is part of an effort to help make college more affordable for students.

#### STATE

■ According to a preliminary analysis of the 2017 **Industrial Hemp Research Pilot Program**, Kentucky licensed processors paid Kentucky growers \$7.5 million for harvested hemp. In addition, Industrial Hemp Research Pilot Program processor licensees reported \$25.6 million in capital improvements and investments and \$16.7 million in gross product sales. In 2017, 198 growers planted the highest number of acres on record at more than 3,271 acres. The 2017 planting acreage was up from 2,350 acres in 2016; 922 acres in 2015; and 33 acres in 2014.

■ Six months into a tax agreement between online hospitality service **Airbnb** and the **Kentucky Department of Revenue** that authorized Airbnb to collect and remit state sales tax and the state transient room tax on behalf of its Kentucky hosts, the company has delivered more than \$700,000 in revenue to the state. Based on the first six months, the revenue for the year is expected to far outpace the \$1 million that was originally projected for the first 12 months of the agreement.

## **INTERSTATE LANE**

Business news from Indiana, Ohio, Tennessee and West Virginia

#### **BUSINESS BRIEFS**

#### INDIANA

■ Nevada-based **Eldorado Resorts** has entered into an agreement to acquire **Tropicana Entertainment Inc.** in a \$1.85 billion deal. The acquisition includes the **Tropicana Evansville** casino along with casino properties in Nevada, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri and New Jersey. Tropicana Evansville just reopened in October 2017 as a land-based casino after operating as a riverboat casino for more than 20 years.



■ Land O'Frost, a Munster, Ind., company that produces presliced deli meats and specialty sausage products, has purchased Wellshire Farms Inc., a established leader in the natural organic meat industry. New Jersey-based Wellshire produces a variety of minimally processed meats that are sold in specialty grocery stores such as Whole Foods, Trader

Joe's, Sprouts and Earth Fare. The transaction brings together two of the leading family-owned and operated companies in the meat industry.

■ Jasper Group, a manufacturer of seating and casegood products, is purchasing a 1.2 million-s.f. facility in Orleans, Ind., that previously housed furniture manufacturer **Paoli Inc.** Jasper will produce laminate casegoods and tables at the Orleans facility, which will also serve as a warehouse and shipping hub. The company currently employs more than 1,000 full-time employees in Indiana and plans to add 300 new jobs as part of the expansion.

#### OHIO

■ The J. M. Smucker Co., an Ohio-based manufacturer and marketer of food and beverage products and pet food/snacks, has announced plans to acquire Ainsworth Pet Nutrition in a transaction valued at approximately \$1.7 billion. Approximately two-thirds of Ainsworth's sales are generated by its Rachael Ray Nutrish brand, a leading brand of premium dog food. The acquisition will significantly expand Smucker's presence in the dog food sector, complementing Smucker's Nature's Recipe



brand. In addition to acquiring Ainsworth's Pennsylvania headquarters, the transaction will include two manufacturing facilities located in Pennsylvania and Kansas and a leased distribution center in Pennsylvania. Ainsworth employs a staff of approximately 700.

■ Pharmacy benefits company **Express Scripts** is closing its mailorder pharmaceutical distribution center in Columbus. The closing will eliminate 456 jobs, including technicians and pharmacists. The announcement came just weeks after **Cigna Corp.** announced its plans to buy St. Louis-based Express Scripts in a deal valued at \$67 billion.



■ Cincinnati-based **Procter & Gamble** has signed an agreement to acquire the consumer health business of **Merck KGaA**, Darmstadt, Germany, in a deal valued at \$4.2 billion.

The acquisition ranks as one of the largest in P&G's long history and will improve P&G's geographic scale, brand portfolio and category footprint in the majority of the world's top 15 markets. Merck's consumer health business is active across 44 countries and includes more than 900 products. The companies hope to close the deal during the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

#### TENNESSEE

■ ATLASBX, a Korean company that manufactures automotive batteries, has selected Clarksville, Tenn., as the site of its first U.S. manufacturing facility. The company is investing \$75 milion in the project, which is expected to open in 2020 and will create approximately 200 new jobs. ATLASBX is a sister company of **Hankook Tire**, which officially opened its tire manufacturing plant in Clarksville in October 2017.

#### TENNESSEE: BELGIAN COMPANY TO HIRE 600 FOR NEW MORRISTOWN BUS PLANT

**AN Hool**, a familyowned Belgian manufacturer of buses, coaches and industrial vehicles, is investing more than \$47 million to build its first U.S. manufacturing plant in Morristown, Tenn.



Van Hool's new Tennessee plant will produce public transit vehicles for the U.S. market.

The company plans <sup>C.S. market</sup> to build a 500,000-s.f. facility in Morristown's East Tennessee Progress Center, where it will hire 600 employees to produce public transit and commuter vehicles for U.S. transit agencies. The company expects the plant to produce approximately 400 buses and commuter coaches annually.

Construction of the new plant will begin later this year, with operations expected to get underway by the first quarter of 2020.

Company officials said "the presence of highly regarded technical schools and well-trained workers" in the area were significant factors in the decision to build in east Tennessee.

Van Hool currently operates production facilities in Koningshooikt, Belgium, where it is headquartered, and Skopje, Macedonia. The company employs approximately 4,450 employees worldwide and designs and manufactures 3,000 commercial vehicles and 1,400 buses and coaches annually.

Van Hool CEO Filip Van Hool said his family's company has more than 30 years of experience in the North American market and has delivered over 11,000 vehicles in North America since 1987.

"Based on this experience and through market research, we have learned that the public transportation market, with a total annual potential of 6,000 to 8,000 vehicles, offers opportunities for Van Hool," said Van Hool. "Because of the 'Buy America Act,' our family business decided to explore a new manufacturing facility in the U.S."

The 1982 "Buy America Act" requires vehicles supplied to public authorities to be assembled in the U.S., contain 70 percent of their parts from American suppliers and 100 percent American steel.

#### OHIO: FESTO ADDING 350 JOBS AS PART OF \$90M MANUFACTURING EXPANSION

**ESTO**, a German supplier of intelligent automation solutions, is investing \$90 million to expand its existing regional service and manufacturing center in Mason, Ohio, by approximately 350,000 s.f.

The expansion will add 350 jobs over the next five years. Construction will be conducted in two phases, with the completion expected by 2024.

Festo, which maintains U.S. and North American regional headquarters in New York, announced its move to Mason in 2013 with a \$50 million, 150,000-s.f. facility that opened in 2015. Just three years later the company is nearly tripling its footprint and more than doubling its Mason workforce.

Festo's leadership team credits a strong foundation established with city, regional and state officials, as well as opportunities the regional ecosystem provides in talent, connectivity and innovation in Industry 4.0/Industrial Internet of Things, as its reasons for locating and expanding in Ohio.

## **KENTUCKY INTELLIGENCER®**

A sampling of business and economic data

#### MOST AND LEAST EXPENSIVE CITIES FOR STARTUP COSTS

Founding a new company carries all sorts of risks, not the least of which is the cost associated with leasing an office and hiring employees. But according to a new report published by SmartAsset, Kentucky ranks as one of the best places in the country to launch a new company in terms of start-up costs. In compiling its figures, SmartAsset studied 80 cities across America to calculate the average cost for starting a new company, including filing fees, office space, utilities, legal and accounting fees and payroll.

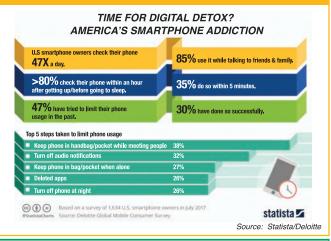


#### U.S. CITIES WITH THE HIGHEST STARTUP COSTS



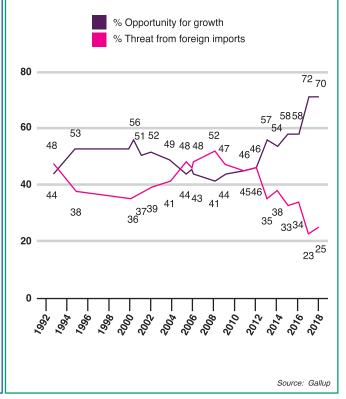
#### **ARE YOU ADDICTED TO YOUR SMARTPHONE?**

It may be an understatement to say that since the 2007 arrival of the first iPhone, smartphones have gradually overtaken our lives, changing the way we interact with others, take photos and utilize our free time. While there are certainly positive aspects to the advancement of technology, many users also note that the constant stream of information and stimuli from smartphones has wreaked havoc on their ability to focus and stay on task.



#### AMERICANS' VIEWS ON TRADE AND MARKET VOLATILITY

With President Trump's decision in early April to impose tariffs on Chinese imports, the topic of tariffs has moved to the forefront as concerns about a trade war surfaced. Still, a firm majority of Americans say they see opportunity in foreign trade, according to the most recent Gallup survey on the issue.



## CORPORATE MOVES

New leadership for Kentucky businesses

#### ARCHITECTURE/ ENGINEERING

■ Joel Wallace has been named partner at Louisvillebased TEG.

#### **BANKING FINANCE**

**PJ Gibbs** has joined the Bowling Green office of ARGI, a Louisville-based personal and business financial advisory firm.

**Jason L. Ayers** has joined Community Trust and Investment Co.'s wealth and trust management team as a relationship officer for private wealth services.

**Barbara Bowling** has rejoined Fifth Third Bank as a mortgage area sales manager for the Louisville market

#### **BUSINESS** DEVELOPMENT **Christy Morrison** has

Rarbara Bowling

been promoted to director of membership development for the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce. Jessica Casebolt has joined the chamber as membership development manager in western Kentucky.

AppHarvest, an Eastern Kentucky ag-tech startup, has announced the following appointments: Seth David Norat - chief operating officer; Sydney Fulkerson - chief design officer; and Ramel Bradley community director.

#### **ECONOMIC** DEVELOPMENT

**Jennifer Panepinto** has joined Northern Kentucky Tri-ED as director of business retention and expansion. Northern Kentucky Tri-ED is the primary economic development entity for Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties.

#### **EDUCATION**

■ Vincent Tyra has been named athletic director and vice president of intercollegiate athletics at the University of Louisville.

**Emmanuel Collins** has

#### been named dean of University of Louisville's J.B. Speed School of Engineering.

Neeli Bendapudi has been named president of the University of Louisville. She comes to the position from the University of Kansas, where she served as provost and executive vice chancellor.



**Mark Whitworth** has been Bendapudi named vice president of intercollegiate athletics at Asbury University.



Ioel

Jason

Ayers

Wallace

**Erica Harris** has been named executive director of alumni services at University of the Cumberlands.

Dr. Steven A. Haist has rejoined the University of Kentucky College of Medicine as associate dean for the Northern Kentucky regional campus.

Erica

Jerry

Barry

**Bowditch** 

Abramson

Harris

■ Former Louisville Mayor and Kentucky Lieutenant Gov. Jerry Abramson has been named executive in residence at Spalding University, effective June 1.

#### EQUINE

Keeneland has named Barry Bowditch as its new Australasian representative and managing director of Magic Millions, which conducts Thoroughbred auctions each year in Australia

**Tim Bryan** has been named president and general manager of Derby City Gaming, Churchill Downs' new historical racing machine facility that is opening in Louisville this fall.

#### FOOD/SPIRITS/HOSPITALITY

■ Mitch Arens has been named executive chef for the Hotel Covington, a 114-room hotel located in a restored department store.

■ Jenny Moon has been named manager of Dale Hollow Lake State Resort Park.

#### GOVERNMENT

■ Jennifer Burnett has joined the Kentucky Association of Counties as director of research.

**Kevin Akers** has been named county commissioner for the 3rd district in Fayette County.



Jennifer Burnett

**Rebecca Grady Jennings** has been confirmed as U.S. district judge for the western district of Kentucky.

**Claria Horn Boom** has been confirmed as U.S. district judge for the eastern and western districts of Kentucky.

**Brian Privett** has been appointed circuit judge for the 14th Judicial Circuit, Division 2.

#### INSURANCE

**Taylor Coots** has joined EM Ford in Owensboro as employee benefits advisor.

#### LEGAL

**Greg Taylor** has joined the Eddins Domine Law Group in Louisville, focusing on business litigation, consumer law, creditors' rights and employment disputes.

■ Michael D. Hornback has been named special counsel in the Lexington office of

#### **DEPARTURES**

**Gregory K. Johnson** has retired as commissioner of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife. Frank Jemley, who serves as chief of staff for the Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet, has been named interim commissioner.

**Ian Derrer**, general director of the Kentucky Opera, has announced he will leave in June to accept the position of CEO and general director of the Dallas Opera.

Littler, a global employment and labor law practice representing management.

■ Neal B. Curtis has joined the corporate and securities team of Wyatt, Tarrant & Combs.

#### **Robert K. McBride** has

joined Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP as a partner in the corporate compliance and white-collar criminal defense practice. McBride will work out of the firm's Northern Kentucky office.



Robert **McBride** 

#### **Justin Fowles** and Carl

Lammers have been named members of the law firm of Frost Brown Todd LLC in Louisville.

#### MARKETING

**Meg Howell** has been named regional vice president of sales for Louisville-based J&L Marketing.

#### MEDIA

Sinclair Broadcast Group Inc. has promoted Jennifer Rieffer to general manager for WDKY (FOX) in Lexington.

#### **PUBLIC RELATIONS/MARKETING**

**Emily Cvengros** has been named Lexington-area marketing manager for Write Now Marketing, a Louisville-based creative marketing firm.

#### TECHNOLOGY

■ Paducah-based Computer Services Inc. (CSI) has elevated three senior vice presidents to its executive leadership team: Andy Elliott, previously senior vice president of customer experience, is now chief experience officer; Bob Ezell, previously senior vice president of product strategy, is now chief product officer; and Diva Narayanan, previously senior vice president of CSI's software engineering group, is now chief technology officer.

#### UTILITIES

**Bob Shurtleff** has been named external affairs manager for Kentucky Power. He will be located in the Pikeville office.

**Linda L. Rumpke** has been promoted to vice president of external and customer affairs for Columbia Gas of Kentucky.

#### OTHER

**David S. Beck** has been named as the new president and CEO of the Kentucky State Fair Board. Beck comes to the position from the Kentucky Farm Bureau, where he has served as CEO since 1995.



Tyra





Jennifer

Panepinto

## ON THE BOARDS

Kentuckians named to organizational leadership roles

#### **AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS**

**Christen Boone** and **Theo Edmonds** have been named to lead the Private Sector Network Council of the Americans for the Arts, a national nonprofit organization that works to advance the arts. Boone, who is president and CEO of Louisville's Fund for the Ârts, will serve as chair of the council. Edmonds, co-founder of IDEAS xLab in Louisville, will serve as vice chair.

#### **AMERICA'S PUBLIC TELEVISION STATIONS**

■ William J. Jones, a lay trustee for Kentucky Educational Television (KET), has been re-elected to the board of directors of America's Public Television Stations (APTS). APTS is a nonprofit membership organization that strives to ensure a strong and financially sound public television system.

#### **ASHLAND COMMUNITY** AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

**Greg Jackson** has been appointed to the board of directors for Ashland Community and Technical College. Jackson, of Ashland, is a human resources manager for Marathon Petroleum's Catlettsburg refinery.

#### **BROWN-FORMAN**

**Tracy Skeans** has been elected to the board of directors of Brown-Forman. Skeans is chief transformation and people officer for Louisville-based Yum! Brands Inc.

#### **EASTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY**

**Laura Schulte Babbage** has been appointed to the Eastern Kentucky University board of regents. Babbage, of Lexington, is a chaplain for KentuckyOne Health/St. Joseph Hospital.

#### **FARMERS NATIONAL BANK**

■ Patti Powell, president of Stuart Powell Ford-Lincoln-Mazda in Danville, has been named to the Farmers National Bank board of directors.



#### **FOUNDATION FOR A HEALTHY KENTUCKY** Powell

■ The Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky has announced the following new appointments to its board of directors: Chair - Mark Carter, Passport Health, Louisville; Vice Chair - Allen K. Montgomery Jr., healthcare executive, Louisville; Treasurer - Brent Wright, T.J. Sampson Family Medicine Center, Glasgow; and Secretary - Vivian Lasley-Bibbs, Kentucky Department of Public Health, Lexington.

#### **JUVENILE JUSTICE ADVISORY BOARD**

Alexys Bardonaro, Julie Reinhardt Ward, Maggie M. Krueger, Jontae Minor, Joan Lisa Byer, Michelle Oakley, Justin D. Miller, Kimberly Wiukenhofer Shumate and Christina Weeter have been appointed to the Juvenile Justice Advisory Board. Bardonaro, of Lexington, is a student at the University of Kentucky and will represent youth under 24. Ward, of California, is a circuit judge in Campbell County. Krueger, of Columbia, is retired. Minor, of Madisonville, is a high school student and will represent youth under

24. Byer, of Louisville, is a family law mediator. Oakley, of Shelbyville, is director of special education for Shelby County Public Schools. Miller, of Louisville, is a social work professor at the University of Kentucky. Shumate, of Radcliff, is a district judge in Hardin County. Weeter, of Louisville, is the Division of Student Success director for the Kentucky Department of Education.

#### **KENTUCKY ASSOCIATION OF HIGHWAY CONTRACTORS**

The Kentucky Association of Highway Contractors has elected new officers and directors for 2018: Chair - F. Richard Hamilton, Hamilton-Hinkle Paving Co., Georgetown; Vice-Chair - Joe Dougherty, Louisville Paving and Construction Co., Louisville; Treasurer - Alan Bernard, Site-Safe LLC, Leitchfield; Board of Directors: Joseph Burchett II, Bush and Burchett Inc., Prestonsburg; Darren Cleary, Cleary Construction Inc., Tompkinsville; Lori Harper, Rogers Group Inc., Hopkinsville; Jason Jurgensen, John R. Jurgensen Co., Cincinnati, Ohio; Brett Kik, Charbon Contracting, Madisonville; Todd Loehnert, L.A. Surety Solutions, Louisville; Kris Mays, H.G. Mays Corp., Frankfort; Jeff Monohan, The Allen Co. Inc., Lexington; Chris Proffitt, Scott & Murphy Inc., Bowling Green; Mike Rogers, Mago Construction Co., Bardstown; Arthur Walker III, The Walker Co., Mount Sterling; Larry Winkleman, Hinkle Contracting Co., Paris; and John T. Yager, Yager Materials, Owensboro.

#### **KENTUCKY BOARD OF** HAIRDRESSERS AND **COSMETOLOGISTS**

■ Margaret Wheeler Meredith has been appointed to the Kentucky Board of Hairdressers and Cosmetologists. Meredith, of Harrodsburg, is a certified public accountant. She will represent consumers.

#### **KENTUCKY BOARD OF VETERINARY EXAMINERS**

■ Jeffrey L. Pumphrey has been appointed to the Kentucky Board of Veterinary Examiners. Pumphrey, of Midway, is an equine veterinarian.

#### **KENTUCKY CENTER FOR THE ARTS**

Lourdes C. Baez has been appointed as a member of the board of directors of the Kentucky Center for the Arts. Baez, of Louisville, is director of government relations and advocacy at Baptist Health.

#### **KENTUCKY COMMISSION ON FIRE PROTECTION PERSONNEL STANDARDS AND EDUCATION**

■ Michael Daron Britain has been appointed to the Commission on Fire Protection Personnel Standards and Education. Britain, of Elizabethtown, is a professional firefighter with Louisville Fire and has also served for 10 years as a volunteer firefighter.

#### **KENTUCKY COMMISSION ON MILITARY AFFAIRS**

Brigadier General Benjamin F. Adams III has been designated vice chair of the Kentucky Commission on Military Affairs. Adams, of Lexington, is commissioner of the Kentucky Department of Veteran Affairs.

#### **KENTUCKY EMPLOYERS' MUTUAL INSURANCE**

Kentucky Employers' Mutual Insurance (KEMI) has announced the following board officers: Chair - Brandon Voelker, Cold Spring; Vice Chair - Timothy Mauntel, Fort Mitchell; and Secretary - Rebecca Hedgspeth, Louisville.



Brandon Voelker

Mauntel Hedgspeth

**KENTUCKY HERITAGE COUNCIL** Paul A. Tenkotte, Timothy C. Peters, Linda Ann Carroll and Judi Patton have been appointed as members of the Kentucky Heritage Council. Tenkotte, of Covington, is a professor of history and director of Northern Kentucky University's Center for Public History. Peters, of Harrodsburg, has completed dozens of historic renovations and restorations and is founder of T.C. Peters Construction. Carroll, of Lexington, is vice president of Morgan Worldwide Consultants. Patton, of Pikeville, is the wife of former governor Paul Patton.

#### **KENTUCKY HIGHER EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY/ KENTUCKY HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENT LOAN CORP.**

■ Wesley Madison Cornett and Neil Lawrence Quinlan have been appointed as members of the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority board of directors and the Kentucky Higher Education Student Loan Corp. board of directors. Cornett, of Waynesburg, is the former principal of Somerset High School. Quinlan, of Louisville, is a certified financial planner with ARGI Financial Group.

#### **MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA OF KENTUCKY**

**Kyle Melloan**, Ann Bassoni and Audra Meighan have been named to the board of directors of Mental Health America of Kentucky.

#### **NORTHERN KENTUCKY CONVENTION CENTER CORP.**

**Bart Porter** has been appointed to the Northern Kentucky Convention Center Corp. board of directors. Porter, of Bellevue, is the CEO of GreatForce Insurance Agents LLC.

#### UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

**Mary R. Nixon** and James Michael Rogers have been appointed to the University of Louisville board of trustees. Nixon, of Louisville, is a retired Yum! Brands Inc. finance executive. Rogers, of Prospect, is a retired Hilliard Lyons chief operating officer and executive vice president.

#### WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT CORP.

**Susan Moss** has been named chair of the (Louisville) Waterfront Development Corp. board of directors. Moss, of Louisville, has served as vice president of corporate communications for Kindred Healthcare since 1996.

## LANE ONE-ON-ONE

Kentucky's leaders express their opinions



#### **Mary Ellen Wiederwohl**

Mary Ellen Wiederwohl joined Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer's administration in 2012. In 2014, Fischer named her chief of Louisville Forward - the city's new, integrated approach to economic and community development, combining business attraction, expansion and retention with the city's real estate functions and talent development. Louisville Forward was named a top 10 economic development organization in 2014, 2015, and 2016 by Site Selection magazine, with announced projects totaling over \$5 billion of investment and more than 21,500 new jobs over the last three years. She has provided leadership for Mayor Fischer's Strategic Plan, the Vision Louisville 25-year advanced plan, the Move Louisville strategic multi-modal transportation plan, the city's first sustainability plan, the Global Louisville Action Plan and the Vision Russell Initiative, which recently won a HUD Choice Neighborhoods implementation grant.

### INTEGRATING ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – TODAY'S 1-STOP SHOP

Louisville Forward Chief Mary Ellen Wiederwohl discusses strategy being employed to keep Kentucky's main financial engine engaged and growing

#### **BY MARK GREEN**

#### Mark Green: Can you give us some background on Louisville Forward along with its current mission?

**Mary Ellen Wiederwohl:** Louisville Forward is a component of the Louisville Metro Government. My boss is Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer. We have here all of the city's activity dedicated to economic development, real estate development and talent development. We can both provide a one-stop shop for businesses who are seeking to locate or grow in Louisville, as well as provide a unified vision for quality of place. Because today, it's as much a battle for talent as it is a battle for new jobs and new companies.

You can work with our project managers in economic development who work on business attraction and retention and expansion projects; you can start a small business here, and we'll help you get a loan to get started, provide a mentor, and get growing in your business. If you need property rezoned or a conditional-use permit or a license of some kind, all of those things are here in Louisville Forward.

We work closely with KentuckianaWorks, which is the area workforce board but really functions as our region's workforce intermediary, translating between what businesses need and what our training providers and our higher education system can put out to make sure we have the workforce we need. Workforce today is two things: It's talent attraction and talent development.

We're going on 4 years old, and we've had a lot of success. We've been named a top economic development organization by *Site Selection* magazine each year. We don't create jobs here in Metro Government; we help people create jobs, start businesses. We help make it easier.

## MG: What's the size of the staff and budget?

**MW**: We have the three major departments: economic development; Develop Louisville, which is all the planning and zoning areas; and the codes and regulations department. Then we have three attached agencies: the Parking Authority, KentuckianaWorks and the Air Pollution Control Board.

Across those six agencies, there's around a \$20 million budget and about 400 people. If you are in business in Louisville, you're intersecting with someone from Louisville Forward at some point.

MG: Louisville Forward combines economic development and community development. How common is this strategy and what are the benefits? **MW:** Economic development is the attraction and expansion of businesses. Community development is a much longer-term, strategically driven approach. The economic development side is driven a lot by the market and private business decisions. In community development, you're working at a neighborhood level.

In most cases, we're working in our more distressed neighborhoods. We spend a lot of time in West Louisville, building new housing, improving the public environments – from streets to sidewalks to trees to parks – and attracting new and growing businesses.

A big part of community development is also wealth creation: helping people get into their first home that they own, helping somebody start their new business. Community development is much more intense. You've got to be committed to a neighborhood for a long time and putting in public investments to leverage new private investments. We've seen a lot of success. West Louisville right now is getting a real renaissance underway. We won a big federal grant a couple years ago, which is leveraging up in the Russell neighborhood alone over \$200 million of new investment. We've got Passport moving its headquarters to 18th and Broadway, new activity all around that node with the YMCA and other investments.

## MG: What are the significant trends in economic development today?

**MW:** Some major themes right now focus around disruption, and most of that is driven by technology and innovation. You have automation taking the front seat in many of these conversations; you have robotics and artificial intelligence pervading most of the jobs in our current lexicon.

We don't see as many large greenfield investments. Now you see new investment entering your market through merger and acquisition activity, particularly foreign direct investment. You see foreign companies coming into the U.S. through acquiring a U.S.-based company. You're going to see a lot of turnover, too, because you have the baby boomers reaching retirement age, and not very many have succession plans for their companies.

Our team is now working with companies and their leadership to plan. Are you going to pass on the company to a family member? Are you going to transition your structure? Are you going to look for a buyer? That's something economic developers weren't paying attention to a few years ago.

The other big theme throughout our industry right now is equity and inclusion. It used to be economic developers would celebrate over the location of jobs and didn't ask many questions about what kind of jobs they were.

You want to make sure you're focusing on high-wage jobs and not incentivizing low-wage jobs, which leads to a nonvirtuous cycle in your community. You've also got to make sure you've got training programs and the civic infrastructure to support folks who need to work their way up through that. Training programs are very important, but they're very different today than 15 or 20 years ago when Congress first passed the Workforce Investment Act.

## MG: How much of a factor are incentives in recruiting and retaining business?

**MW:** I always refer to incentives as the icing on the cake. You've got to have a cake first. And the cake is your competitive environment and today your workforce availability. You as a city, or a state, have to make sense to this company for whatever their qualifications are. For us, that's often location, being here in the middle of everything, being able to make things here, ship them anywhere easily. You have to have the workforce availability, and you have to be able to demonstrate to the companies not only that you have it but

that you have a full pipeline to keep it or grow it. And then a generally competitive environment helps – a tax environment, things like workers' comp, those considerations that you often see debated.

Incentives tend to come toward the end. They do factor into the majority of the projects. Our incentives are performance-based, and that's what taxpayers expect – they want to see the company actually do what they committed to do and then reap the reward. That has allowed us to be very competitive. And we're competitive with our surrounding states, too.

## MG: What is Louisville Forward's strategy for enhancing and growing the workforce?

**MW:** Louisville Metro has had a cradle-tocareer initiative for a number of years now, looking at our entire education system, from pre-K to our public school K-12 education, to our higher education system and our lifelong learning. Louisville Metro has had a dedicated effort toward increasing our degree attainment and the 55,000 Degrees initiative has been hugely successful. We're now better than the national average on our two- and four-year degrees. A lot of businesses now are connecting with and partnering with schools. As early as freshmen, they'll get a view into what being in a certain career might be like, and then actually have career pathing in addition to the standard curriculum that must be taught.

We think ultimately this model will graduate more students who are ready for a two-year degree, a four-year degree or a credential. Today's career world requires something beyond a high school diploma and you can get that while you're in high school: You can get a credential; some even graduate high school with associate's degrees now.

We are partnering with KentuckianaWorks on programs like the Career Calculator, where you can learn about what jobs are available and what it will pay if you're going to be a plumber, an electrician, a software developer.

We are starting new credentialing programs. The Code Louisville program has been successful. Literally hundreds of people per year go through that in trying to address the growing IT challenge. For years KentuckianaWorks has run the Kentucky Manufacturing Career Center. We help support that. They offer stackable credentials for manufacturing.

## Best-in-class training creates a best-in-class workforce.

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### LANE ONE-ON-ONE

Manufacturing has changed so much that it's hard to go into it with just a high school diploma.

MG: What are site selectors' top concerns? MW: Every project we work has two commonalities: people and place. Everything is about workforce and real estate; after that every project is unique.

There is an increasing need for a higher-talent pool, more skill on the front end. The other big thing with workforce is just not enough people. We're functioning at 3.5 percent unemployment. Our workforce participation rate in the Louisville area is above the national average. There aren't many more people we're going to pull off the sidelines into daily work. These are problems across the U.S.

And on the real estate side, everyone's looking for the solution that works for them. If you are looking at a manufacturing facility, there's a certain number of sites left in Jefferson County, which is largely built out. We're not going to welcome a whole lot more manufacturing here. We're going to have some, but it will be highly targeted at folks who really need to be here to be close to somebody in their vendor supply chain.

The business services cluster has the greatest opportunity for growth. That's everything from your IT jobs to financial services to back office and shared services. High-speed internet is critical. When you talk about the signals you send to the world, being a Google Fiber city is really important. It's also important for us to be able to market to our clients that we have multiple high-speed providers, so they can have a choice. Folks are doing telework, working from home part- or full-time.

Employers want to know their employees can get high-speed internet at home.

## MG: What is the status of Louisville's five major business clusters?

**MW:** They're all performing well. Advanced manufacturing allows folks to make a family-supporting wage without a four-year degree – the average wage in that cluster is around \$60,000. It will continue to expand but unless there's a n o ther original equipment manufacturer in the region, that's not going to grow dramatically.

Logistics continues to be a great strength, with UPS and our interstate system, our rail access, our river. That is the cluster we're watching most closely in terms of change, where automation is likely to impact that dramatically. The story on automation now is not necessarily that there will be fewer jobs; there just will be different jobs. It's going to be programming and robotics and things like that. There will still be entry-level jobs there; you'll just see some shift in it.

We call the food and beverage cluster the fun cluster. Bourbonism is still in its very early innings of the game, and with one-third of the country's distilling jobs here we see a lot of opportunity for growth. Scotch still has 90 percent of the global whiskey market. If we can teach more people about bourbon we'll do just fine there. And with our restaurant chains headquartered here (KFC, Yum!, Papa John's, Texas Roadhouse), this is a great place to start and grow a food and beverage company. We just hosted a big food and beverage conference (Restaurant Franchise and Innovation Summit) a few weeks ago. They had a great experience and are coming back.

The roots of that Lifelong Wellness and Aging Care cluster grew out of the talent that came out of Humana and started other companies. We've got this great talent cluster around aging care and the headquarters that are here. This is a place where we're putting a lot of focus because demography is on our side; the baby boomers are getting older. They're going to be living longer, and the silver tsunami, as it's called, won't crest until more than a decade from now. You're going to see this continual ramping-up of the consumer-facing side of this, how folks are going to be taken care of and what choices they're going to make. Technology will drive a lot of this, too, because most people want to age in their homes. They want to be in a multigenerational setting. We're going to have affordable housing issues around this, too. We want Louisville to be that innovation and thought leadership center for aging care.

The final cluster is business services, which projections show has the greatest upside. We've had some wonderful success stories, including Computershare, which moved its back-office operation here; they're now over 600 employees, on their way to 1,000. A couple other sharedservices operations that we've won here include Ernst & Young and Hogan Lovells. We've got a good, educated workforce. Our hospitable nature helps make this a nice cultural fit for many companies. And functioning in the Eastern time zone helps in the financial market work.

#### MG: What impacts has Louisville Forward seen from completion of the Ohio River Bridges Project?

**MW:** There are two big ones. We now have that connectivity. We don't have a



choke point; that would be the worst possible thing we could have when selling a logistics cluster. But the other side is that we've proven we can get big projects done. That project was on track and finished early. This is a place that gets business done. To have completed what was at the time one of the largest infrastructure projects in the country, on time, under budget, is a great signal to send to the world.

#### MG: Amazon's feedback to Louisville's bid for that company's second headquarters was that there are not enough young tech workers here. What do you see as the city's best target sectors for growth and recruitment?

**MW:** We're a mid-sized city in middle America. Our region is getting up towards 1.5 million people. We're not New York, L.A., Miami, Chicago. We don't want to be. We're big enough to be globally relevant, we're small enough to get work done, and we've got to focus on those areas where we can be best.

That's why we have a cluster strategy. We focus on those five areas because we either are or can be best in class, best in the world, at this. With other mid-sized cities, you'll often see a similar cluster strategy built around their strengths. Our strengths are somewhat historic, when you look at geography and the long history of manufacturing we have in this community and the more recent history of development of the agingcare cluster. Food and beverage has a long history here. Business services is a more recent add to our cluster strategy as companies look to Middle America to reduce their cost structure. It does not make sense to have a back office or

shared services function on a coast; you're just going to pay more.

In the game of cities, size does matter. Cincinnati is over 2 million metro; Indy and Nashville are around 2 million. We're 1.5 million. Continuing to grow as a city is extremely important to us. We are growing, and we don't have a brain drain, we have a brain gain. But we'd like to grow about twice as much as we are per year. We need to grow more organically, but it's really got to come from attraction.

#### MG: To grow, you need housing. What are Louisville Forward's current goals for community development?

**MW:** Our real estate market right now is very hot and very tight. Some of that is from the Great Recession, in which there wasn't enough inventory added and a lot of home builders went out of business. We're seeing single-family pick back up and a lot of new construction in multifamily, which has been 95 percentplus occupancy in recent years. We'll have a lot of new apartments come online, particularly in downtown and the edge neighborhoods, where there's a lot of folks looking for walkable neighborhoods.

Affordable housing is one of the big policy topics for our country for the next several years. We have a shortage of everything in the housing category. The cost of construction has gone up so much that many people are just being priced out of the market. That's why this administration, over the last three years, put \$29 million into new affordable housing supports and you'll see this administration continue to make investments in affordable housing.

## MG: What trends, statistics or metrics do you watch most closely and think are important to Louisville?

**MW:** The biggest thing we track is wages. We are trying to raise our median wage, because it is indicative of a more prosperous community. Ultimately, all of the socioeconomic statistics connect to each other: educational attainment connected to wage connected to health outcomes. We are also tracking our creation of high-wage jobs in the professional, technical and managerial spaces, and we compare ourselves against our peer cities. That's how we measure. Durable goods is a good marker to watch; we make a lot of durable goods here.

## MG: What should local business operators be doing or thinking about to help improve the economy?

MW: Investing in their employees. Without fail, nearly every time our team meets with an employer upset about their ability to attract and retain workforce, by the time you get into the conversation about what they pay or what their work environment is like, you can generally tell why they're having trouble. And it's not just pay. Pay is the No. 1 driver, but with the millennials now becoming the largest portion of our workforce, they're demanding different things. As an employer, you've got to be ready to set a different culture and invest in your employees. And that's not just dollars and cents; it's also flexibility and being family-friendly.



Mark Green is executive editor of The Lane Report. He can be reached at mark@lanereport.com.



## **COVER STORY**



# Today's Skills for Today's Workers

Using P3 leverage, Kentucky Work Ready Skills Initiative gets traction aligning training with needs

#### **BY DEBRA GIBSON ISAACS**

\$150 million investment from the private sector, 40 new public/private partnerships, and 30,000 new seats for technical training are three of the early benefits coming from the Kentucky Work Ready Skills Initiative (KWRSI).

Funded by the 2016 General Assembly, KWRSI – Kentucky's \$100 million investment in the state's workforce – is the largest investment of its kind anywhere in the country, according to Hal Heiner, who previously served as secretary of the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet before accepting an April 16 appointment to the Kentucky Board of Education.

"We intend to make Kentucky the manufacturing and logistical center of

excellence in America," Heiner said when announcing KWRSI's creation with Gov. Matt Bevin. "This will start with having the most highly skilled and well-trained workforce in the country. To accomplish this, we will better align our education systems and our workforce needs. This is exactly why we have created the Work Ready Skills Initiative."



Hal Heiner, Secretary, Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

In the past two years, KWRSI has approved 40 projects, all designed to expand workforce technical training and upgrade equipment and facilities in the state's top five business growth sectors: advanced manufacturing; business services and information technology (IT); A rendering from Omni Architects of its design for a training floor on the \$24 million Advanced Manufacturing Information Technology Center under construction at Jefferson Community Technical College in Louisville. It will house flexible labs, technology-enabled learning classrooms and more to train more than 2,700 adults and 750 students annually.

construction trades; health care; and transportation and logistics.

The projects were selected during competitive application processes in 2016 and 2017.

In 2016, the 10-member Work Ready Skills Initiative Advisory Committee awarded \$65.5 million to 25 projects. These first-round awards leveraged \$84.5 million in matching resources: approximately \$64.1 million in cash and \$20.4 million in-kind.

In 2017, a second round of competition dispersed \$33.1 million in bond money to 15 additional projects, leveraging another \$27.22 million in matching funds: \$17 million-plus in cash and more than \$10 million in-kind. Proposals came from numerous workforce areas, addressing a wide array of key industry sectors, including manufacturing, health, technology, transportation and trades.

#### Private and public involvement is key

Each of the projects must follow several criteria such as public/private collaboration.

While serving in the cabinet, Heiner said, he received texts every Saturday from employers and high school and community college educators gathered around a table working together. This collaborative approach is one of the ways KWRSI is intentionally putting educators and employers on the same team with the same goal: better-trained employees who draw more businesses to the state and help businesses already here expand.

"One of the great outcomes from the competition for funding is that some teams have expanded beyond a single county," Heiner said.

He cited the Western Kentucky Partnership, which was awarded \$3.04 million and has a \$337,778 match. Employers in the area joined with 12 Purchase-area school districts, West Kentucky Community and Technical College, Murray State University, UK Engineering (in Paducah) and others to purchase updated equipment and provide for the training needs of the Purchase region in all five core Kentucky sectors.

They will train 455 adults and 2,326 students annually, an increase in training capacity by 448 and 269 respectively.

Each year, the partnership expects 976 students and adults to earn postsecondary

An exterior view of the Advanced Manufacturing Information Technology Center under construction at Jefferson Community Technical College in Louisville. The Kentucky Work Ready Skills Initiative awarded \$15.2 million to the project. State officials think private sector matches might exceed \$30 million.

or dual credits, 882 to pass the Kentucky Occupational Skills Standards Assessment (KOSSA) and/or the ACT WorkKeys skills assessment, 488 to earn other types of certifications, 65 to be involved in apprenticeships, and 30 to graduate from the Kentucky Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (KY FAME) program, a partnership of regional manufacturers that have implemented career pathway, apprenticeship-style educational programs.

"These kinds of partnerships, especially with the private-sector involvement, will bear fruit for a long time," Heiner said. "It used to be that a flat piece of land and a free building was the way to attract business. Today a trained workforce is the way."

Public/private collaboration is also required when it comes to funding.

"Applicants for KWRSI funding are required to provide at least a 10 percent match by local partners," Heiner said, "but many of the projects have far exceeded that."

For example, KWRSI awarded the KentuckianaWorks partnership in Louisville \$15.2 million to construct an advanced manufacturing center on the Jefferson Community and Technical College campus. Heiner said he expects the partnership's private-sector match to top \$30 million.

His expectation is that the projects will garner a collective \$150 million in private-sector funds to match the state's



Student Sheba Roberson hones her forklift operating skills at LIFT the TriState, a free logistics and warehousing training program. The 10-week job program offered by Freestore Foodbank in Northern Kentucky won a \$267,000 Kentucky Work Ready Skills Initiative grant to provide training in the fast-growing field.



\$100 million KWRSI investment over the next 24 months.

The advanced manufacturing facility is an example of how the projects lead to those sought-after employees. The new center will house flexible labs, classrooms and support areas, and will free up space to expand JCTC automotive technology programs. Expected to open in early 2020, the facility will provide equipment and space to train 2,752 adults and 750 students annually.

Collectively, the 40 projects will add more than 30,000 new technical training seats annually across the state.

"To put that in perspective," Heiner said, "the Future Skills report from the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics just came out. It shows that Kentucky will need to fill 80,000 jobs (annually) for the next five years. We are only graduating 50,000 from high school each year."

#### High demand and good pay

The need for KWRSI can be seen not only in raw statistics but by economic sector as well. Consider just the construction trades and narrow that down even more to just the construction trades in Northern Kentucky.

There alone, the construction trades – carpentry, electric, HVAC, plumbing, masonry,

facilities maintenance and welding – need 4,995 new and replacement workers each year, according to Brian Miller, executive vice president of the Home Builders Association of Northern Kentucky (HBA), which operates the Enzweiler Building Institute.

Miller said the industry is currently experiencing the greatest need for skilled construction-trade workers since the years immediately following World War II – yet only 700 people statewide are presently enrolled in construction-trades training.

KWRSI awarded the HBA partnership \$2.69 million to address this gap in Northern Kentucky. The funds will be used to rehabilitate, repurpose, expand and equip the Enzweiler Building Institute in Erlanger, and to rehabilitate and equip a second location in Alexandria.

The expanded Institute building will include masonry and welding labs as well as a lab for heavy diesel mechanics. The existing carpentry shop will double in size. A large events center will be repurposed to subdivide the space into four separate classrooms. The building will be renovated to accommodate greater attendance, and technology added throughout will include large smart boards, television displays and state-of-the art projection systems. The partnership also plans to purchase materials and tools for adult evening trades training - HVAC and plumbing, electric, carpentry, welding and masonry - at the Campbell County Area Technology Center in Alexandria.

"Although the project is about the facility, programming is what was important to the KWRSI committee," Miller said. "We plan to create a career pathway in facilities maintenance. We will also partner with area technology centers to feed young people into the technology center. We will be able to reach down to high school juniors and seniors. That will give them dual credit to go on and get an associate's degree in whatever they choose.

"We need people to fill all kinds of jobs, including business management. A lot of company owners are retiring or leaving. These careers pay good money and don't require a bachelor's degree. They can start out earning \$40,000 to \$60,000. Construction management pays around \$95,000. This is a great time for young people. They can jump into upper-middle-class wage jobs with zero college debt."



Executive Vice President, Home Builders Association of Northern Kentucky

### **COVER STORY**

#### First sets of trainees making an impact

This process does not have to take a long time, either, according to Heiner.

"Since we awarded the first Kentucky Work Ready Skills Initiative projects a year ago, the pace of activity across Kentucky in schools, training centers, and business and industry has been remarkable," Heiner said. "It is astounding how quickly the KWRSI investment in training is making a difference in preparing Kentuckians for careers in high-demand technology fields. The ripple effect we are seeing in communities is exactly what we were hoping for when we envisioned this initiative, and this is just the beginning."

Eric Keeling, principal at Warren County Area Technology Center (ATC), said its \$557,726 KWRSI grant has already made an impact.



"Because of the new equipment, we have been able to step up to advanced robotics, machining, welding and automotive, and have a new computer lab,"

Eric Keeling, Principal, Warren County Area Technology Center

Keeling said. "Companies are seeing the new equipment and the quality of the program, and they are donating equipment and starting more apprenticeships. The grant has been a godsend for our students. The award has reinforced a culture of excellence, respect, integrity, character, commitment and leadership in our students and program."

In Northern Kentucky, the Freestore Foodbank is using its \$267,000 KWRSI award to train and certify unemployed and underemployed adults in the warehousing and logistics field through its free, 10-week LIFT the TriState program. The program couples hands-on training with classroom curriculum at Gateway Community and Technical College so that students graduate with credentials in logistics, power equipment, forklift and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

All graduates from the project's first class have secured jobs, with pay starting between \$14 and \$17 per hour plus full benefits. A second class recently graduated.

"The Work Ready Skills Initiative that Gov. Bevin promoted through these

Kurt Reiber, President/CEO, Freestore Food

grants really allowed us to jumpstart the LIFT the TriState program to where it is right now," said Kurt Reiber, president and CEO of Freestore Foodbank. "We would not have been able to provide the equipment and the racking system for our students to be able to get real hands-on experience in the logistics area without this funding,"

LIFT the TriState student Sheba Roberson, who is in the second class of trainees, was certified in forklift in just a few weeks, even though she cannot drive a car. The program has boosted her self-confidence.

"I love the hands-on experience that we get from the teachers. Everything we do brings me a step closer to my goal of having a career," Roberson said.

The Brighton Center in Newport is using its \$227,213 KWRSI grant to upgrade equipment to train students for health care as well as business and computer technology careers.

"Kentucky Work Ready has been an incredible opportunity for us to actually start a new skill and enhance our current skills in medical assisting and business and computer technology," said Talia Frye, director of workforce innovation for Brighton's Center for Employment Training (CET).

For student Rachael Schleper, who is training for a position in health t e c h n o l o g y a n d

administration, preparing for a new career has been a family endeavor. Schleper accompanied her 21-year-old son to the Kentucky Career Center, where they toured Brighton's Center CET and both enrolled in classes.

"I didn't realize how many opportunities were available for adults who have children and want to brush up on their skills and need an opportunity because they don't have skills for the workplace today," Schleper said. "They focus on your career but also your mental health. They want to support you in every area of your life, not just learning a new skill, and I really appreciate that. "

#### Expected to bear fruit long term

Frye said the KWRSI grant is meeting a rapidly growing workforce demand in the health-care field.

"In our region, health care is so important to the vitality of our community. In fact, the largest employer in Northern Kentucky is St. Elizabeth Healthcare: They employ over 8,000 people," Frye said. "Medical assisting is the second most in-demand occupation in Northern Kentucky, and it is the start of a great pathway because you can stack your education and credentials to move farther along and that's important."

Allen County Career and Technical Center received a \$328,700 KWRSI



Medical assistance trainee Julie Van Brunt, right, practices taking the blood pressure of fellow student Marlene Rogers at the Brighton Center's Center for Employment Training in Newport. The job program received a \$227,213 Kentucky Work Ready Skills Initiative grant to upgrade equipment to train students.

grant to purchase equipment for the school's automotive, IT, welding, industrial maintenance and nursing programs.

"Training on new equipment gives students a step up when they go to job interviews because they are using the same equipment in high school as the modern equipment in manufacturing jobs," said Brian Carter, assistant superintendent of operations at Allen County Schools.



Brian Carter, Assistant Superintendent of Operations, Allen County Schools

Because of the grant,

the career and technical center is now offering night classes for adults who want to obtain certified nursing assistant (CNA) credentials.

"Since this process began in 2016, the committee has reviewed the requests of more than 150 applicants, covering the majority of our counties," Heiner said. "This program will bear fruit long after it ends, giving students the means to find jobs in a world exploding with technology.

"The economic future of Kentucky is bright. As we develop an employer-led skill and career development system, we move away from the old days of train and pray that the training might lead to a job to a strategic plan equipping Kentuckians and industries with the skills to compete globally and build a stronger Kentucky economy."

For more information about KWRSI and the projects, go to: educationcabinet. ky.gov. ■

Debra Gibson Isaacs is a correspondent for The Lane Report. She can be reached at editorial@lanereport.com.



MAY 2018

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Employment

Training'



## WKU has been named among the nation's **Top Fulbright Producing Institutions**

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Laura Allen Edgewood







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## THE LANE LIST

### **KENTUCKY'S MBA PROGRAMS**

Where to get an accredited master of business administration degree in the commonwealth

T'S a form of golden ticket that thousands of you, our readers, hold: the master of business administration degree, created a century ago when companies wanted scientific approaches to management. Year in and year out, it is the most sought after credential in business, in Kentucky, the nation and the world. There are some two dozen programs across commonwealth. This month's Lane List offers details on all of them: their specialized tracks, the time and place commitments required, the cost, admission standards and accreditation.

| Accredita | tion  |
|-----------|---|
| AACSB:    | Association to Advance<br>Collegiate Schools of Business<br>International |
| ACBSP:    | Accreditation Council for<br>Business Schools and Programs                |
| IACBE:    | International Assembly for<br>Collegiate Business Education               |
| SACS:     | Southern Association of<br>Colleges and Schools                           |
| SACSCOC:  | Southern Association of<br>Colleges and Schools<br>Commission on Colleges |



#### **PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES**

| INSTITUTION<br>Location  | CONCENTRATIONS/TRACKS   | MINIMUM CREDIT HOURS;<br>TIME COMMITMENT;<br>CAMPUS REQUIREMENT   | COST  | GMAT<br>REQUIREMENT   | ACCREDITATION     |
|--|---|---|---|---|-------------------|
| University of Kentucky/<br>University of Louisville<br>Joint Executive MBA<br>Lexington and Louisville | Executive skills for mid- to<br>C-level professional.   | 46 credit hours. 20 months.<br>Classes on campus Fridays/<br>Saturdays – half at UK, half<br>at UofL.   | \$67,500 total<br>program cost,<br>paid in four equal<br>installments.  | No GMAT<br>required.  | AACSB and<br>SACS |
| Eastern Kentucky<br>University<br>Richmond   | General   | 36 credit hours. Two-,<br>three- and four-year plans.<br>All classes on campus<br>during evening hours. | To be determined.   | 450 GMAT.   | AACSB             |
| Kentucky State<br>University<br>Frankfort  | Accounting, management,<br>marketing, finance, public<br>administration, computer<br>science.                                       | 30 hours. Length based on scheduling. Classes on campus.  | Not available.  | 400 GMAT, or<br>286 GRE<br>combined<br>(verbal and<br>quantitative)<br>score. | ACBSP             |
| Morehead State<br>University<br>Morehead   | General; health systems<br>management track requires<br>33 semester credit hours.   | 30 semester credit hours.<br>Length varies. No<br>on-campus requirement.                                | \$579 per credit<br>hour or \$1,737<br>per course;<br>\$17,370 total.   | GMAT<br>required, but<br>GRE is also<br>accepted.                             | AACSB             |
| <b>Murray State University</b><br>Murray   | General, business analytics,<br>global communication,<br>economic development,<br>finance, marketing, human<br>resource management. | 30 credit hours. 12 months.<br>Campus class available but<br>not required.                              | \$640 per credit<br>hour (+\$75 per<br>online course<br>fee). Total cost:<br>\$15,840 on<br>campus; online<br>only: \$22,410. | GMAT or GRE.<br>Waived for<br>applicants who<br>meet certain<br>criteria.     | AACSB             |

| INSTITUTION<br>LOCATION                                 | CONCENTRATIONS/TRACKS   | MINIMUM CREDIT HOURS;<br>TIME COMMITMENT;<br>CAMPUS REQUIREMENT   | соѕт   | GMAT<br>REQUIREMENT   | ACCREDITATION     |
|---|---|---|--|---|-------------------|
| Northern Kentucky<br>University<br>Highland Heights     | General   | 33 credit hours. Two years.<br>Courses are five weeks and<br>offered in face-to-face,<br>online and hybrid formats.   | \$627 per credit<br>hour.  | GMAT/GRE is<br>not required<br>for applicants<br>showing<br>competency<br>and readiness.                                  | AACSB             |
| University of Kentucky<br>One-Year MBA<br>Lexington     | General MBA with<br>professional certifications/<br>workshops in project<br>management, global<br>commerce and strategy, and<br>Lean Six Sigma Green Belt.  | 51 credit hours (39 core<br>and 12 elective, including a<br>study abroad course).<br>11-month June to May<br>program. On-campus MBA<br>classes, but all prerequisites<br>can be completed online.   | \$33,486 Kentucky<br>resident tuition  | GMAT or<br>GRE, can be<br>waived for<br>professional<br>experience,<br>terminal<br>degrees and<br>military<br>experience. | AACSB and<br>SACS |
| University of Kentucky<br>Professional MBA<br>Lexington | General MBA with<br>certifications in project<br>management, global<br>commerce and strategy, and<br>Lean Six Sigma Green Belt.<br>Professional MBA (Leaders in<br>Healthcare) option tailored<br>for current health-care<br>professionals. | 36 credit hours (27 core<br>and nine elective,<br>including a study-abroad<br>course). 20-month or<br>32-month tracks; fall and<br>spring semesters. Course<br>meets on campus once a<br>week 6-8 p.m. On-campus<br>MBA classes, but all<br>prerequisites can be<br>completed online. | \$34,622 Kentucky<br>resident tuition<br>(two-year track) or<br>\$33,458 (three-<br>year track). | GMAT or<br>GRE, can be<br>waived for<br>professional<br>experience,<br>terminal<br>degrees and<br>military<br>experience. | AACSB and<br>SACS |
| University of Louisville<br>Full-Time MBA<br>Louisville | General MBA.  | 45 credit hours, paid<br>internship track or non-<br>internship track. 13<br>months. Classes on UofL<br>Belknap Campus  | \$32,000 tuition<br>and includes an<br>international trip.                                       | GMAT<br>required.   | AACSB and<br>SACS |



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## **THE LANE LIST**

| INSTITUTION<br>Location   | CONCENTRATIONS/TRACKS                   | MINIMUM CREDIT HOURS;<br>TIME COMMITMENT;<br>CAMPUS REQUIREMENT  | COST   | GMAT<br>REQUIREMENT  | ACCREDITATION     |
|---|---|--|--|--|-------------------|
| University of Louisville<br>Professional (Part-time)<br>MBA<br>Louisville | General MBA.                            | 45 credit hours. 20 months.<br>Classes on UofL Belknap<br>Campus.  | \$32,000 tuition<br>includes an<br>international trip.   | GMAT<br>required.  | AACSB and<br>SACS |
| University of Louisville<br>Entrepreneurship MBA<br>Louisville            | General with focus on entrepreneurship. | 45 credit hours. 20 months.<br>Classes on UofL Belknap<br>Campus.  | \$32,000 tuition<br>includes an<br>international trip.   | GMAT<br>required.  | AACSB and<br>SACS |
| Western Kentucky<br>University<br>Bowling Green                           | General, professional.                  | 30 credit hours. One year<br>full-time MBA; one to five<br>years online; five<br>semesters for PMBA. Full-<br>time MBA is on campus,<br>PMBA meets off campus in<br>Bowling Green every other<br>Saturday. | Full-time<br>accelerated MBA:<br>\$18,210 for<br>Kentucky<br>residents, \$26,970<br>for nonresidents<br>(domestic);<br>Professional MBA:<br>\$23,304; online<br>MBA: \$24,410<br>(estimated 3-5<br>percent tuition<br>increase for 2018-<br>2019). | GMAT<br>required for<br>full-time and<br>online<br>programs but<br>not PMBA,<br>which requires<br>five years of<br>experience. | AACSB             |

#### **PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES**

| INSTITUTION, LOCATION                        | CONCENTRATIONS/TRACKS  | MINIMUM CREDIT HOURS;<br>TIME COMMITMENT;<br>CAMPUS REQUIREMENT        | СОЅТ   | GMAT<br>REQUIREMENT  | ACCREDITATION |
|--|--|--|--|----------------------|---------------|
| Sullivan University<br>Lexington, Louisville | Accounting, health-care<br>management, hospitality<br>management, public<br>management, strategic<br>human capital management. | 48 credit hours. 18-month<br>program. Offered on<br>campus and online. | \$590 per credit<br>hour, \$28,320<br>total program<br>cost. | No GMAT<br>required. | SACSCOC       |

#### PRIVATE NONPROFIT COLLEGES

| INSTITUTION, LOCATION                              | CONCENTRATIONS/TRACKS  | MINIMUM CREDIT HOURS;<br>TIME COMMITMENT;<br>CAMPUS REQUIREMENT   | соѕт   | GMAT<br>REQUIREMENT   | ACCREDITATION |
|--|--|---|--|---|---------------|
| Asbury University<br>Wilmore                       | Traditional MBA, nonprofit, accounting   | 36 credit hours. As few as<br>20 months in a traditional<br>cohort; 4+1 for bachelor's<br>and MBA in five years and<br>for MBA Accounting; own-<br>pace tracks available.<br>Classes available online;<br>one week on campus for<br>capstone presentations and<br>graduation. | \$595 per credit<br>hour.  | No GMAT but<br>Peregrine test<br>required.  | SACSCOC       |
| Bellarmine University<br>Louisville                | Marketing, management,<br>innovation, finance, analytics   | 39 credit hours. 12-22<br>months. On campus and<br>some hybrid classes.   | \$760 per credit<br>hour in fall 2018<br>plus \$2,000<br>international trip<br>and \$1,490 course<br>fees. | Combination<br>of GMAT or<br>GRE and<br>cumulative<br>GPA.  | AACSB taken   |
| <b>Brescia University</b><br>Owensboro             | General.   | 33 credit hours. 18 months.<br>On-campus completion of<br>unmet prerequisites.  | \$500 per credit<br>hour.  | No GMAT<br>required but<br>minimum 2.5<br>GPA   | SACS          |
| <b>Campbellsville University</b><br>Campbellsville | Accounting, church<br>management, health-care<br>management, human-<br>resource management,<br>information technology,<br>international business,<br>marketing | 36 credit hours. 12<br>months. Campus<br>requirements same as<br>online; there is an<br>international component.  | \$479 per credit<br>hour, \$17,244<br>base program<br>cost.  | GRE or GMAT<br>waived if the<br>student has a<br>master's or a<br>bachelor's (with<br>3.0 GPA) from<br>an accredited<br>school. | IACBE         |

| INSTITUTION, LOCATION   | CONCENTRATIONS/TRACKS   | MINIMUM CREDIT HOURS;<br>TIME COMMITMENT;<br>CAMPUS REQUIREMENT                        | соѕт   | GMAT<br>REQUIREMENT                   | ACCREDITATION                           |
|---|---|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| Midway University<br>Midway   | General, equine studies,<br>health-care administration,<br>tourism and event<br>management, sports<br>management  | 30 credit hours, 36 with<br>specialization. 12 to 15<br>months. 100 percent<br>online. | \$560 per credit<br>hour, \$16,800<br>program cost<br>(\$20,160 with<br>concentration).            | No GMAT<br>required.                  | SACSCOC (not<br>specific to<br>program) |
| Spalding University<br>Louisville   | General, organizational<br>leadership, health-care<br>management, accounting  | \$625 per credit hour,<br>\$20,625 base program cost.                                  | 33 credit hours.<br>As few as 10<br>months. Fully<br>face-to-face or<br>entirely online.           | No GMAT<br>required.                  | SACSCOC                                 |
| <b>Thomas More College</b><br>Crestview Hills,<br>Ky., and Blue Ash, Ohio | General.  | 39 credit hours. 18 months.<br>Online or in classroom: 39                              | \$505 per credit<br>hour, \$20,280<br>base cost.   | GMAT<br>required if<br>GPA below 2.7. | SACSCOC and ACBSP                       |
| University of the<br>Cumberlands<br>Williamsburg                          | General, accounting, strategic<br>management. Coming online<br>this summer and fall:<br>entrepreneurship, marketing,<br>nonprofit administration and<br>health-care administration. | 30 credit hours. 18 months.<br>No campus requirement.                                  | \$315 per credit<br>hour, \$9,450 base<br>program cost plus<br>\$50 technology<br>fee per bi-term. | No GMAT<br>required.                  | SACSCOC                                 |
| University of Pikeville<br>(UPIKE)<br>Pikeville                           | General.  | 36 credit hours. 12 months.<br>All online.   | \$450 per credit<br>hour, \$14,796 base<br>program cost.   | No GMAT<br>required.                  | SACSCOC                                 |
| <b>Union College</b><br>Barbourville                                      | General.  | 30 credit hours. Less than<br>two years. 100 percent<br>online.                        | \$340 per credit<br>hour, \$10,200 base<br>program cost.   | No GMAT<br>required.                  | SACSCOC                                 |

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## **HIGHER EDUCATION**



# Smart Strategies at Midway University

President creates revival by going coed, adding sports, asking more of everyone

#### **BY RUSS BROWN**

ESPITE a long career in higher education, five years ago Dr. John Marsden may have been seriously questioning not only his intelligence but his judgment a few months after becoming president of what was then Midway College, a 165-year-old all-girls school in Central Kentucky.

But he has long since overcome such doubts and certainly isn't leery anymore after transforming Midway into a feelgood success story while guiding it to explosive and impressive growth in virtually every area.

As a first-time college president, Marsden initially was as excited and positive about his new job as a Cincinnati Reds rookie making his Major League debut. Then reality hit. Midway appeared to be more than midway to extinction.

Hired on Feb. 1, 2013, Marsden said he got a much clearer picture of the scope of the turnaround that was needed early in the summer when he saw the dire financial straits the

school faced. Midway had a severe cashflow shortage and was borrowing millions just to make payroll and pay vendors.

There were numerous other significant problems too, including declining enrollment, poor community relations, an identity crisis and critical



Dr. John Marsden, President, Midway University Midway University Board of Trustees Chair Donna Moore Campbell, left, and President Dr. John P. Marsden, right, award a degree to Esther Tsumba at the May 2015 commencement.

looming deadlines on debt refinancing and a re-accreditation application to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), a lengthy process that hadn't even been started.

"I didn't realize, nor did the board (of trustees), how much overhaul was needed," Marsden said. "I knew Midway had a failed school of pharmacy, but I didn't know how severe the financial issues were. I did not know it was a turnaround institution.

"It became a process of discovery. I kept uncovering things over a period of several months. Of course, I made a commitment to the institution and had moved my family here, but it turned out to be a lot harder job than I ever imagined."

It also has turned out to be highly successful and likely one of the most remarkable university makeovers in Kentucky history.

#### Women-only origin no longer viable

First, some nuts and bolts: Midway is an independent, liberal-arts school related by covenant to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with an overall enrollment of 1,200, 80 percent of them from Kentucky, including online students. It offers two- and four-year degree programs in 30 majors or areas of concentration, including nursing, business, equine studies, English, math, marketing, biology and teacher education. Its campus is on a working horse farm on 200 bucolic acres overlooking the small, historic town of Midway, which is halfway between Lexington and Frankfort (hence the name Midway).

Marsden, 52, was recognized for his achievements earlier this year when he was selected to receive the Excellence in Education Vision Award by the Bluegrass Tomorrow organization.

A first-generation American who was raised on Long Island, Marsden is the son of Irish immigrants who met in New York City. Before coming to Midway, he was provost at Barton College in Wilson, N.C. He received his master of science and doctorate from the University of Michigan and holds graduate credentials from the University of Arizona and Carnegie Mellon University.

Midway University has an interesting and unique history. It originally opened as the Kentucky Female Orphan School in 1849, with one teacher and 16 female students on five acres of land. In the early years there were four grades that essentially provided an intensive high school education. Later it became a junior college and then a fully accredited baccalaureate-granting institution as Midway College, an all-girls school meant to empower disadvantaged women with an education in the field of teaching.

Under Marsden's guidance, the school rebranded to Midway University on July 1, 2015, and then became coed when it admitted men to its day program for the first time for the fall semester of 2016. Men now make up 32 percent of the traditional undergraduate students.

"Our women's college had shrunk to a tiny 260 (traditional) students," Marsden said. "Only 2 percent of students in the U.S. desire a single-sex education, so there was no market to draw from. It wasn't financially viable. Since going coed, enrollment (on campus) has almost doubled to just under 500."

Kathryn Lawler, a senior business major from Scott County High School who is also a member of Midway's golf team, described the change to coed "really interesting."

"We were used to going to class in sweatshirts and boxers and not dressing up or looking nice," Lawler said

of herself and her female classmates. "When boys came, the level of dress and makeup went up. You never see casual in classes now; every girl puts on a little bit of mascara or something."

In other words, it's a new day for Midway – and has been since the day Marsden arrived.

#### Financial candor creates commitment

First, of course, he had to solve the cashflow problem, which he did by restructuring the debt and ramping up fundraising and repairing relationships with donors.

"If you don't have money it's hard to keep going," he says. "Rebuilding relationships takes awhile. People want to support a winner, and when an institution is struggling it's difficult. Now we're raising millions to support student growth, which has been pretty rapid."

Marsden also made it a priority to reorganize Midway's faculty and staff to make sure they were committed to the school's mission and values and that they were "there for our students and not themselves."

One of the newcomers to the faculty is Rebecca Briley, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Communications, Humanities and Arts/English, who accepted a lower salary than her qualifications demanded because she shared Marsden's vision for Midway.

"Dr. Marsden informed me of the dire financial situation," Briley said. "I was shocked and concerned by his news, but I appreciated his candor and told him I would commit to working with him to get Midway back on its feet, as joining the faculty was important to me."

Briley says she and other faculty and staff dedicated themselves to tightening

personal belts for the benefit of saving the institution.

"Since then it has been my pleasure to watch Midway stabilize and develop from the historical all-girls college to a progressive coed university," Briley said. "Under Dr. Marsden's excellent leadership and careful fiscal attention,



Rebecca Briley, Chair, Department of Communications, Humanities and Arts/English



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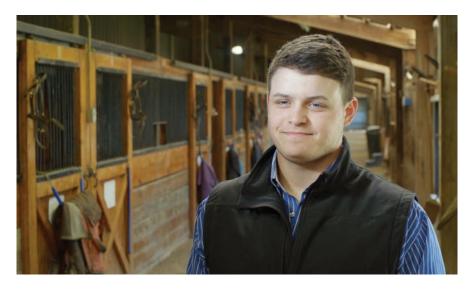
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#### **HIGHER EDUCATION**



everyone is beginning to realize the reward. I am glad I came on board when I did and stuck it out through some lean years, as I believe the best is yet to come. Midway has a bright future."

A major turning point was going coed and at the same time admitting over 100 students from St. Catharine College in Springfield, Ky., when it closed in 2016 due to financial problems.

"All of a sudden, we had great momentum," Marsden said.

#### Good management attracts partners

Koy Lindsey, a junior from Elizabethtown who graduated from LaRue County High School, is one of the student-athletes absorbed into Midway when St. Catharine closed after 95 years as a college. He was the first male to join Midway's equine management program and is also the regular catcher for the Eagles' baseball team. He was surprised by how much he liked his new school.

"I love it," Lindsey said. "It was a really big change, so it was a little rough in the beginning. It took awhile to get settled in, but since then everything has been great. I like the fact it's on a horse farm with 35 horses. I've been around rodeo, horses, cattle and farming my whole life, so it's a really good fit. It's right up my alley. I've been fortunate and I really appreciate what the people here have done for us. I meet with parents all the time to tell them why their kids should come here."

Aside from the board acting boldly and quickly to absorb the influx of St. Catharine students, another big factor in Midway's rebirth was reconnecting with the town, largely through co-sponsorship with Midway Renaissance of the Francisco's Farm Arts Festival. The festival, which moved back to campus in 2014 after a three-year absence, will be held May 19-20 this year. Marsden has also opened the campus more frequently to other events, including forums, lectures and political programs and has encouraged student volunteer work.

"When Dr. Marsden arrived at Midway University, he inherited an organization that was doomed to close," said John Hayes, an academic advisor and recruiter for Midway University. "In the business of re-organization, we refer to this as a DOA (dead on arrival) and few, if any, survive to tell this



John Hayes, Academic Advisor, Midway University

story when they are on a terminal curve. Dr. Marsden brought a wealth of educational and management background to the university. Koy Lindsey, a junior from Elizabethtown, was the first male student to join Midway's equine management program after transferring from St. Catherine College.

"His passion and dedication to success was untiring in serving the university, seeking out the counsel of others, and as an encourager in helping people apply their talents and expertise. Dr. Marsden was able to develop strategic delivery approaches for services and operations, which totally changed the operations of our campus services and changed the course of Midway University's future."

Midway Mayor Grayson Vandegrift says the community response to Midway under Marsden's leadership and changes has been enthusiastic and productive, pleasing citizens and supporting local businesses.



Vandegrift, Mayor, City of Midway

"I believe that Midway M University and the City of of Midway are enjoying

some of the best town/gown relations we've had in a very long time," Vandegrift says. "Dr. Marsden and his team are constantly keeping us in the loop on their progress, and we make sure to extend them the same courtesy. I have lunch with him and his leadership team every few months to go over new initiatives we're both working on, and if possible, how we can work on them together."

Vandegrift said those sessions recently bore fruit in a cost-sharing program to renovate the girls' softball field, which is owned by the city but used mostly by the university under a lease agreement.

"We've also worked together on city events and economic development to best serve our community," Vandegrift said. "Students from the university now routinely volunteer to help us mulch trails and make other improvements in our recently renovated city park. I'm very

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grateful for the willingness and eagerness to collaborate that the university has exhibited under Dr. Marsden's leadership."

#### Winning with sports

Another of Marsden's ambitious, highly successful initiatives involves athletics, where he has overseen the expansion from 90 or so student-athletes to 340, competing in 17 sports during this academic year. Sports include women's basketball, men's and women's golf, baseball and women's tennis, all competing in the River States Conference as a member of NAIA Division II.

Midway will add men's wrestling, men's volleyball and women's track and field for the 2018-19 school year, along with incorporating dance into its existing cheer program. Furthermore, a campaign is underway to raise funds to build a baseball park on campus, expand the student center and auxiliary gym, and upgrade residence halls.

"This isn't necessarily build-it-so-theywill-come," Marsden said. "It's build it so they will stay."

Lawler says she originally chose Midway for her college golf career because she liked coach Otis Smith, who she calls "absolutely fantastic." But she said she quickly learned there is much more to love about Midway University.

"It's a beautiful campus, and I've realized how wonderful a small-school atmosphere is," Lawler said. "I went to one of the biggest high schools in the state and on graduation day I still didn't know half of my class. Here, I know every single person I pass on campus. Everybody. People are fantastic.

"And I love the fact that they want to do great things. Faculty and staff are so set on student success. They're not just trying to get students in and out; they care about how we're doing and our plans for the future. Dr. Marsden has definitely pushed us to move forward in leaps and bounds. He has really impacted this school in a huge way."

And there's more to come. Midway is currently going through a new strategic planning process, but Marsden isn't quite sure where it will all lead just yet.

"We don't have that grand vision yet to go public," he said. "It's very hard to talk about where you'll be in five, 10 or After having been a women-only school for more than 160 years, Midway University in Woodford County went coed in 2016, added more sports programs and absorbed some 100 students from St. Catharine University. Its on-campus enrollment has doubled. It has more than 1,200 students including those who study online.

15 years because there's so much change and you have to adapt so quickly."

One thing Marsden does know, however, is that unlike the situation he discovered five years ago, Midway is definitely heading in a positive trajectory. He favors this analogy for the school's progress:

"The car was accelerating toward the cliff," he said. "We put the brakes on, figured out what repairs were needed, got the car gassed up, turned around and going in the right direction."

That's no small accomplishment considering that when Marsden got into the driver's seat, it was a car that appeared headed for the junkyard.

Russ Brown is a correspondent for The Lane Report. He can be reached at editorial@lanereport.com.



## **PUBLIC POLICY**



# A Four-Day Grand Finale

2018 General Assembly crammed in pension reform, state budget, tax reform, veto overrides and bill fixes

#### **BY SEAN CUTTER AND JAMES HIGDON**

HE first three months of the 2018 legislative session now seem like prologue: The sexual harassment scandals and shakeups within House leadership that informed the opening weeks of the session were left in the rearview mirror by a grand finale that included pension reform, a state budget, tax reform, vetoes, veto overrides and fixes to bills that were passed earlier in the session – all within the last four legislative days.

To some extent, the process became as much the focus as the policies themselves, as a seemingly more engaged public witnessed firsthand how the "Schoolhouse Rock" version of 'sausage making' is largely discarded by General Assembly once they are staring down the clock.

Tax reform began as a straightforward revenue bill (HB366) to balance the budget, but it grew to encompass major tax policy shifts over a series of behindclosed-doors meetings prior to the veto recess. The legislature passed it after being in the public domain for mere hours, the governor vetoed it, then legislators overrode. House and Senate leaders, acknowledging the need to change the bill over the veto break but unable to make further changes to it, amended a new bill altogether that superseded HB366. HB487 was passed on the last day of session and is now law.

It flattens the state individual and corporate tax rates to 5 percent, phases

Rep. Suzanne Miles, R-Owensboro, speaks April 13 on overriding the Governor's veto of House Bill 200, the state budget bill, in the House.

out the inventory tax, moves the state to a single-sales-factor corporate tax apportionment, suspends or caps several tax credits, requires combined filing among business groups, expands the sales tax to several services, and increases the per-pack cigarette tax by 50 cents, among other changes. The legislature estimates the bill will generate \$400 million over the biennium, a number disputed by the governor's budget director.

The state budget (HB200) faced similar circumstances following the governor's veto. The legislature overrode the veto, and changes to the law were included in a new bill, HB265. The combination of generating new revenue in HB487, draining the "rainy day" fund and preserving some of the governor's proposed reductions balanced the budget without cuts to public education. As a result, public education advocacy groups, who were organized and motivated to rally against pension reforms, came out in support of the budget and revenue measures in the session's final days.

Pension reform, which became law with the signing of SB151, drew the ire of educators statewide. The law largely held harmless existing employees and retirees across most state retirement systems, but it puts future teachers into a hybrid cash balance plan, which new state and county employees have had since 2014. Such plans guarantee a minimal rate of return during periods of market downturns.

Pensions, budget and tax reform were considered a collective financial threelegged stool for purposes of final legislative negotiations, but other meaningful items were considered over



Sen. Brandon Smith, R-Hazard, speaks on overriding the Governor's veto of House Bill 200, the state budget bill, in the Senate.

House Speaker Pro Tem David Osborne, R-Prospect, applauds the end of the 2018 General Assembly session on April 14.

the 60-day session. Workers' compensation reform (HB2) passed following defeat last year. Tort reform was filed as a constitutional amendment (SB2), and it did not get through the Senate. However, medical peer review panels (HB4) are now law. The General Assembly passed a balanced road plan (HB202), but they did not act on a proposed 10-cent increase in the motor fuels tax (HB609).

It may take some time to ultimately score this session. The General Assembly passed a pension reform measure that doesn't cut the unfunded liability in the short term but will likely reduce the state's long-term public-pension risk by making changes to future hires. The new two-year budget funds the pension systems and perpupil public school spending at unprecedented levels, but does not reflect commensurate investments in higher education and other areas of state government. Tax reform places Kentucky on a more competitive footing with its peer states, but as always, there are winners



and losers any time substantial revisions to the code are made.

By passing a budget, the General Assembly appears to have headed off the need for a special session, although it is completely within the governor's purview to call one. It is also within the governor's ability to make budget reductions without legislative input if tax receipts do not meet their budgeted amounts, a scenario his office predicted while the floor debate on the revenue bill veto override was going on. Regardless of whether a special session takes place, the legislature is setting the table for "tax reform 2.0" in 2019 by establishing a task force to review the voluminous tax breaks and incentives that may negatively impact overall general fund returns.

Sean Cutter is director and James Higdon is a principal with MML&K Government Solutions.

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# **Repurposing Lives and Timber**

Nathan Brown finds unexpected success in salvaging old wood

RMED with a master's degree in international business management from University of Kentucky's Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce, Nathan Brown assumed he would be on the corporate track. It turned out, though, that his true nature was more suited to entrepreneurship.

In 2002 Brown co-founded Patriot Tax International with an immigration attorney, a company they sold to Jackson Hewitt in 2009. Brown then got his real estate license, and one project in particular involved taking down a large barn in Fayette County. At the urging of a friend, he took the 100-yearold timbers and put them in his own house as exposed beams. He used reclaimed wood in other real estate projects and collected it until he had a warehouse full of wood. By 2011 he was advertising the lumber on eBay and Craigslist and called his venture Reclaimed American Hardwood.

"I realized there was a robust need domestically and internationally for reclaimed wood," Brown said. In January 2013 he rebranded as Old World Timber and the company has evolved into something larger than he ever imagined.

The business sells wood wholesale and retail. Finished products include

flooring, wallboards and barn doors, while custom projects range from flower pots and cutting boards to nightstands and kitchen tables, all made out of reclaimed wood, most of which is at least a century old. Brown often works with residential owners who want to preserve the integrity of flooring or beams in their historical homes.

"We are in the fashion business," Brown said. "Our material happens to be wood."

Old World Timber projects can be seen in Lexington in the food hall at the Summit at Fritz Farm and at the Frazier History Museum in Louisville. Clients who are developers and designers are as far away as San Francisco, Chicago and New York, and until late last year around 90 percent of the company's business was outside of Kentucky. A new 5,000-s.f. showroom that opened this spring on Versailles Road in Lexington will be an opportunity to engage more with local customers. The company's offices and manufacturing plant are located in two old metal tobacco warehouses.

Much of the timber comes from a 150-mile radius of Lexington. There are thousands of empty barns in Kentucky that once stored and dried tobacco, as well as cotton mills in the Southeast and industrial mills in the From left, Garrett Ebel, Liz Brown and Nathan Brown of Old World Timber unload and inspect wood they'll use to create everything from flooring to home decor.

Northeast. Many of these structures were built in the 1800s with massive timbers instead of steel.

"Those timbers are the ones we end up salvaging," Brown said.

Within the past couple of years, the company has started importing reclaimed timber from Africa and Europe. Brown's brother, Stevie, lives in Northern Africa and is responsible for global sourcing of timber. Their sister Sarah-Marie answers the toll-free line from her home in Ohio, and younger sister Liz Brown is senior sales executive in Lexington. Honorary sibling Garrett Ebel is also a senior sales exec.

The vision and mission of Old World Timber is Reclaim – Redeem – Repurpose.

"We're doing that with the wood and our own lives," Brown said.

Many of his company's employees have backgrounds of addiction or incarceration. Additionally, Old World has a small manufacturing operation inside a correctional complex in Eastern Kentucky.

"We are privileged to hire quite a few of them when they've served out their time or are out on parole and offer them employment before they leave the prison," he said.—*Kathie Stamps* 



Old World Timber is run by Liz Brown, Garrett Ebel and Nathan Brown.

# Missing Ingredient Leads Cancer Survivor to Turn Entrepreneur



Heidi Fuller has opened a boutique in Louisville to help women who are battling cancer feel better about their appearance.

EIDI Fuller stumbled into entrepreneurship because she didn't want anyone else to go

through the same demoralizing experience she did after being diagnosed with stage 3 uterine cancer in September 2015. Devastated over losing her long blonde hair after chemotherapy, she went to purchase a wig.

"At this vulnerable time, I did not receive the warmth and love I needed during the wig selection process," Fuller said. Back home with her purchase, she couldn't really figure out how to wear it, so she went back to the store for assistance, only to be told "You can't return it!"

Fuller just knew there had to be something better: a store with a caring service for people going through cancer. She journaled about what such a space would look like.

In April 2016 she was in remission, and three months later she saw some amazing cancer carecentered items in Atlanta. She thought about opening an online boutique and toyed with the idea for quite a while. In spring 2017 as she was planning a sabbatical from her corporate role

with Starbucks, Fuller wound up leaving the company and became an entrepreneur. She opened the doors to Awakenings Boutique in May 2017.

Located off Chamberlain Lane in Louisville, the 1,600-s.f. store specializes in wigs and healing essentials. Fuller carries breast-cancer clothing like bathing suits for women who have had a mastectomy; natural skincare products and essential oils; cancer-recovery items and caregiver products, along with specialty gifts. She has two employees.

Everyone who walks in to Awakenings is greeted warmly. Fuller spends one-onone time consulting with wig buyers to help them find the right one. She will cut and style a wig upon request, and has been known to go to customers' homes for consultations when someone is not feeling well enough to come to the store.

Fuller has donated more than \$8,000 to the American Cancer Society, Friend for Life Cancer Support Network and other local organizations. She has given 80 wigs, so far, to Norton Cancer Institute, and she's partnering with Gilda's Club and the Kentucky Chapter of Susan G. Komen.

"Awakenings is my heart and soul," Fuller said. "I have built it out of love to inspire and instill hope for everyone who walks through our doors. It's my mission and goal to lead this war against cancer and what cancer cannot take from us."—*Kathie Stamps* 



Awakenings Boutique specializes in wigs for women who have lost hair due to cancer treatments.



#### Meadery Set to Open at 3rd Turn Oldham Gardens

HEN Hive & Barrel Meadery opens this spring at 3rd Turn Oldham Gardens in Crestwood, it will represent a journey of sorts for co-owner Mike Pemberton.

The mead-maker started out with homebrew beer but became interested in mead in a place where many taste the honey-based beverage for the first time: at a Renaissance festival.

The IT professional's newfound fascination grew along with the resurgence of the drink in general – a 2017 report by the American Mead Makers Association showed that on average, a new meadery opens in the U.S. every three days and that 67 percent of meaderies here have been open five years or less.

Between 2013 and 2016, mead was the fastest-growing alcoholic beverage, according to a fool.com report, doubling in production. The number of meaderies in the U.S. is now approaching 500, and Hive & Barrel is part of that growth.

A beverage that dates back at least nine centuries, mead takes on many varieties and can sometimes contain alcohol content reaching near 20 percent – well above that of wine. But its smooth flavor and adaptability to other complementary flavors has it winning over palates.

Early batches at the meadery in Oldham County include maple syrup, peanut butter and jelly, chipotle pepper and traditional honey, with more planned. Label runs began recently, and batches so far have been roughly 50 barrels, so it will be, as Pemberton phrased it, a limited "premium product."

The complex also features an arm of 3rd Turn Brewery as well as a restaurant called Backside Grill, opening up the possibility for mead-themed special events.

"It's a great opportunity to do mead dinners," Pemberton said. "There's really no limit to what we can do. We're looking forward to all the options." —*Kevin Gibson* 

# MARKETING



## **BRANDING ENERGIZES**

Identifying, expressing your business' values creates a virtuous cycle

#### **BY BRAD FLOWERS**

fell for a clickbait article. The title was something like "The One Thing You Can Do to Improve Your Health in Your 40s." I was a little embarrassed at first. But it was actually pretty good.

The premise is that regular exercise creates a virtuous cycle. It raises your metabolism, which helps you control your weight, decreases risk of heart disease, and decreases risk of some cancers. It strengthens your bones and muscles. Exercise helps moderate symptoms of depression, improves cognitive functioning, and boosts energy levels. It is one activity that causes cascading positive outcomes.

Branding has a similar effect on your business. It is an investment in the culture of your organization that has cascading positive outcomes.

#### From exploratory to momentum

An effective branding process starts with talking about your brand to the people in your company. This in itself is energizing. Your employees and coworkers get the opportunity to say what they love about your company. They say why they wanted to work there in the first place. They also explain where there is room for improvement. And the process provides hope that these concerns will be addressed. Your marketing partner will conduct their own research concurrently with the exploratory meetings. They analyze your competitors. What do they do well, poorly? They look at other brands your customers are likely to interact with. What do they look like? How do they talk?

They get excited about the project. They can visualize your place in your industry and how you can more clearly show who you are to potential employees and clients.

Their excitement combined with your passion for your business creates a palpable sense of momentum. This momentum is important, but isn't fully realized until the next phase.

#### Strategy leads to confidence

Next, your marketing partner presents findings from their research and exploratory steps. They present who they think you are in terms of values and tones of voice. They articulate what you hope to accomplish with this effort: You are trying to stand out, fit in, or carve an entirely new niche.

This results in a strategy they use to make good aesthetic decisions. Maybe everyone in your industry is green, so they are going to explore a different palette. Or your employees are bought-in to the color red, so they recommend only tweaking it slightly, but not changing it. The people answering the phone say no one can pronounce your name, so they suggest a change. Every decision reinforces who you are and where you are going.

Those strategic agreements are the foundation for confidence. Most people don't know how to make decisions based around colors or typography. Having an agreed upon strategy builds that framework for providing feedback during the concept phase.

#### Launching tangible benefits

The concept is where momentum and confidence crystallize. Your marketing partner has established who you are with an articulation of values and tone. They have looked at your landscape. And, now the transformation becomes real. You have a visual identity and language system that accurately represents your organization. You imagine yourself as this better version of yourself. Like getting a new suit. Driving a new car. Except this isn't decoration. This really is you and it feels great.

This is where you realize some of the work you have put in. Your employees are more engaged. They treat your clients better, and they are more likely to tell their friends about your company. Your more engaged employees put in the extra time and effort to make your product better. This better product is valuable to your clients, leading to higher satisfaction.

Also, your employees have more pride in their work. They stay longer, reducing the cost of finding, training and retaining new people. They tell their friends about their work, giving you a solid pool of candidates when you need to hire.

To make it more tangible: Your website better represents you when you aren't there. Your social media sounds like it comes from the same place. The sales team has new marketing materials that better represent them. The tool is better, which makes the salesperson better, which helps the business close more deals. With more closed deals, you have more cash to hire better people who represent you – who again provide a better service to your client. All of this leaving you with more time to do what you do best.

It is a virtuous cycle.



Brad Flowers is partner in Bullhorn Creative, a full-service marketing agency with offices in Lexington and Washington, D.C.

# SPOTLIGHT ON THE ARTS



# Make Your Own Fun

Art workshops are a great way to create summer memories

#### **BY CHRIS CATHERS**

TTH the summer travel season rapidly approaching, it's the ideal time to think about how to make the arts part of your travel plans.

As Kentucky Travel Industry Association CEO Hank Phillips noted in a Lane Report interview last month, travelers have increasingly fallen out of love with "stop and stare" tourism. Instead, they prefer to immerse themselves in interactive experiences that by their very definition include activity and participation.

For an example of how to make that easy, we turn to our friends in Berea, one of Kentucky's notable communities for celebrating art and culture.

In July, Berea Tourism will present its annual Festival of Learnshops, a month of arts and skill workshops taught by master craftsmen from all over Kentucky. The festival invites visitors and local residents to learn more about the arts and crafts in Berea while joining the ranks of its vibrant arts community themselves. Learnshops cover a wide range of topics and skills, from traditional crafts such as jewelry making, painting, blacksmithing and culinary arts to modern and unique experiences such as podcasting, blogging, outdoor survival skills and storytelling.

"We have loved seeing how this program has grown to teach art and art appreciation to all of our participants," said

Berea Tourism Director Kerri Hensley. "While we often focus on Berea being 'Where Art's Alive,' we really want to help make art alive everywhere in our country, and the Festival of Learnshops is a great way for us to contribute to that goal."

Participants have come from 32 states and two countries for these Learnshops and stay in local hotels, dine at local restaurants, and shop at Berea's many arts and crafts galleries and shops. Many participants return year after year to further enhance their skills and reconnect with the community of artists and enthusiastic learners.

Kate Sprengnether, who is a staff member at the University of Kentucky Art Museum and a parent of one teen and one preteen, has experienced the Learnshops with her children. They attended a glassblowing lesson, where they learned how glass was made and had the opportunity to make their own glass art.

"At their ages, it is difficult to find activities that they both enjoy and that we want to do as a family," Sprengnether said. "Looking at things, like in an art gallery or history center, or passively learning is not enough. We are looking for opportunities to participate and engage in an activity. Those types of activities bring us closer as a family and create lasting memories.

Kentucky Tourism's suggestion for potential cultural heritage tourism

Cultural tourism opportunities seek to provide travelers with the experiences they can participate in and not just observe. Here, an artist instructs visitors at MAKE, a Paducah studio where customers can make their own works of art.

visitors is to broaden their ideas about culture, heritage and the arts.

"It's still about painting and sculpting, writing, creating pottery and music, but it's also much more," said Kentucky Tourism Commissioner Kristen Branscum. "It's watching the world's best bourbons being crafted, learning about how cars are designed and built, discovering new ways to experience food culture while honoring the unique history of regional foodways, and it's the experience of making your own pottery/painting/music as well as studying the work of others and taking the memories made back home.<sup>3</sup>

With that in mind, here are some suggestions Branscum has for visitors interested in planning a cultural heritage tourism trip:

Think about what you like, what you're interested in learning more about, and what you enjoy. Then, check the Kentucky Tourism website for listings of sites, trails, articles and videos, trip ideas and itineraries related to your interests.

Check out information on nichespecific tours that offer experiences focused on your interests. Louisville, Lexington and Northern Kentucky all offer various sightseeing and experiential tour opportunities, but don't overlook small communities, where there are many opportunities to see artisans at work and enjoy authentic experiences.



Chris Cathers is interim executive director of the Kentucky Arts Council.



Visitors get a peek inside the studio of a glass bead blower in Berea. The Madison County community has become known for its series of summer Learnshops, where guests can learn about an artist's process and make their own pieces of art.

# **EXPLORING KENTUCKY**



# Burgoo, Booze and Bungee

There's more to tiny Lawrenceburg than you might expect!

#### **BY KATHERINE TANDY BROWN**

DD title for a column, right? I mean, where in the world would you be likely to find such alliterative fun, all in one place? Well, that would be a mere 12 miles south of our state's capital city...in Lawrenceburg. With a population of just over 10,000, this Bluegrass town – known as the Burgoo Capital of the World – boasts two major distilleries on the Kentucky Bourbon Trail, two wineries and the only bungee business of its kind on the East Coast.

Let's start with that Kentucky specialty, burgoo. The old joke was that you put "everything that didn't make it across the road" in a big cauldron outdoors over a fire and cooked it for a few days till it was edible. But according to Diane Wells, president of the Anderson County Burgoo Festival (andersoncountyburgoo.com), theirs is a thick, tasty stew of beef, potatoes, limas, onions and carrots. This year's celebration, scheduled for Sept. 28-30, is the 25th annual event and you can expect a motorcycle show, burgoo cook-off, burgoo-eating contest, ugly lamp contest, live music and a beauty pageant.

Next is Lawrenceburg's bourbon connection. And quite an important one it is.

Jimmy Russell – dubbed the "Buddha of Bourbon" by his industry peers – has been making bourbon at Wild Turkey (wildturkeybourbon.com) for an amazing 60 years. His son Eddie joined him 35 years ago and the two are now Barrels of burgoo – a tasty stew of beef, potatoes, lima beans, onions and carrots – are the order of the day at the Anderson County Burgoo Festival.

co-master distillers. Two years ago, Academy Award-winning actor Matthew McConaughey signed on as Wild Turkey's creative director.

On a tour that takes visitors high on a hill overlooking the Kentucky River, you can learn the history of this world-famous distillery and how bourbon is made, smell that "angel share" in the air, wander past barrels of aging bourbon, then sip a bit of bourbon. Longbranch is a new collaboration between the younger Russell and McConaughey that's made with two filtrations, one with American white oak and the other with Texas mesquite.

Next on the Bourbon Trail is Four Roses Distillery (fourrosesbourbon.com). Celebrating its 130th anniversary, it's known for its Spanish mission-style architecture (circa 1910), a slew of industry awards and a history that dates back to the 1860s. When the brand's founder, Paul Jones Jr., fell for a beautiful Southern belle, he asked for her hand in marriage. She replied that if her answer were "yes," she'd wear roses to the grand ball. Happily for him, she arrived sporting a corsage of four red roses on her gown. He named his bourbon for his love.

At Four Roses visitors can see, taste and feel the distillation process. And, of course, have a taste of the good stuff.

If you're more a fan of the state's fruit of the vine, you're in luck. Set in the scenic rolling hills of Central Kentucky, Lovers Leap Vineyards and Winery (loversleapwine.com) is a working vineyard set on a 60-acre farm, 33 acres of which are grapes with 10 varietals, a bottling facility, meeting rooms, a spacious tasting room and 180-degree deck overlooking it all. Here you can experience the entire winemaking process from vine to bottle on a tour, sipping as you learn.

Nearby Rising Sons Home Farm Winery (risingsonswinery.com) is



located on a 45-acre, family-run farm and has 10 acres of grapes with seven varietals, with winemaking that reflects the family's 100-year-old Italian heritage. In addition to tours and tastings, Rising Sons also offers canvas painting and pottery painting events.

Catch a taste of Rising Sons at the Kentucky Derby WineFest May 2 on the Belvedere in Louisville.

If you're looking for an extreme sport experience, Vertigo Bungee (vertigobungee.net) is your ticket. The company owns the Young's High Bridge spanning the Kentucky River in Anderson County and offers three-day weekend jump opportunities from mid-May through October. You may want to swig a bit of bourbon first for courage.

And, it turns out Lawrenceburg actually features more "B's" than those listed above.

Stone Fence Tours, a company dedicated to spreading the word about Kentucky's rich and fascinating history, offers a Bourbon Baron Tour (stonefencestours.com) twice monthly from May through October. This heritage tour introduces two young Irishmen, James and John Ripy, who years ago relocated to the cliffs of the Kentucky River and began the Ripy Brothers' Distillery, which morphed into the current Wild Turkey facility. A Ripy descendant will lead you through the beautiful, 11,000-s.f. Ripy Mansion. You'll stroll down Lawrenceburg's "whiskey row" to learn of other prominent distillers of the era, and end up at a tour and tasting at Wild Turkey.

For a palate cleanser, stop by Bauer's Candies (bauerscandy.com) for a treat. Home of the famous caramelmarshmallow Modjeskas, Bauer's candy line can be viewed through a showroom window, where you can watch these luscious confections – named for a for a 1890s-era Polish actress – being handdipped and hand-wrapped. Current owner Anna Bauer is a fourthgeneration candy maker whose greatgrandfather in 1889 began making the caramel biscuits that became Modjeskas. No doubt some will follow you home.

On an odder note, betcha didn't know that Anderson County has had more reported sightings of Bigfoot than any other Kentucky county. To celebrate that distinguished statistic, Lawrenceburg presents Wildman Days (wildmandays.com), featuring celebrity guests, entertainment and of course,



Wild Turkey Master Distillers Jimmy Russell (left) and Eddie Russell (right) with actor Matthew McConaughey, who has joined Wild Turkey as its creative director.

lots of food to make your feet grow. This year's event is scheduled for June 1-3.

Way bigger than Bigfoot, the "World's Longest Yard Sale" (127sale. com) stretches 690 miles from Hudson, Mich., to Gadsden, Ala., passing right through Lawrenceburg. The 127 Sale is slated for the first Thursday in August through the following Sunday.

Find more info at visitlawrenceburgky. com or (502) 598-3127. ■

Katherine Tandy Brown is a correspondent for The Lane Report. She can be reached at editorial@lanereport.com.



# Together

It's how we help Kentuckians live healthier lives.



# Murry Family Donates \$1M for Lexington Park Project

Major park project that is expected to transform downtown Lexington has received a \$1 million donation from the E. E. Murry Family Foundation.

"My grandfather believed it was his duty and responsibility to be more than just a participant in his community. He desired to make lasting impacts – and did," said Wes Murry, who manages the foundation named for his grandfather. "I also believe in that philosophy. We seek out unique opportunities that have the stated purpose of permanently altering the trajectory of a need or cause."

Town Branch Park, which will be located in the heart of Lexington, will encompass 10 acres and will include children's play areas, art installations, educational programs, a dog park, free performances, and expanded and interactive water features inspired by the historic Town Branch Creek, where Lexington was founded.

"When presented with the opportunity to be involved with Town Branch Park, my family and I viewed it as a no brainer," said Murry. "Town Branch Park will create a better quality of life and improved health for Lexingtonians. Access to unique and thoughtfully designed recreational spaces open the door for curated educational opportunities for children of all ages and backgrounds. Access to significant green space improves a c o m m u n i ty's quality of life and environment. We are proud to be involved and, on a personal note, can't wait to visit the park with our kids."

Wes Murry, goriginally of Pennsylvania, is a founding partner of Castle & Key Distillery in Frankfort. He

Town Branch Park will cover 10 acres in the heart of Lexington.

and his wife, Anne, a dentist, have two children and have called Lexington home since 2014.

The E.E. Murry Family Foundation donation follows the announcement last year of \$5 million in commitments raised by the Town Branch Fund advisory board.

Town Branch Fund, established at Blue Grass Community Foundation to raise funds and oversee the design and operational plan for the park, set a fundraising target of \$31 million for the park. Private donations, which complement the city's public investment of the land, will allow the fund to finalize the design and engineering as well as construct the park. The park is one of two key components of Town Branch Commons. The other is the new section of the Town Branch Trail, a 3.2-mile connection through the heart of downtown Lexington.

The trail will connect Town Branch Park to 23 miles of protected bike and pedestrian paths, joining the Legacy Trail and the existing Town Branch Trail to connect the urban core to Central Kentucky's iconic countryside. The trail extension is fully funded through \$40 million in federal, state and city grants. The city is leading the trail portion of the project, with construction scheduled to begin this year.



# **Billboards Promote Positivity**

N a day and age when news spreads around the world with lightening speed, it's easy to feel overwhelmed with negativity. But a recent billboard campaign launched by the Community Foundation of Louisville sought to counter that negativity by honoring individuals in the Louisville area who work to serve others and demonstrate a commitment to their community.

The "Force for Good" campaign launched March 19, with billboards placed at various locations throughout Louisville, and remained on display through late April.

Susan Barry, president and CEO of the Community Foundation of Louisville, said the organization was excited to "flood Louisville with positive imagery of people who embody what it means to be 'A Force for Good."

Billboard honorees included:

- Karina Barillas, executive director of La Casita Center
- Raymond and Kim Burse, philanthropists supporting the

Psi Boulé Fund and the Community Foundation's African American Legacy Fund

• Jocelyn Church and Corey Nelson, directors of Grace Kids! A Church for Children

• Arthur Cox, executive director of St. George's Scholar Institute

• Bert and Jane Emke, philanthropists supporting the National Council of Jewish Women's Light the Way Fund and the Family Drug Treatment Court

• Jackie Floyd, community volunteer in the Russell neighborhood

• Mahogany Mayfield, co-founder of GLOW, Girls League of the West

• Andrew Noland, philanthropic supporter of various initiatives that remove barriers to education

• Sarah Nuñez, assistant director of the University of Louisville Cultural Center

• Moshe Ohayon, founder of Educational Justice

• Mona Page, founder and executive director of Rhonda's Another Chance Inc.

• Angela Renfro, executive director and founder of the Kristy Love Foundation

• Georgia Turner, director 2NOT1: Fatherhood & Families Inc.

"We hope the campaign will inspire others to think how they can be a force for good and see the Community Foundation as a partner in creating a community where people and place thrive," said Barry.



Students attending the recent Education Days at Whitaker Bank Ballpark in Lexington were taught about the science behind the sport of baseball, exploring concepts such as angles, speed and velocity.

# The Science Behind the Sport

NDUSTRIES across the state and the nation have long been touting the importance of STEM-related (science, technology, engineering and math) learning in schools to develop a strong workforce.

To add an extra component of fun to the learning process, the Lexington Legends minor league baseball team partnered with Lexington-based Lexmark International this year to use the sport of baseball to help students master STEMrelated concepts.

On April 11 and May 9, students from across the Lexington area took in a Legends game at Whitaker Bank Ballpark for Education Days. During those games, students learned about the science of baseball with launch angles, speed, velocity and more being broadcast on the television screens of the concourse. A STEM Fair, sponsored by Lexmark, was also held to allow students to experience hands-on learning through interactive exhibits set up by area businesses, including WKYT, Kentucky American Water, Whitaker Bank, Denham-Blythe and the U.S. Army.

"Learning through hands-on activities related to baseball sparks an interest in STEM, steering our youth toward successful careers in critical fields," said Sheri Evans Depp, Lexmark's director of Global Talent Management, Diversity and Corporate Citizenship and NA Business Partners. "Lexmark and other innovative companies will need these qualified candidates to fill future STEM jobs. And as a nation, we will rely on this next generation of innovators to drive our economy."

In 2017, 4,500 Fayette County Public School students participated in the program. This year, the number grew to 8,600 students actively participating in the initiative.

# Hal Moss Joins Lane Report As Associate Publisher

HE Lane Report welcomes Hal Moss to our team as an associate publisher.

Moss has an extensive background in media sales management with Kentucky-based print and digital operations. He served as senior territory manager at Thoroughbred Times (2004-2012) and followed that up as senior advertising manager at Daily Racing Form (2012-2016).

Moss is an experienced professional who understands today's marketing platforms and how to communicate at the business-to-business level.

"I have always admired The Lane *Report* as a quality business publication serving Kentucky's most influential opinion leaders," Moss said. "I look forward to partnering with businesses across the state, learning about their new initiatives, and creating unique brand

# **Buffalo Trace to Release Bourbon Designed by Fans**

N 2015 Buffalo Trace distillery launched a "Craft Your Perfect Bourbon" website, part of a lighthearted attempt to teach people about bourbon.

The interactive experience allows fans to choose their bourbon recipe, warehouse placement, age and proof. In just over two years, 100,239 bourbon drinkers completed the process of "crafting" their perfect bourbon.

So what did professed bourbon fans choose? The overwhelming number chose a wheated bourbon recipe aged for eight years. Most chose for their barrel to mature on the top floor of the bourbon warehouse and ultimately be bottled at somewhere between 90 and 99 proof.

In response, Buffalo Trace Distillery will be releasing a new edition of W. L. Weller Bourbon called "CYPB" - short for Craft Your Perfect Bourbon.

As directed by fans, this bourbon will be made from a wheat recipe, aged eight years on the top floors of the warehouses, and bottled at 95 proof. Although very limited, one batch of this new bourbon will be released each year, beginning this summer. The recommended price is \$39.99 for a 750ml bottle.

"Although we certainly didn't set out to produce a new bourbon based on this 'Craft Your Own' experience," said Kris Comstock, senior marketing director, "the results are overwhelmingly consistent, so why not give whiskey drinkers what they want?"

> awareness for each company."

> Moss and his wife Dana, an area branch banker at BB&T Bank, are returning to Kentucky from the Chattanooga, Tenn., area and will reside in Lexington. They have two adult children: Ryan, an orthopedic sales consultant for Smith &

Nephew, and Kala, who is finishing up her degree at Lee University in Cleveland, Tenn.



Moss,

Associate

Publisher.

The Lane

Report

# **KENTUCKY PEOPLE**

#### PIKEVILLE: COMMUNITY COLLEGES PARTNER WITH NATIONAL GROUP TO PROMOTE ENTREPRENEURSHIP



Big Sandy Community and **Technical College President** Sherry Zylka (right) and Mountain Empire Community College (Va.) President Kris Westover recently signed a pledge with the National Association for **Community** College Entrepreneurship to encourage entrepreneurship on their campuses and local communities. NACCE works with community colleges nationwide to link the colleges' traditional role of workforce development with entrepreneurial development through conferences and symposiums, webinars, podcasts, newsletters, journals and blogs, among other resources.

#### DANVILLE: FARMERS NATIONAL BANK HONORED FOR EFFORTS TO PRESERVE CENTURY-OLD BANK BUILDING



Farmers National Bank in Danville was recently recognized by Boyle Landmark Trust for its efforts to preserve the bank's Main Street location in Danville, which is more than 100 years old. Pictured here presenting a recognition plaque to Farmers National Bank are (left to right) Boyle Landmark Trust board members George Coomer and Barbara Hulette, Farmers National CEO Greg Caudill, Boyle Landmark Trust Chair Jacob Pankey, Farmers National Vice President of Marketing Sharon K. Howell, Farmers National President Marty Gibson and Boyle Landmark Trust board member Kathy Milby.

#### WILMORE: ASBURY UNIVERSITY HOLDS DEDICATION CEREMONY FOR JOE PITTS CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY



Asbury University held a ribbon-cutting and dedication ceremony on March 28 for the new Joe Pitts Center for Public Policy. The center is named in honor of Asbury University alumnus and former U.S. Representative Joseph R. Pitts and is modeled after Pitts' office in Washington, with an array of memorabilia, awards, signed letters and drawings. Pictured here at the ceremony are (left to right) Asbury 2018-19 Student Body President Elijah Lutz; Asbury Social Science and History Department Chair Steve Clements; Pitts' wife, Ginny; Joe Pitts; Asbury President Sandra C. Gray; Asbury Board of Trustees Chair Larry Brown; Asbury Provost Bonnie Banker; and Wilmore Mayor Harold Rainwater.

#### FRANKFORT: KENTUCKIANS RECOGNIZED FOR SUPPORT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

Three Kentucky businessmen were honored in Frankfort on March 6 for their ongoing support of public education and innovation in Eastern Kentucky. L.D. Gorman, of Hazard, and Luther Deaton, a former Breathilt County resident who now lives in Lexington, were presented with the Proud Mountaineer Award. The Patton Education Advocacy Award was presented to Bob Hutchinson, of Paintsville. The awards were presented by former Gov. Paul Patton.



Luther Deaton (left) with former Gov. Paul Patton.



L. D. Gorman (left) with former Gov. Paul Patton



Bob Hutchinson (left) with former Gov. Paul Patton

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