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to today's savvy students that Success is their ROI

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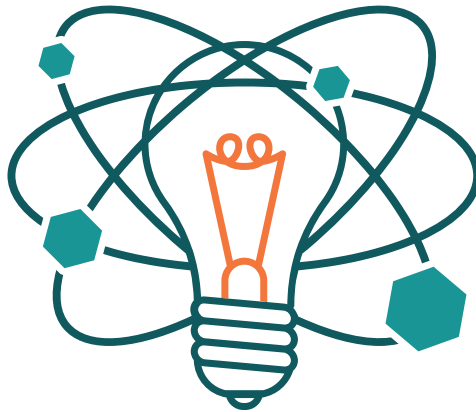
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PERSPECTIVE

IN THE LONG TERM, IT PAYS TO BE POSITIVE

When a recession does arrive, it may be because we expect it

BY MARK GREEN

FACTS do regularly defy expectations in our complex economy, but expectations can and do also create facts. Thus, perhaps it does pay to be positive, in the long term especially.

Recession in the U.S. economy is unlikely this year, and the current expansion – now 10 years old and the longest in history – could easily continue through most or all of 2020, according to Mark Hoffman, managing director, head of portfolio management and analytics at PNC Asset Management Group.

When recession does come, the primary cause is likely to be ... expectations, negative expectations that then create facts.

"We think this is going to be a positive year," Hoffman said. While recession will occur eventually, he listed why PNC's economic team forecasts it won't be this year:

- There is no "bubble" of overexuberance in real estate or stock prices.
- Consumer confidence is positive and consumers have money to spend.
- U.S. economic growth of near 2.5 percent recently is based on solid activity and not a tax cut "sugar high."
- International Monetary Fund predicts global growth of 3-plus percent.
- China most recently reported a controlled-slowness 6% GDP growth rate,
- Federal Reserve leaders say any further interest rate increases will be "data based" rather than to arrive at a number that seems to sound good.

Hoffman does arrive at an investor strategy for 2019 (maybe longer?) when he overlays this perspective with historic trends dating back 125 years, which he said decisively shows that there is greater risk in investing too conservatively rather than too aggressively. He counsels that wise wealth investors should keep plenty of assets in stock markets, but they should switch assets from aggressively managed funds to defensively managed funds as this expansion cycle plays out its late innings.

Hoffman spoke to PNC Wealth Management's Kentucky leadership and several dozen clients late in the first quarter of the year in Lexington and said that all expansions do come to an end. This is an inescapable truth.

But the observable economic forces and trends at work presently point to continuing slow growth.

Ironically, when recession does come it likely will have been triggered by the psychological consequences of the current economic expansion having lasted so long. As the present growth cycle ventures further into record-length territory, Hoffman explained, business decision-makers grow more wary of making capital expenditures and investments – a new store, factory, product or fresh hires – because the result of the outlay might come online just as a recession does in fact arrive.

Hoffman is a numbers man. Prior to entering wealth management portfolio analysis, his education included astrophysics and physics bachelor's, master's and Ph.D. degrees at Yale and the University of Chicago. That level of achievement is rare. Astrophysics and physics math is essentially gathering and analyzing data to make reliable determinations about what one can expect to happen.

Consequently, he looked at the total long-term investment return of putting assets into the collective stock market from 1893 to 1993, a century of monumental change encompassing the rise of electricity, the automobile, flight, income taxes, world wars, multiple small recessions and the Great Depression. Stocks gained 6.5% annually.

And Hoffman looked at the overall investment returns of the collective stock market from 1993 to 2018, a quarter century of further monumental change encompassing the rise of the internet, a dot-com boom and bust, 9-11, China's economic ascent, the Great Recession and a 10-year recovery. Stocks again gained 6.5% annually.

Hoffman said he looked also at the investment returns of putting assets into the bond market, again during the century from 1893 to 1993 and the quarter century from 1993 to 2018. Again those assets produced equal long-term results, a return of 0 percent.

Of course, individual years can and do see a stock portfolio fall and a bond portfolio rise, by double-digit percentages even. And the short-term strategy is important when it is time to use those assets – for retirement, acquiring real estate, or buying or expanding a business.

But a long-term investor's strategy is clear: Keep thinking positive thoughts. ■



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

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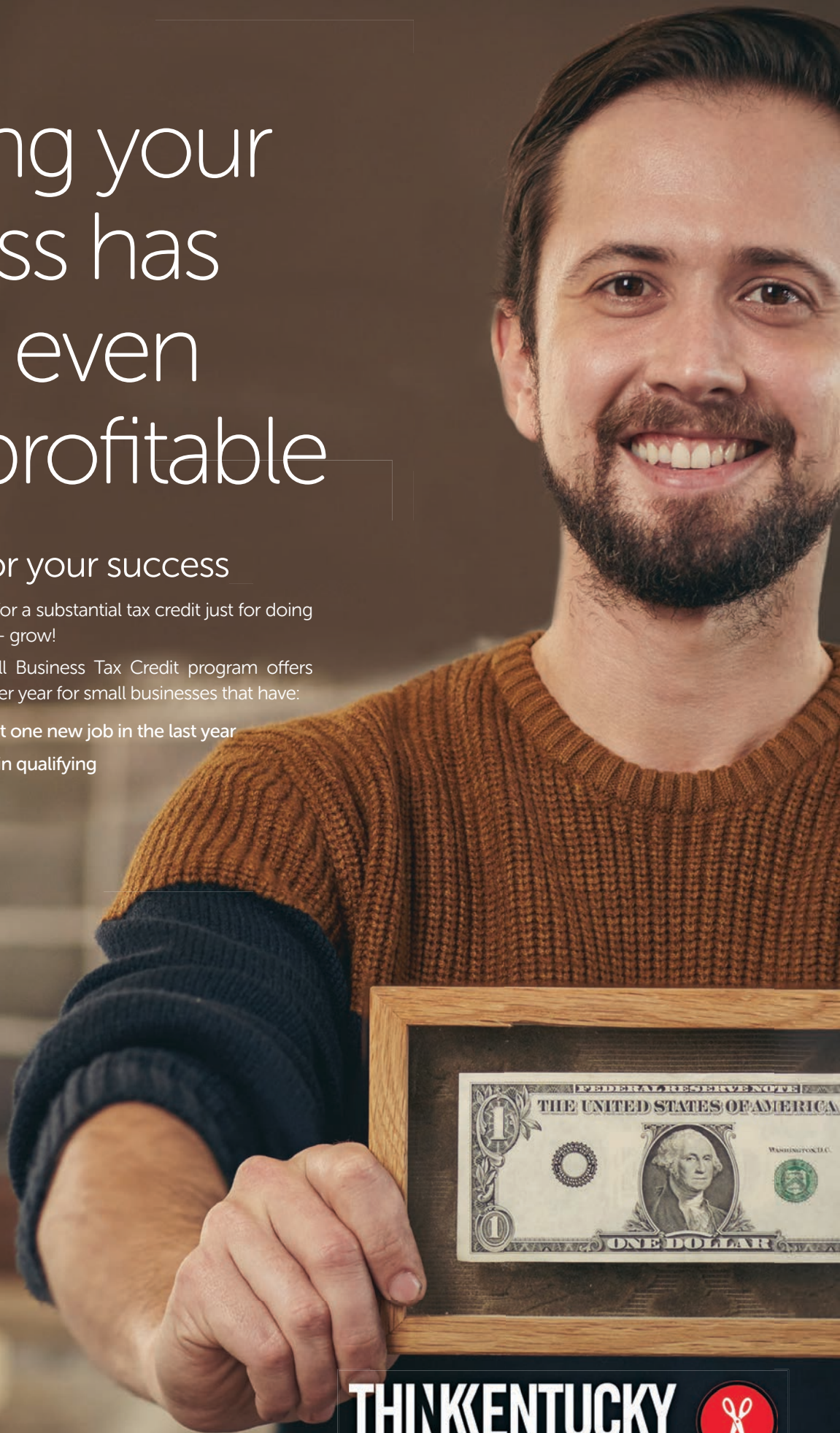
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FAST LANE

A compilation of economic news from across Kentucky

BRANDENBURG

NUCOR ANNOUNCES PLANS TO BUILD \$1.35 BILLION STEEL MILL IN MEADE COUNTY, CREATING 400 JOBS

NUCOR Corp. has unveiled plans for a \$1.35 billion steel plate mill that will be built along the Ohio River in Brandenburg, about 40 miles west of Louisville.

The new mill will create more than 400 full-time jobs with an average annual wage of \$72,000. Positions will include equipment operators, production specialists, safety and environmental technicians, engineers and office support staff.

The 1.5-million-s.f. facility will sit on 900 acres in the Buttermilk Falls Industrial Park. With a production capacity of 1.2 million tons per year, the steel mill will enhance Nucor's ability to serve customers throughout the region and meet needs for the company's customers nationwide. The North Carolina-based company is one of the nation's largest producers of steel and steel products and one of North America's largest recyclers.

The announcement comes just six months after the company announced a \$650 million, 70-job phase II expansion at **Nucor Steel Gallatin**, a mill producing flat-rolled coils in Ghent. That project promises to nearly double the mill's annual capacity to approximately 3 million tons. Phase I of the Gallatin plant's expansion, announced in May 2017, included a new building to house galvanizing and pickling lines. That phase, which is expected to open in the first half of this year, represents a \$176 million investment and the addition of 75 new full-time jobs.

In Kentucky, Nucor and its affiliates already employ approximately 2,000 people at Nucor Steel Gallatin, **Steel Technologies LLC**, **Republic Conduit** and **Harris Rebar**. Nucor also owns the **David J. Joseph Co.** and its six subsidiary **River Metals Recycling** facilities across the state, which collect and recycle scrap metal.



SOUTHEAST KENTUCKY

EXPANSION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TRAINING PROGRAM EXPECTED TO GENERATE 350 NEW JOBS



THE Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) has awarded a \$1.3 million grant to the **Southeast Kentucky Economic Development Corp.** (SKED) to expand its successful Supplier Education and Economic Development (SEED) training program.

"This ARC grant will continue the business development work provided by SKED to help prepare local companies for bigger business opportunities with the federal government," said U.S. Congressman Hal Rogers, who launched

SKED in 1986 to enhance economic development in Southern and Eastern Kentucky. "Over the last two years, the SEED program has provided local manufacturers with a face-to-face introduction to some of the top defense and automobile contractors in the country."

Key partners in the SEED program are: **Advantage Kentucky Alliance** (AKA), which provides the training, and the **Kentucky Procurement Technical Assistance Center** (KYPTAC), which assists participating companies in developing new business relationships with federal prime contractors. The AKA is a statewide, nonprofit partnership that provides assistance and training to help manufacturers of all sizes grow, improve their manufacturing and business strategies and processes, adopt advanced technologies, increase productivity, reduce costs, and improve competitiveness. KYPTAC serves all 120 counties and provides free, personalized procurement assistance to small-business owners.

SKED Executive Director Brett Traver says this funding is expected to create 350 jobs and leverage \$3 million in private funding over a three-year period.

ASHLAND

RUSAL INVESTING \$200M FOR 40% OF BRAIDY MILL; WILL SUPPLY ALUMINUM

BRAIDY Industries Inc. has announced a partnership with Russian aluminum company **Rusal** that will provide the funding needed to move forward on the \$1.7 billion Braidy Atlas aluminum rolling mill in Ashland.

Rusal, a subsidiary of **En+Group**, is the world's largest producer of aluminum outside of China and has been one of the primary non-domestic suppliers of prime aluminum to the United States. The terms of the letter of intent between Braidy and



Rusal call for Rusal to invest \$200 million in the Atlas mill. In exchange, Rusal will hold a 40% share in the project. En+Group Executive Chairman Lord Barker will assume the role of co-chairman of Braidy Atlas, alongside Braidy Industries Chairman and CEO Craig Bouchard. Binding documentation for the project is expected to be signed during the second quarter of 2019.

Rusal will serve as Braidy's exclusive supplier of low-carbon aluminum, providing close to 2 million tons over 10 years. The company will supply aluminum for the new rolling mill from its **Taishet** aluminum smelter currently under construction in Siberia.

The Atlas mill plans to provide interior structural metal and exposed sheet parts for the transportation industry.

"Without Rusal, we could not build an environmentally conscious mill of this scale," said Bouchard. "We enter the market with the perfect customer proposition – low cost, high quality and low carbon is the future of aluminum."

"The 10-year supply contract between Braidy Atlas and Rusal represents the world's largest low-carbon primary aluminum slab order for a single mill," said Jorge Vazquez, founder and managing director of **Harbor Aluminum Intelligence**, one of the world's leading aluminum industry consultancies. "The contract will enable Braidy Atlas to have a competitive advantage in terms of cost, quality and sustainability, while providing a market value of over \$5 billion to Rusal."

The Atlas mill is expected to create 650 permanent advanced manufacturing jobs and approximately 3,600 additional jobs in surrounding communities.



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FAST LANE

BUSINESS BRIEFS

BOONE COUNTY

■ **Armor USA**, a company that manufactures and sells thermal-transfer ribbons used for printing information on labels and packaging, is investing \$3.3 million to expand its facility in Boone County. The project will add 32,000 s.f. of space to expand manufacturing and logistics capabilities. Company leaders expect to increase production by more than 60 percent between 2020 and 2030 as a result of the expansion, allowing Armor to extend its market presence. Armor plans to add 36 jobs to its existing 87-member staff.

Armor USA photo



CALLOWAY COUNTY

■ Calloway County has been awarded \$23 million in federal funding for the reconstruction and widening of **US 641** from the Kentucky-Tennessee line to the Clarks River Bridge, south of Murray. The existing two-lane roadway will be widened to a new four-lane highway that will improve safety on a busy corridor used by commercial trucks, commuters and **Murray State University** students and employees. The completion of the corridor will connect Calloway County to I-40 and Paris, Tenn., and unlock economic development opportunities for the rural Southwestern Kentucky region.

CENTRAL KENTUCKY

■ **Central Kentucky Ag Credit** has paid more than \$4 million in a patronage distribution to member-borrowers of the association, marking the 22nd consecutive year it has distributed a patronage dividend. The distribution is determined after all operating expenses and financial reserves are determined. This year's distribution was the largest in the association's history.

COVINGTON

■ **CTI Clinical Trial and Consulting Services**, a full-service contract research organization headquartered in Covington, is expanding its



offices in Raleigh, N.C., and San Francisco. The expansion in Raleigh will double the company's current footprint there, while the move to a larger space in San

Francisco will provide more accessibility to biopharma companies, the downtown area and the airport.

CYNTHIANA

■ Cynthiana-based **Bullard**, a global leader in the personal protective equipment market, has acquired **Darix**, a spin-off of the **Swiss Federal Institute of Technology** in Lausanne, Switzerland. Darix, founded in 2017, is a frontrunner on smart-glasses for industrial and commercial safety and emergency responder applications. Darix will continue to be based in Switzerland and will become the **Bullard Technology Center**, focusing on the development of leading technology to enhance worker safety.

ERLANGER

■ The **Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport** (CVG) has partnered with tech firm **Aira** to introduce an app-based, video-assisted service to enable blind and low-vision travelers to self-navigate the airport. Travelers can access the Aira service for free as soon as they enter the airport with any **iPhone** or **Android** smartphone, or with the **Aira Horizon** smart glasses, which come equipped with an embedded camera. Aira's trained agents can see the user's surroundings via the camera stream from the phone or glasses, as well as geolocation information, airport maps and flight information to provide on-demand assistance.

FLORENCE

■ **JACK Entertainment** is selling **Turfway Park** in Florence and **JACK Cincinnati Casino** to **Hard Rock International** and **Vici Properties** for \$780 million. The transaction is expected to be finalized in late 2019 and both locations will remain open for business during the approval process.



HIGHLAND HEIGHTS

NKU OPENS MECHATRONICS LAB TO MEET INDUSTRY DEMAND FOR SKILLED WORKERS

NORTHERN Kentucky University has partnered with **Rockwell Automation** and **CBT Co.** on a new lab designed to meet industry needs and give students hands-on learning in mechatronics engineering.

Rockwell Automation is one of the world's largest companies dedicated to industrial automation and information. CBT Co. is the sole distributor of Rockwell products in the Cincinnati region. They work hand-in-hand to bring advanced manufacturing technology to clients.

"The biggest challenge our customers have today is finding skilled workers that understand the evolving technology utilized in their manufacturing processes," said CBT Co. Marketing Manager Kellie Kruger. "The integration of the 'internet of things' in manufacturing will require an even more advanced

SkillsCommon photo



skill set in the future, and the individuals who understand automation and have the ability to improve processes to increase efficiencies will be in even higher demand."

The mechatronics lab provides a real industrial automation environment for students to assemble, program and operate integrated manufacturing systems, preparing them for jobs in automation, control, instrumentation design and robotics areas.

"There's an urgent need for a diverse knowledge base that blends data analytics, computer programming, engineering and robotics," said Michael Schutte, Rockwell Automation account manager. "NKU created that with its mechatronics degree, but we started asking what we can do to get these students on the line before they even graduate. That's how the lab came together. The mechatronics lab allows students to learn on the integrated panels and machines that they will run in the real world. They fill the skills gap while earning their degree.

"Companies like **Amazon**, **FedEx** and **DHL** are investing here to build hubs and distribution centers, and they will continue to expand. Engineers are needed to design and build the control systems for these centers, and technologists to run them," Schutte added. "That's why this is a partnership and not just a one-time investment. Technology will change. As it does, we will send toolkits and updates to keep the lab current with what we are putting on the lines."



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STATE

NEW LAW PUTS KENTUCKY ON FOREFRONT OF INSURANCE INNOVATION BETA TESTING

NEW legislation signed into law in late March will make the commonwealth an innovation hub for companies in the insurance and technologies industries, according to state officials.



Ky. Rep. Bart Rowland (R-Tompkinsville), chairman of the House Banking and Insurance Committee, worked closely with **Frost Brown Todd's Insurance Industry Group**, officials at the **Kentucky Department of Insurance** and the **Public Protection Cabinet**, and FBT public affairs subsidiary **CivicPoint** to develop House Bill 386. The legislation – which passed with bipartisan support – allows companies, even those without an insurance license, to come to the Bluegrass and beta test their inventions in a tailored regulatory environment.

“This insurance ‘sandbox,’ or safe place for innovation, could include anything from a digital commerce platform, a new product, or back-end portal for simplifying a purchase path,” said FBT Insurance Industry Group Chair Greg Mitchell. “The law builds on existing regulations in the United Kingdom and other states, putting the Bluegrass State as a leader in the InsurTech world.”

BOWLING GREEN

ISENBERG NAMED KY SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION PERSON OF THE YEAR

Paul Isenberg, owner of **Smart Start Child Care** in Bowling Green, has been named the 2019 SBA Kentucky Small Business Person of the Year.

Isenberg opened Smart Start's first location in Bowling Green in 2011, using SBA loans to construct the building. Along the way, he encountered a number of challenges, including construction issues and cost overruns. Shortly after opening the facility, Isenberg's wife was diagnosed with a brain tumor. He had to care for his young daughter, attend to his wife's aggressive treatments and surgeries, and operate a new business. Fortunately, his wife made a full recovery, they were blessed with twins two years later and the business began to grow rapidly.

The company now has three locations and 128 employees who care for and educate more than 400 children. Since 2016, revenue has tripled and net profit has grown four-fold.

Isenberg will be honored by the SBA at its national event on May 5-6. The SBA Kentucky District Office will have a celebration on May 8 at the capitol rotunda in Frankfort, where the following Kentucky entrepreneurs and advocates will also be honored:

- **Financial Services Advocate of the Year – SBA Bank Lender:** Barry Frazier, Peoples Exchange Bank, Mount Sterling.

- **Financial Services Advocate of the Year – SBA Microlender:** Regina Becknell, Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED), Paintsville.

- **Rural Small Business of the Year:** James (Jay) and Michelle Tapscott, J-Mack BBQ, Gilbertsville.

- **Veteran Owned Small Business of the Year:** William (Will) Rivera, Running Soles, Elizabethtown.



Paul Isenberg

BUSINESS BRIEFS

FLORENCE

■ **Wiseway Supply**, a family-owned distributor of electrical, plumbing and lighting supplies, has acquired **Kentucky Lighting & Supply**. Florence-based Wiseway operates seven branches throughout the Greater Cincinnati market, while Kentucky Lighting & Supply, headquartered in Lexington, has three branches. Because the two markets are contiguous, with virtually no overlap of customers or sales personnel, the acquisition expands Wiseway's service area from central Ohio to central Kentucky. Kentucky Lighting & Supply General Manager Paula Minton has joined Wiseway's executive team as vice president, showrooms.

Wiseway Supply photo



GLASGOW

■ **American Engineers Inc.** has earned a national recognition award for exemplary engineering achievement in the American Council of Engineering Companies' annual Engineer Excellence Awards for designing improvements to the Echo River Trail at **Mammoth Cave National Park**. Though one of the park's most popular attractions, the Echo River Trail was deficient in a number of areas and space constraints left little room for upgrades. Using an innovative concurrent design and construction strategy, the project team incorporated upgrades that allow for wheelchair access and a reconfiguration of the small parking area now accommodates a greater mix of vehicles, while new waysides and overlooks dramatically improve the user experience.

INDEPENDENCE

■ **LSI Industries**, a Cincinnati-based company that specializes in lighting, graphics and technology capabilities, is investing \$573,000 to expand its manufacturing facility in Independence. The majority of the investment will go toward improving and expanding the facility, upgrading current equipment and purchasing new equipment. The plan will also increase the company's Kentucky workforce by over 40%, adding 22 new jobs to the existing 53-member staff within the next few years.



Blue Grass Airport/WestLEX photo



LEXINGTON

■ Lexington's **Blue Grass Airport** has received the General Aviation Architectural Project of the Year

award from the Southeast Chapter of the American Association of Airport Executives. The award was presented in recognition of the airport's excellence in designing the new private aircraft hangars and a 12,000-s.f. community hangar, **WestLEX General Aviation Services**. Designed by **J.R. Miller & Associates**, the new facilities were designed to reflect the region's equine barns and incorporate a green and ivory color scheme to blend in with the aesthetics of **Keeneland Race Course**, which is located directly across the street from the airport.

■ **Kentucky American Water Co.** has acquired the water and wastewater assets of the City of North Middletown in Bourbon County, adding approximately 400 water customers and 250 wastewater customers. KAWC already has customers in rural areas of Bourbon County and has owned and operated the water and wastewater systems in Millersburg since 2014. Prior to the acquisition, the City of North Middletown was a wholesale water customer of Kentucky American Water.

■ **Macy's Fayette Mall** store in Lexington is one of 36 stores selected by the Cincinnati-based retail giant to launch a new “narrative-driven retail concept shop” called **STORY**. Macy's has partnered with companies such as **MAC Cosmetics**, **Crayola**, **Levi's Kids** and more than 70 small businesses on the concept, which calls for themes within the shop to change every few months, providing customers with a fresh reason to return. Rachel Shechtman, founder of **STORY** and Macy's brand experience officer, likens the concept to a “real-life version of scrolling through Instagram.” The inaugural theme, **Color STORY**, will run through June 26.

Macy's photo



BUSINESS BRIEFS

LOUISVILLE

■ **The Gheens Foundation Inc.** has pledged \$2 million in unrestricted funds to the **University of Louisville**. UofL President Neeli Bendapudi said \$500,000 of the gift will be directed toward enhancing safety and securing staffing and technology on the Belknap and Health Sciences Center campuses, with the remaining \$1.5 million used to fund initiatives identified through the university's strategic planning process, which is now underway. Gheens has given more than \$12 million to UofL over five decades, including funding for the Cardiovascular Innovation Institute, Gheens Science Hall and Rauch Planetarium, and the Gheens Foundation Inc. Chair in Aging Research.

■ Louisville-based financial services firm **Hilliard Lyons** and **Hilliard Lyons Trust Co.** are now wholly owned subsidiaries of **Baird** following the April 1 closing of the acquisition, which was announced in November. Established in 1854, Hilliard Lyons is one of the nation's oldest financial services firms. Combined, Hilliard Lyons and Hilliard Lyons Trust had 2018 revenues of more than \$280 million. Founded in 1919, Baird is an employee-owned, international wealth management, asset management, investment banking/capital markets, and private equity firm with offices in the United States, Europe and Asia. The Milwaukee-based company had revenues of nearly \$1.8 billion in 2018.



■ The **J.B. Speed School of Engineering** at the University of Louisville has finalized a strategic partnership with **Farsoon Technologies – Americas** to offer state-of-the-art training and research aimed at making advanced metals manufacturing more accessible to consumers. Farsoon Technologies is a global comprehensive solution supplier of industrial-grade polymer and metal laser sintering systems. Farsoon's FS271M advanced metal laser sintering manufacturing system has been installed at the Speed School's Rapid Prototyping Center, which is widely recognized as a leader in 3D printing/additive manufacturing research, education and outreach.

■ **Facilities Management Services**, a Louisville-based company that provides janitorial services, has been named a Top 100 Impact Company by *Real Leader Magazine*, recognizing companies that are "applying capitalism for greater profit and greater good." According to FMS, it is the first janitorial service in the world to be a certified B corporation, which indicates a company has chosen to include in its bylaws a dedication to making a positive impact on society, its workers, the community and the environment. The company is also a registered public benefit corporation in Kentucky.

■ Louisville-based **Breath Diagnostics Inc.** and **Mayo Clinic Laboratories** have announced a collaboration to develop clinical diagnostic tests that use patient breath samples to identify individual biomarkers that can predict a spectrum of diseases. The two organizations will initially focus on a test that can detect lung cancer through a breath-analysis test using Breath Diagnostics' patented OneBreath technology. OneBreath can capture specific cancer biomarkers from a single breath, providing results in less than 24 hours without exposing patients to radiation.

■ **C2 Strategic Communications**, a Louisville-based public relations and marketing firm, has expanded its regional presence with a new office in Indianapolis. C2 Strategic already has a number of clients in the Hoosier State, including the **Indiana Department of Transportation**, **RiverLink** tolling system, **Sherman Minton Renewal**, **River Ridge Commerce Center** and Jeffersonville, Ind.-based **Pet First Pet Insurance**.



■ **American Airlines** has launched nonstop flight service between **Louisville Muhammad Ali International Airport** and **Los Angeles International Airport**, linking travelers to more than 40 connecting options to cities in the western U.S., Hawaii and Asia. The flight is operating daily, utilizing the 128-seat **Airbus 319** aircraft.

STATE

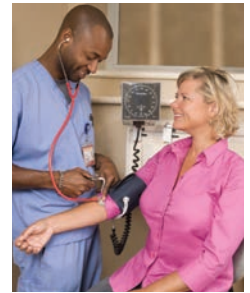
BAPTIST HEALTH, BLUMINE TEAM UP TO PROVIDE DIRECT EMPLOYER WELLNESS

LOUISVILLE-based **Baptist Health** has formed a strategic alliance with **BluMine Health LLC** to support employer-sponsored health and wellness initiatives.

BluMine Health provides direct primary care (DPC) model health care to employees and dependents of mid-size to large employers. DPC services are provided by physicians and practitioners onsite, near site or in a shared-site clinic space. Employees and their dependents are able to access the clinics at no cost for services ranging from acute/urgent care, primary care, physical examinations and management of chronic health conditions such as diabetes. With the strategic alliance with Baptist Health, BluMine patients can be offered additional services, such as specialty care, hospital care, diagnostics and physical therapy.

Under BluMine Health's DPC model, employers pay a set amount per employee per month for services provided in the clinic care centers. The benefit for employers is improved employee morale and productivity, with decreased overall health-care spending. Employees and their family members benefit from easier access to care, improved patient satisfaction and a streamlined referral process.

BluMine is a joint venture between **Alternative Health Solutions** and Paducah-based **HealthWorks Medical**. HealthWorks, founded by Dr. J. Kyle Turnbo in 2007, provides a similar DPC healthcare model, coupled with wellness, occupational and safety services for employers, in clinics in Paducah and Murray, as well as Union City, Tenn., and New Orleans.



BluMine Health and Baptist Health are teaming to provide services for employers that offer health and wellness initiatives.

BARREN COUNTY

JOHNSON CONTROLS PROGRAM TRAINS INMATES FOR RE-ENTRY TO WORKFORCE

KENTUCKY has teamed with leaders from Barren County and **Johnson Controls** to launch a training re-entry program for inmates at the **Barren County Corrections Center** to provide the necessary skills and training to successfully re-enter the workforce.

"We remain committed to providing employers with a highly skilled, highly qualified workforce and recognize that the key to Kentucky's economic growth is through educational and career training programs designed to foster success in the workforce," said Kentucky Education Workforce Development Cabinet Secretary Derrick Ramsey. "By raising the education and skill level of individuals who are incarcerated, we are able to create a pathway for individuals to successfully re-enter Kentucky's workforce while lowering recidivism through re-entry training and education."

Through the partnership, Johnson Controls will work with county officials to reduce energy costs in county-owned facilities, and apply the savings to a high-demand job sector skills training program operated by Johnson Controls at the Barren County Corrections Center. Eligible inmates will have an opportunity to gain extensive HVAC experience, and receive a trade certification creating a career pathway to successfully re-integrate into the state's workforce upon release.



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BUSINESS BRIEFS

LOUISVILLE

■ Louisville-based **Sum180**, a financial technology company that supports financial wellness to employers, has been acquired by New Jersey-based **FlexWage Solutions**, a national provider of employer-sponsored financial wellness and pay solutions. Sum180 is a fintech startup launched by Louisville-based **IMC** in 2014 through its incubator for new products and new businesses. IMC, a brand licensing agency co-founded by Stephen Reily, has generated over \$3 billion in consumer product sales for the Fortune 500 brands it represents while also serving as an incubator for its own new product and business ideas.

NORTHERN KENTUCKY

■ Hotel occupancy in Northern Kentucky outpaced the national average in 2018, hitting a record high driven by group tour business bolstered by the **Creation Museum** (Boone County) and the **Ark Encounter** (Grant County); the growth of the **Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport** (CVG); and the popularity of bourbon tourism. Demand for Northern Kentucky's hotels grew by 7.5 percent last year to 72.78 percent, beating the national average of 66.2 percent and marking the second consecutive year that Northern Kentucky hotel occupancy exceeded 70 percent. In response, hotel development across Boone, Kenton and Campbell counties is at an all-time high, with five new properties in the pipeline.



Hotel Covington photo

PADUCAH

■ The board of directors of Paducah-based **Computer Services Inc.** has declared a two-for-one stock split in the form of a stock dividend. In announcing the stock split, CSI Chairman and CEO Steven A. Powless noted that in 2018, the company marked its 18th consecutive year of revenue growth and its 21st consecutive year of earnings growth, and has increased its cash dividend paid to shareholders for 47 consecutive years.

PIKEVILLE

■ **WestCare Kentucky** has been awarded \$1.14 million by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) to renovate a 24,600-s.f. building in Pike County into a facility providing residential substance abuse treatment for women. Treatment services will include an emphasis on recovery-to-work support such as professional development, skills training and peer counseling.



PRINCETON

■ Houston-based **WCA Waste Corp.** has acquired **D&D Sanitation**, which provides residential and commercial services to approximately 2,600 customers in the Cadiz and Princeton

markets. The acquisition is part of WCA's strategic effort to expand its footprint in markets where it already has an established infrastructure.

PULASKI COUNTY

■ **Pulaski County** has been awarded \$25 million in federal funding for highway interchange improvements and a road-widening project designed to improve safety, reduce traffic congestion and enhance economic development. New interchanges will replace the current intersections at KY 461 and KY 80, and Valley Oak Drive and Coin Road. A three-mile section of KY 461 – a route heavily used by commercial trucks and Lake Cumberland tourists traveling from I-75 – will also be widened from two to four lanes. Construction is expected to begin in September 2020 and end by mid-2023.

WESTERN KENTUCKY

■ The **William H. Natcher Parkway** between Bowling Green and Owensboro has been elevated to interstate status and is now **Interstate 165**. The designation upgrades the parkway to a federally recognized route on the interstate highway system and state officials expect it to generate more economic development opportunities for the corridor.



ARC photo

The Appalachian Leadership Institute is a comprehensive regional leadership training program developed by the Appalachian Regional Commission.

STATE

NEWLY FORMED LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE SEEKING APPLICANTS FROM APPALACHIA

THE Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is accepting applications for the inaugural class of the **Appalachian Leadership Institute**, a new leadership and economic development training opportunity for community leaders who currently live and/or work in Appalachia.

During the course of the nine-month program, participating fellows will learn how to design effective economic development project proposals, integrate community assets into economic development strategies, identify resources available to spur economic development, locate and access investment capital from a variety of public and private sources, prepare competitive applications for public grant opportunities, and use leadership skills to create strong coalitions. The curriculum will be anchored by six multi-day seminars around the region, followed by a capstone graduation in Washington, DC.

The Appalachian Leadership Institute will be limited to 40 fellows annually. Each class will include representatives from all of the 13 states in the ARC footprint. ARC will cover travel and other participation costs.

Applications are being accepted at arc.gov/leadershipinstitute through June 2, 2019.

STATE

SALES OF KENTUCKY HEMP PRODUCTS TRIPLED FROM 2017-2018, REACHING \$58M

SALES of Kentucky hemp products in 2018 were more than 3.5 times higher than the previous year, according to figures released by the **Kentucky Department of Agriculture** (KDA).

According to a KDA review of 2018 hemp licensed processor reports, hemp processors reported \$57.75 million in gross product sales last year, compared to \$16.7 million in gross product sales in 2017. Processors paid Kentucky farmers \$17.75 million for harvested hemp materials in 2018, up from \$7.5 million the year before. Hemp processors spent \$23.4 million in capital improvements and employed a total of 459 people in 2018, according to the processor reports.

"It's important to keep in mind that all of this economic activity took place before the 2018 Farm Bill legalized hemp production," said Kentucky Commissioner of Agriculture Ryan Quarles. "I am encouraged by these numbers and hope this news solidifies Kentucky's reputation as the hemp center of the United States."

The 2018 Farm Bill removed industrial hemp from the federal Controlled Substances Act and gives hemp growers increased access to **USDA** programs.

More than 50,000 acres in Kentucky have been approved for the 2019 hemp growing season, more than triple the number of acres approved in 2018. The number of approved hemp-grower applicants for 2019 is set to be 1,047, nearly five times the number of growers in 2018. The KDA also approved more than 6 million s.f. of greenhouse space for hemp cultivation.

OAK GROVE

CHURCHILL DOWNS, KEENELAND BREAK GROUND ON \$150 MILLION RACING VENUE



Oak Grove Racing & Gaming is being touted as the only venue of its kind in Kentucky.

Churchill Downs and Keeneland have broken ground on a new \$150 million racing and entertainment venue in Oak Grove, a project that will create nearly 400 jobs for the Christian County community.

Oak Grove Racing & Gaming will be constructed in two overlapping phases. The first phase will include the harness race course, overnight stable facility and race-day paddock stable facility, which will be completed in time for the inaugural live race meet in October 2019. The second phase, scheduled to open in the first half of 2020, will feature up to 1,500 historical horse racing machines; a 128-room hotel; a grandstand with seating capacity for 1,200 and event space for indoor events; a 3,000-person capacity outdoor amphitheater and stage; an equestrian center including indoor and outdoor arenas; and a 30-pad RV park.

In December 2018, the Kentucky Horse Racing Commission awarded a racing license to CDI and Keeneland for 12 live Standardbred racing dates in 2019 at Oak Grove. The new venue replaces Standardbred racing opportunities lost due to the closure of **Thunder Ridge Park** in eastern Kentucky.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

STATE

■ Three Kentucky companies are among the first 13 hemp growers and processors to receive certified seals from the **U.S. Hemp Authority**, signifying that they have met the most stringent standards for quality and safety. The certification is designed specifically to educate hemp farmers and producers about Food and Drug Administration Current Good Manufacturing Practices and Good Agricultural Practices to ensure that consistent quality is achieved.

GenCanna and **Shell Farms** are both based in Winchester; **Nature's Hemp Oil** is based in Lexington.



Walmart photo



■ **Walmart** has announced plans to invest more than \$56 million on new technologies and upgrades to its stores throughout Kentucky this year. The projects include 11 store remodels (Dry Ridge, Hopkinsville, Somerset, Elizabethtown, Glasgow, Richmond, Bardstown, Lexington, Owensboro, Bowling Green and Prestonsburg), the

addition of free grocery pickup at 18 stores and grocery delivery services at 17 stores, and 13 pickup towers installed for online orders. In addition, 30 stores will be equipped with automated floor scrubbers and 33 stores will receive automated delivery truck unloaders.

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INTERSTATE LANE

Business news from Indiana, Ohio, Tennessee and West Virginia

BUSINESS BRIEFS



INDIANA

■ The owners of **Great Lakes Forest Products**, an Elkhart, Ind.-based lumber manufacturing business, are establishing a new sister company in Bristol, Ind., to produce laminated wood panels. **Great Lakes Lamination** is expected to begin production this summer and will largely serve the recreational vehicle industry, which is heavily concentrated in north-

central Indiana. Indiana produces approximately 80 percent of the world's RVs, with industry shipments topping more than 483,000 models in 2018.

■ **Steel Dynamics**, a Fort Wayne, Ind., company that is one of the nation's largest domestic steel producers and metals recycler, has acquired 75 percent of the equity interests of **United Steel Supply** in a \$134 million transaction, with the option to purchase the remaining 25 percent in the future. United Steel Supply, headquartered in Austin, Texas, distributes painted and coated flat roll steel coils to the roofing and siding industry.

OHIO

■ Cincinnati-based **Multi-Color Corp.** has entered into a definitive merger agreement to be acquired by an affiliate of private equity firm **Platinum Equity** for \$2.5 billion. Multi-Color, a company founded in 1916 that has become one of Cincinnati's largest public companies, produces labels for a wide variety of clients throughout the world and currently employs some 8,400 people at 71 operations across the globe. The transaction is expected to close in the third quarter of 2019.



■ Global financial services technology company **FIS** has announced plans to acquire Cincinnati-based e-commerce company **Worldpay Inc.** in a \$35 billion transaction. Worldpay is one of the world's top payment technology companies, processing over 40 billion transactions annually and supporting more than 300 payment types across more than 120 currencies. FIS is a Fortune 500 company that serves clients in more than 130 countries. The combined company will operate as FIS and will be headquartered in Jacksonville, Fla.

TENNESSEE

■ The **ICEE Co.**, well known for its frozen beverages that are sold around the world, is moving its headquarters from California to Tennessee. The company plans to locate in La Vergne, just southeast of Nashville, bringing 200 new jobs to the area over the next five years.



ICEE Co. photo

■ **Stulz Air Technology Systems Inc.** has announced plans to establish manufacturing operations in Dayton, Tenn., creating 250 new jobs. Germany-based Stulz specializes in the production of precision HVAC equipment and solutions.



■ **FedEx Logistics** is investing \$44 million to consolidate its Memphis operations in the former Gibson Guitar Factory building in downtown Memphis, a move that city officials say will add a financial boost and bring new energy to a key downtown location. The company plans to locate nearly 700 jobs in the

new space, more than half of which will be new positions. FedEx Logistics plans to move into the building in April 2020.

■ Nashville-based **LifeWay Christian Resources** has announced that it will close all 170 of its brick-and-mortar stores this year to focus on its digital retail business. The company, which has been in business since 1891, offers a wide array of Bibles, books, Christian music and movies, gifts and church supplies.

TENNESSEE

SMILEDIRECTCLUB ADDING 2,000 JOBS AS PART OF \$217 MILLION EXPANSION

SMILEDIRECTCLUB is investing \$217 million to expand its headquarters and facilities in the Greater Nashville area, where it plans to add more than 2,000 new jobs to the existing 1,600-member area workforce.

SmileDirectClub utilizes a teledentistry platform to connect its customers with dentists or orthodontists in their state who remotely create a personalized plan to straighten teeth with invisible aligner therapy. The company has a network of more than 240 affiliated dental professionals who oversee the treatment plans, using impressions made with an at-home kit or from a scan taken at one of the 200-plus SmileShops.

SmileDirect says that with an average treatment length of six months, its program is 60 percent less expensive and three times as fast as traditional braces.

Since its founding in 2014, SmileDirect has created treatment plans for more than 500,000 people and currently has an employee base of over 4,300. The company moved its headquarters from Detroit to Nashville in 2016 and the recently announced expansion is its second expansion in Middle Tennessee within the last two years. In February 2017, SmileDirect announced a \$4.5 million expansion across two Nashville locations, which supported the creation of nearly 450 new jobs.



Customers of SmileDirectClub receive a personalized treatment kit after completing an at-home dental impression of their teeth or getting a dental scan at one of the company's 200-plus SmileShops.

INDIANA

GREENLEAF BUILDING \$310M FACILITY TO PRODUCE PLANT-BASED PROTEIN



Greenleaf's portfolio of food brands includes Lightlife, currently the No. 1 brand in the refrigerated alternative-protein category.

GREENLEAF Foods is investing \$310 million to construct and equip a new manufacturing facility in Shelbyville, Ind., that is expected to be North America's largest plant-based protein facility.

The 230,000-s.f. plant is slated to be operational in late 2020 and will create up to 460 new jobs.

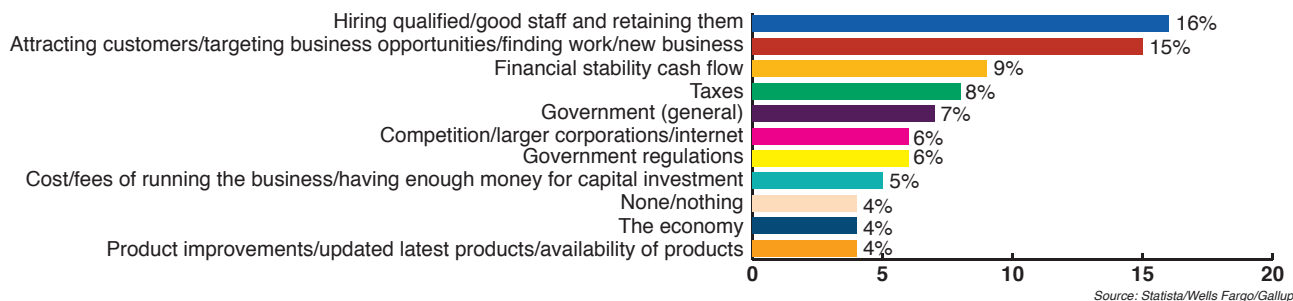
The new facility will more than double Greenleaf's production capacity to help meet increasing consumer demand for its portfolio of brands, which includes **Lightlife Foods** and **Field Roast Grain Meat Co.** The brands currently rank as the No. 1 and No. 2 brands in the refrigerated alternative-protein category. The expansion will extend Greenleaf's network of production facilities, which includes operations in Seattle and Turners Falls, Mass.

Greenleaf, headquartered in Chicago, is a subsidiary of Canada-based **Maple Leaf Foods Inc.**

THE CHALLENGES OF RUNNING A BUSINESS

The top challenge for small business owners across the U.S. is hiring qualified staff and keeping them around, according to a new quarterly report from Wells Fargo and Gallup. This concern has doubled in five years, skyrocketing to a top issue for small business owners. The tight labor market is making it difficult for all companies — big or small — to retain staff and keep positions filled.

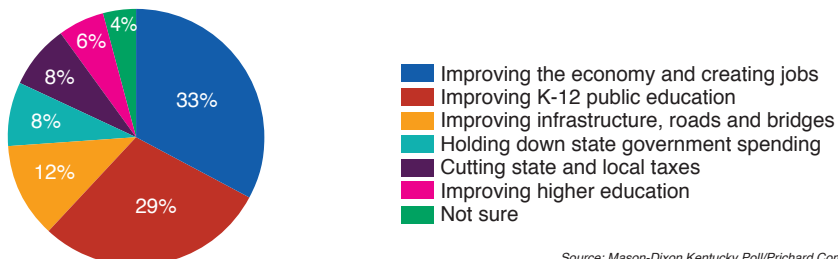
U.S. SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS' ASSESSMENT OF THEIR BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN 2019



TOP PRIORITIES FOR KENTUCKY GOVERNMENT

Job creation and K-12 education are the top priorities for Kentucky voters heading into the 2019 gubernatorial election cycle, according to poll results released by the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence. The Mason-Dixon poll asked:

WHICH ONE OF THE FOLLOWING ISSUES DO YOU FEEL SHOULD BE THE TOP PRIORITY FOR YOUR STATE AND LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS IN KENTUCKY TO ADDRESS?



STUDY REVEALS THAT WORKPLACE DESIGN IMPACTS JOB SATISFACTION

The results of a Capital One study about workplace design reveal that the vast majority of professionals — 85 percent — want to work at companies that accommodate a variety of work styles, with flexible design, workspaces and hours. The results of the Work Environment Survey found that respondents across the country value flexibility and design, particularly when evaluating whether to stay at their current job or considering a new employment opportunity. The chart below shows the design elements they most value:



CORPORATE MOVES

New leadership for Kentucky businesses

BIG MOVES

■ **Andrew Mason** has joined Bank of the Bluegrass & Trust Co. in Lexington as a credit analyst.



Andrew Mason

■ **Kathleen Spears** has joined Baldwin CPAs as an accounting supervisor in the Lexington office.



Kathleen Spears

■ **Jeffrey Owens** has joined Baldwin CPAs as a senior accountant in the Lexington office.



Jeffrey Owens

■ **Frances Johnson** has joined Baldwin CPAs as a client accounting specialist in the Richmond office.



Frances Johnson

■ **Kelsey Dryden** has joined Baldwin CPAs as a client accounting specialist in the Flemingsburg office.



Kelsey Dryden

■ **Sarah Grayson** has joined Baldwin CPAs as a staff accounting specialist in the Louisville office.



Sarah Grayson

■ **Edmund Furphy** has been promoted to staff accountant II in Baldwin CPAs Richmond office.



Edmund Furphy

■ **Justin Hurst** is now a certified public accountant in Baldwin CPAs Louisville office.



Justin Hurst

PROMOTED LISTINGS

BANKING/FINANCE

■ **Jason L. Lee** has joined Community Trust and Investment Co.'s wealth and trust management team as senior vice president, private wealth services manager.



Jason Lee

■ **Mark Salyer** has been promoted to vice president, enterprise client/computing systems for Community Trust Bank.



Mark Salyer

■ **Jessica Bryant** has been promoted to vice president, director of human resources and training for Henderson-based Field & Main.



Jennifer Simpson

EDUCATION

■ **Jennifer Simpson** has been named to the new position of dean of the graduate school at University of the Cumberlands.

■ **Tania Basta** has been named dean of Western Kentucky University's College of Health and Human Services.



Benjamin Mohler

■ **Benjamin Mohler** has been named vice president of resource development for the Kentucky Community and Technical College System.

■ **Lanny Brannock** has been named director of communications for Eastern Kentucky University.



Lanny Brannock

■ **Christopher Shook** has been named dean of Western Kentucky University's Gordon Ford College of Business.

■ **Hayward M. "Skip" Daugherty Jr.** has been named vice president for student affairs and campus life at Eastern Kentucky University.

FOOD/SPIRITS/HOSPITALITY

■ **Karlin Linhardt** has been named global chief marketing officer for Louisville-based Papa John's International Inc.

■ **Whitney Franklin** has been named director of catering and events at the Lexington Marriott City Center and Residence Inn Lexington City Center. **Jason Perkins** has been named director of operations for the two new hotels.



Whitney Franklin



Jason Perkins

■ **Craig Sundell** has been named general manager of the Lexington Griffin Gate Marriott Resort and Spa.



Craig Sundell

■ **Wes Hutchison** has been named executive chef for the East Kentucky Expo Center in Pikeville.

HEALTH CARE

■ **Aphreika DuHaney-West** has been named chief executive officer of Clark Regional Medical Center.



Aphreika DuHaney-West

■ **J. Scott Judy** has been named chief executive officer of Louisville-based Masonic Homes Kentucky, which provides aging care and other services. **Todd Lacy** has been promoted to president of the organization.

LEGAL

■ **Lee Pfeiffer** has been named chief information officer and director of business intelligence at Stites & Harbison PLLC. Pfeiffer is based in the firm's Louisville office.



Lee Pfeiffer

■ Frost Brown Todd has promoted **Tommy Gleason**, **Ben Hager**, **Jana Syrcle** and **Allison Weyand** to members of the firm. Both Hager and Syrcle work in the firm's Lexington office. Gleason and Weyand work in FBT's Louisville office.

MARKETING

■ **Jeff Rushton** has been named vice president of marketing for Buckner-based Fastline Media Group.



Jeff Rushton

RESEARCH

■ **Dr. Bob Gaston** has been promoted to senior medical director for Covington-based CTI Clinical Trial and Consulting Services. **Dr. John Adams** has been named senior director, regulatory and scientific affairs for the company.



Bob Gaston

STAFFING/RECRUITING

■ **Beth Delano** has been named chief executive officer of Louisville-based Malone Workforce Solutions. **Dawn Meyers** has been promoted to chief operating officer.

TECHNOLOGY

■ **Mike Martin** has joined Louisville-based 10K Advisors as the company's first chief customer officer.

■ **Courtney Perez de la Vega** has been promoted to vice president of sales for managed service solutions at Paducah-based Computer Services Inc.



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ON THE BOARDS

Kentuckians named to organizational leadership roles

ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

■ **Liz Polly** has been named to the board of directors of the Alzheimer's Association – Greater Kentucky and Southern Indiana chapter. Polly is director of information and research services for the law firm of Stites & Harbison.

AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

■ **Tom Breidenstein** has been elected to the board of trustees of the American Planning Association – Ohio Chapter. Breidenstein is counsel to the law firm of Stites & Harbison, based in the Covington office.



Tom Breidenstein

AMERICAN WORKFORCE POLICY ADVISORY BOARD

■ **Jay K. Box** has been appointed to the American Workforce Policy Advisory Board. Established under Executive Order 13845, the board will work directly with the National Council for the American Worker to revamp the American workforce to better meet the challenges of the 21st century. Box is president of the Kentucky Community and Technical College System.



Jay Box

CENTRAL KENTUCKY RIDING FOR HOPE

■ Dr. **Pete Hester** and **Chris Johnson** have joined the board of directors of Central Kentucky Riding for Hope, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life and the health of people with special needs through therapeutic activities with the horse.



Pete Hester

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY ASSOCIATION OF LEXINGTON

■ **Ken Silvestri**, of Silvestri Real Estate, has been named president of the Commercial Property Association of Lexington.



Ken Silvestri

COMMUNITY TRUST BANCORP

■ **Franklin H. Farris Jr.** has been named to the board of directors of Pikeville-based Community Trust Bancorp Inc. Farris, of Louisville, is the founder of Farris Advisory Services LLC.

FARMINGTON HISTORIC PLANTATION

■ **Aaron Klein** has been elected to the board of regents of Farmington Historic Plantation, a historic house museum in Louisville. Klein is an attorney with Stites & Harbison.



Aaron Klein

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF CLEVELAND

■ **Holly Wiedemann** and **Tucker Ballinger** have been appointed to the board of directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland,

Cincinnati Branch, for 2019. Wiedemann, of Lexington, is president of AU Associates. Ballinger, also of Lexington, is president and chief executive officer of Forcht Bank.

GREATER LOUISVILLE INC.

■ Greater Louisville Inc. has announced its executive committee for 2019: Chair – **Mike Ash**, Fifth Third Bank; Immediate Past Chair – **Jim Allen**, Hilliard Lyons/Baird; Chair-Elect – **Lonnie Bellar**, LG&E and KU Energy; Secretary/Legal Counsel – **Theresa Canaday**, Frost Brown Todd; **Russ Cox**, Norton Healthcare; **Tierra Kavanaugh Wayne**, TKT & Associates; **Charlie Scholtz**, Brown-Forman Corp.; **Evelyn Strange**, AES Advanced Electrical Systems Inc.; **Pura Veer**, V-Soft Consulting Group Inc.; **Jennifer Willis**, Humana; and **David Wombwell**, US Bank.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR EDUCATION THROUGH ART

■ **Allen Richards** has been elected world councilor for the North American region of the International Society for Education through Art (InSEA). Richards is associate professor of art education at the University of Kentucky School of Art and Visual Studies.



Allen Richards

KENTUCKY ARTS COUNCIL

■ The following individuals have been appointed as members of the Kentucky Arts Council: **Douglas G. Adams**, Whitesburg; **Paul Evans Fourshee**, Cadiz; **Lindsey Lee Jaeger**, Union; **Everett D. McCorvey**, Lexington; **Elizabeth Kathleen Griffith**, Owensboro; and **Janell Samuels**, Louisville.

KENTUCKY DISTILLERS' ASSOCIATION

■ The Kentucky Distillers' Association has announced its board of directors for 2019: Chair – **Rick Robinson**, Campari America; Vice Chair – **Jessica Pendergrass**, Heaven Hill Brands; Secretary-Treasurer – **Pauline Rooney**, Diageo North America; board members – **Joseph J. Magliocco**, Michter's; **Campbell Brown**, Brown-Forman; **Ryan Ashley**, Four Roses; **Jacob Call**, O.Z. Tyler; **Donn Lux**, Lux Row; **Wes Henderson**, Louisville Distilling Co.; **David Mandell**, Bardstown Bourbon Co.; and **Kevin Smith**, Beam Suntory;

KENTUCKY LAW ENFORCEMENT COUNCIL

■ **Michael Jansen** and **Louis Clayton Sumner** have been appointed as members of the Kentucky Law Enforcement Council. Jansen, of Fort Thomas, is a sheriff. Sumner, of Hopkinsville, is a police chief.

LEADERSHIP KENTUCKY

■ Leadership Kentucky, a statewide leadership development program, has announced its 2019 executive committee and board of directors. The 2019 executive committee includes: Chair – **Teresa Trimble Hail**, D.C. Trimble Inc.; Chair-Elect – **John P. Malloy**, LG&E/KU; Immediate Past Chair – **Elmer K. Whitaker**, Whitaker Bank; Secretary – **Perry P. Allen**, US Bank; Treasurer – **Dan Bork**, Kentucky Department of Revenue; 35th Anniversary Chair – **Mary Michael Corbett**,

Baptist Health Foundation; **Barbara K. Dickens**, Atria Senior Living Inc.; **Leslie A. Fugate**, RunSwitch PR; **Trey Grayson**, Frost Brown Todd; **Regina Jackson**, English, Lucas, Priest & Owsley; **Ron Wilson**, Western Kentucky University; **Gina S. Winchester**, Calloway County; and **Nick D'Andrea**, UPS. The 2019 board of directors includes: **Deann Stivers Allen**, Clay County Public Schools; **Anthony J. Apro**, Perfection Group Inc.; **Charles Beach III**, Peoples Exchange Bank; **Sydina Bradshaw**, Maker's Mark Distillery; **Christopher L. Brown**, Brown-Forman; **David A. Byerman**; **Craig J. Carlson**, BB&T; **Carri Chandler**, St. Elizabeth Healthcare; **Paula C. Hanson**, Dean Dorton Allen Ford (retired); **Rick Hesterberg**, Toyota Motor Engineering & Manufacturing; **Bob Hutchison**, McDonald's Restaurants of East Kentucky, Hutch Auto Group; **Melissa Lee Knight**, Farmers National Bank of Lebanon; **Gloria S. McCall**, Kentucky Community & Technical College System; **William Kevin Mays**, Owl's Head Alloys; **Ken Perdue**, Logan Aluminum; **David W. Seewer**, Wyatt, Tarrant & Combs; **Leslie Buddecke Smart**, Saint Joseph Health Foundation; **Chisandra Turner**, Stites & Harbison; **Sandra Wilson**, Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce; **Julie Whitis**, Kenton County Academies of Innovation and Technology; **Burton J. Webb**, University of Pikeville; and **Kelley Workman**, Planters Bank.

NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION'S GOVERNORS HOMELAND SECURITY ADVISORS COUNCIL

■ Kentucky's Homeland Security Advisor **John Holiday** has been elected to serve as vice president of the National Governors Association's Governors Homeland Security Advisors Council Executive Committee.

NATIONAL INSURANCE PRODUCER REGISTRY

■ Kentucky Department of Insurance Commissioner **Nancy G. Atkins** has been elected to serve as board member of the National Insurance Producer Registry. The NIPR was established as a public-private partnership with the goal of streamlining the producer licensing process.

NORTHERN KENTUCKY CONVENTION CENTER CORP.

■ **Steven Louis Frank** has been appointed as a member of the Northern Kentucky Convention Center Corp. board of directors. Frank, of Covington, is a certified financial planner.

TENNESSEE-TOMBIGBEE WATERWAY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

■ Gov. **Matt Bevin** has been named chair of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway Development Authority for 2019. The authority is a four-state interstate compact comprised of Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi and Tennessee, and ratified by the U.S. Congress in 1958 to promote the development of the Tenn-Tom Waterway and its economic and trade potential.



Gov. Matt Bevin

LANE ONE-ON-ONE

Kentucky's leaders express their opinions



Laura Prewitt

Laura Prewitt in July 2016 became Executive Director of the Kentucky Horse Park, an agency of the Kentucky Tourism, Arts & Heritage Cabinet and one of the world's top equine competition facilities as well as the leading tourist attraction in the Bluegrass area. Prewitt previously served as executive director of the Breeders' Cup Festival and served as director of operations and then general manager of Kentucky Off-Track Betting, a company formed by Keeneland, Churchill Downs, Ellis Park and Turfway Park. Prewitt has years of leadership experience in the equine industry, is an avid equestrian and has been around horses her entire life. She owns a horse farm in Lexington with her husband, and they have two children, Carter a junior at the University of Kentucky and Caroline, an incoming UK Freshman.

BECOMING MORE BUSINESSLIKE AT THE KENTUCKY HORSE PARK

State-owned equine venue sets sights on becoming self-supporting through partnerships and events, says Executive Director Laura Prewitt

BY MARK GREEN

Mark Green: The Kentucky Horse Park came into existence in 1978 and operations have grown slowly and continue to expand today. What are its current size and facilities?

Laura Prewitt: The park is over 1,400 acres. The front part of the park is a visitor section: the walking tour, the Parade of Breeds, the Hall of Champions, our playground, our ride, our museums. That's truly why the horse park was built: to educate folks on the relationship of man and equine. Our museum is dedicated to that and is a Smithsonian-affiliated museum.

Over the years, the park has expanded to event space. The 2010 FEI World Equestrian Games put the Kentucky Horse Park on the map, and we had construction of the Rolex Arena and the Alltech Arena. Prior to that, the horse park had rings and show facilities but not to that magnitude. We've got acreage dedicated just to the cross-country course, acres dedicated to the visitor center and the walking tour, and the equestrian or events facilities. We have lots of other of activities at the park other than horse shows.

MG: What are some of the non-equine activities that occur here?

LP: The non-equine activities are usually through events (conducted by those who

contract to use park facilities) and activities our community can come and enjoy. You can come into the horse park, pay \$5 to fish; we've got stock ponds. We've got soccer fields, and a couple of different clubs practice here during soccer season. We have car shows, trade shows, the Kentucky Crafted market. Last year we started having high school graduations in Alltech Arena. We have weddings, parties, a lot of big business annual meetings. Whether it's in the Alltech Arena or in the covered arena, we have space for anything.

MG: What is the annual budget and number of employees?

LP: Our annual budget fluctuates between \$11 million and \$11.5 million. A lot of people think we're a private park, but we're a state-run agency so we get allocations from state government every year. Those allocations have dropped. We have been close to \$2 million a year, but now we're down to a little over \$1 million a year. Since this administration and I came on board, we've found additional revenue in various ways. The goal is for the horse park to become self-sufficient. With any business, your model is to break even or to make money, and I think the horse park can get to that level. We still need the supplemental allocation.

The revenues we generate offset some of our expenses. What's really difficult is we have 1,400 acres, miles in fencing and over 80 horses year-round. We're a public facility and we do it all with 76 employees. Our employee base is mandated by the state. We supplement a lot through contractors and third parties, seasonal and temporary help. Right now we are trying to figure out the best metric on how to mow everything. It's a \$300,000 investment to pay for mowing April through November. We compete with area farms that also are having a hard time finding quality workers.

MG: There are many equine organization headquarters based at the park. How many total employees work on the park grounds?

LP: Close to 1,000. We have 30 national, regional and local businesses here. The U.S. Equestrian Federation has a new 35,000-s.f. headquarters building going up. They're the governing body for the majority of disciplines in the United States and employ over 200 people. They signed a new lease for 40 years. We have the U.S. Pony Club and the U.S. Hunter/Jumper Association. On a state level, we have the Kentucky Horse Council, the Kentucky Thoroughbred Association, the State Racing Commission, the Secretariat Center, and Central Kentucky Riding for Hope.

MG: How many events do park facilities host a year and what is the attendance?

LP: Attendance is about 535,000 to 550,000. We have over 200 events a year. Every weekend is busy with something, even in the winter. The events recognizable to most people would be Breyerfest, the Land Rover Three-Day Events (formerly the Rolex Three-Day Event). Kentucky Horseshows LLC has a seven-week horse show series here in the summer; probably 5,000 horses go through here in that period. We have the Festival of the Bluegrass (music) in our campground every July; Road to the Horse; Kentucky Crafted; the Good Guys Car Show. We've had rodeos, tractor pulls, graduations. We're a wedding destination and the museum is a great backdrop for a reception.

This past year we had the Junior League Horse Show that historically has been at the Red Mile. It happened to be the same weekend of Breyerfest and there were 30,000 to 40,000 people here on that Saturday. Land Rover's estimates of their three-day event is anywhere from 50,000 to 70,000 people.

MG: What is the relationship between the park and the events?

LP: The park never owned nor operated its own event until two years ago, when we

started our first: the Bluegrass Rocking Rodeo. This year – and this is crazy, but the horse park has never had its own horse show – we have the Kentucky Horse Park Spring Opener. It is a horse show we're owning and operating to get folks in who have never had the opportunity to show at the horse park. A lot of the shows done are sanctioned or you have to be at some kind of level to participate, or part of an organization. This is open for anyone. We've had great response.

Our relationships are strong with the event promoters who have their shows here. Our team knows their teams; we know how to put it up, how to tear it down, how to help so the turnaround is really quick. We always want to make it a positive experience for the promoter so they make us their forever home. It's a great place because we're located on the interstate, our facilities are good. From the big promoters to the folks who call us and want to have a meeting or wedding or a car show, those relationships are built early on when they come out here for a site visit.

We haven't lost any shows, and our industry is a lot more competitive now. Back in the day, the horse park was the only competition facility around. Now you have Ohio, North Carolina, Florida.

It can be hard to compete against private entities because they can negotiate, and as a state entity we're basically the same price for you as for a big name show. It has to be fair for all.

MG: Will the park will try to acquire or create more events that it owns?

LP: The plus for doing our own events is that we *can* do them; we have the staff and don't have to pay ourselves for the facility. Then we can capture the ticket cost, which is where the revenue is. This is what I was charged with from Secretary Don Parkinson (of the Tourism, Arts, and Heritage Cabinet): Let's make some signature events that will grow. One thing I did arose from an email two Decembers ago to a German executive director of Equitana, the world's largest equine trade show. My email to him was, "I'm executive director of the horse park. I have the best facility in North America. You have the biggest equine trade show in Europe. Let's partner." We just got back from Germany in March, where we announced our partnership with Reed International, the company that produces Equitana. Equitana's been going on 32 years so it's built into over 800 exhibitors. They have a high-end Cirque du Soleil horse show a couple nights that is a high-end ticket.

The horse park is going to be the home of Equitana USA starting in the fall of 2020. Reed International is the biggest company that does any kind of trade shows: Comic Con, all the big ones. They're multinational. That's a good partner to have. We're excited that's going to come to fruition.

MG: Of the 530,000 people who come in the park every year, what percentage are day visitors to the park versus event attendees?

LP: It's higher on the event attendee side; I would say 60/40. It's easy for us to calculate the park-visit folks coming through our point of sales system and tell where they're coming from. The back side, not so much; there's a formula we use for horse shows of 2.8 people for one horse that comes in.

MG: Where do the visitors to the park come from?

LP: The majority are Kentucky or the surrounding states – Michigan down to Florida. We have a lot of international visitors; usually through the four-star or five-star horse shows. We consider ourselves one of the biggest welcome centers in the state; we're located centrally on the I-75/I-64 split. When you come to



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the horse park we promote the other industries in Kentucky. We understand it's all about co-branding and co-marketing. We don't want this to be visitors' only touch on Kentucky when they come here. We give them information about other tourist attractions that are close, such as Keeneland.

MG: Is the majority of the marketing of events done by the event operators, not the park itself?

LP: Correct. But what's great about that is they're marketing the park while they do it. They put our destination in their marketing, and we get free advertising while folks are here. We do have a marketing budget, and the park itself has tried to do a better job the past few years of marketing, mainly to our locals. We have a free run/walk club on Monday nights in the summer and have had 500 or 600 people out here on Monday nights. We have food trucks and there are families pushing strollers, families with their dogs, run groups. So that's a great aspect as well as our museum, our fishing, our open fields, all the beautiful trees here. The Legacy Trail wraps right around the Kentucky Horse Park. Our campground has a swimming pool, a merchandise store and over 160 slots. We're full year-round except January and February.

MG: The park hosted the FEI World Equestrian Games in 2010. Is there any likelihood the park would host a future World Equestrian Games?

LP: Yes. We were shortlisted for '18, and we declined; there wasn't enough time. It was 18 months out. The planning for the World Equestrian Games in 2010 started some four to five years prior. We have the infrastructure, but we didn't have the sponsorship dollars nor did we have time to sell that event or manage the expectations. We wouldn't have had enough time to let everybody know that we probably can't have a Spotlight (entertainment series) downtown; we probably can't have a big tent city (again) from Alltech. And we didn't want to disappoint people. 2010 was so great.

Another reason we declined was their business model. I didn't feel it was a great business model for the horse park to be taking so much risk and liability and the entity selling the show – FEI – not taking so much. This being said, FEI has come up with a new bid process. They've changed their business model somewhat. I went to a meeting and there were over 20 nations there. And I don't know if they're all going to vie for the World Equestrian Games, but we're seriously considering putting in a bid for 2022.

MG: Is there anything on the park's wish list for new or additional facilities or programs?

LP: The one thing that the horse park needs is new barn facilities. With the number of horse shows we have here, that's the one thing our competitors beat us in hands down. The World Equestrian Center in Wilmington, Ohio, and Wellington Equestrian center near West Palm Beach, Fla., are much newer. Our barns are old and they're not up to date. So, we're planning, trying to set aside money. We're going to try to work with the Kentucky Horse Park Foundation to have a campaign to get updated barn facilities.

MG: The park has cut annual costs by \$2.6 million since 2016, but revenues fell also and the state allotment has remained around \$2.2 million. However, the estimated economic impact from the park is \$131 million with \$13.5 million in tax revenue. Is it a goal for the park to be cash-flow positive? Is that realistic?

LP: It's a goal of any operation to be cash-flow positive. But the overhead of a facility this large should be the responsibility of all taxpayers. Quite frankly we're not receiving a large majority of the taxpayer's dollars. The allotment is no longer \$2.2 million; next calendar year they've asked us to take \$1.4 million less. Another thing that's happened is legislation passed last year increasing our share of paying for employee benefits from 49.47% to 83.4%. We'll do the best we can.

It's a goal to be self-sufficient; it's not a goal to make tens of thousands of dollars. The horse park is run as tight as it can be run. To my understanding, the horse park never operated in the black; 2017 would have been the first year that the Kentucky Horse Park, with the allocation, operated in the black. In 2018 we operated in the black again, but not as much – we went from over \$100,000 positive to last year \$13,000 positive. In '19 we're not going to be positive, but we're trending in the right direction.

MG: What is the economic impact on local hotels and restaurants from your events?

LP: There are at least 10 to 20 shows here annually that book up Lexington's Newtown Pike corridor, Georgetown and even over to Hamburg (in northeast Lexington). All the restaurants are full, the gas stations, the equine suppliers, anyone with food. We've got great relationships with all the hoteliers. The hotels understand the importance of the horse park and its proximity to their business. Lots of hotels become headquarters for events

when the teams come in weeks early for the set-up. So there's a lot of economic impact outside the park from activities.

MG: What has been the impact of a state auditor report released in 2017 suggesting some of the management practices at the park were not compliant with state regulations?

LP: State entities are audited every year as a good practice of checks and balances. A special audit, as this was, is just taking a deeper, in-depth look. There were seven findings that all go back to procedures being lax. There's a process with contracts and posting RFPs (request for proposal) and posting sponsorships that you have to do. If one of those steps is missed, it's not done right. It doesn't mean it's been illegal; it doesn't mean it's been done to benefit somebody else than the horse park. It was a step that wasn't done. Happily, though, prior to the auditor coming out with his report in 2017, we had already recognized all of these shortfalls and already started to or implemented tightening of the rules as directed to us from our state entity.

MG: The Kentucky Horse Park Foundation is a legally separate, tax-exempt corporation that receives, holds, and administers gifts and grants in the name of the park. It has an \$8.97 million net position. What is the relationship between the park and the foundation? Does it contribute to your budget on a regular basis?

LP: The relationship is strong. There were private individuals then and now who are so passionate about the park. It's a vehicle by which folks can contribute and get a 100% write-off, like many foundations. We do not go to the foundation with anything superficial or that it would have a hard time "selling" to its supporters. Last year they purchased a water truck, probably an \$85,000 purchase but something vital to maintaining the rings here at the horse park. Foundation moneys do not go to cover payroll or operating expenses.

The foundation leadership and the horse park leadership are on the same page with the common goal that we want to be financially set long-term. There are organizations with foundations whose whole operating costs are covered by the interest their foundations generate. That would be a huge goal of the Kentucky Horse Park. Can it get there? Absolutely. Some of the people who come and show here are part of families with great resources. It's not unreasonable to think that harvesting those relationships could help the horse park get to self-sufficiency through the foundation.

MG: The park's stated vision is to be the premier equestrian event venue and 2017 readers of *The Chronicle of the Horse* voted it No. 1. Who are KHP's rivals and what does the park need to do to maintain a premiere position?

LP: The vision is for us to be the premier venue for equestrians but also for those who want to learn more about and enjoy the land we have that's dedicated to the horses. On top of our show facilities, what the horse park has going for it that the other venues don't have is our location, our green space. We have an entertainment, educational part on the front half of the park as well. Our competition would be Tryon, N.C., which hosted the World Equestrian Games in '18. Our other competition would be the World Equestrian Center up in Ohio; they also have a facility down in Wellington, Fla.

MG: How much awareness is there about the Kentucky Horse Park outside your main geographic footprint and overseas in Europe?

LP: I often tell people the horse park is more known internationally than it is nationally. And it's better known nationally than it is locally. That's partly due to our lack of marketing dollars. We're doing a much better job of letting

people know that there are horses here all the time, and we're doing a much better job of cross-promoting ourselves with other tourist attractions in the state. We are part of the Bettering the Bluegrass marketing campaign that the tourism department has taken on this past year. The majority of people know about the horse park because the World Equestrian Games put the horse park on the map in 2010.

MG: What do most Kentuckians not know about the state horse park?

LP: Most Kentuckians don't know we have a world class, one-of-a-kind, Smithsonian Institution museum sitting here. Most Kentuckians don't know you can come out to the horse park any day of the week. During season you can buy tickets to do all the different things at a \$20 admission. Kentuckians think they have to be coming out here for an event or that they have to like horses.

There's a visitor center when you walk in, a gift shop, we have two Parade of Breeds shows. We have a barn that has more breeds than any one place probably in North America. We have over 20 different rare breeds that perform a show twice a day with our riders in costume that represent what

that breed is. We have a Hall of Champions and two Hall of Champion shows a day. We have two Derby winners, Standardbred winners, a Quarter Horse winner. And we have the walking tour of horse park, which is self-guided, that could take a whole day. We're one of very few places in the state that you can come and take trail rides. A lot of people who come to Kentucky want to drink bourbon and ride and pet a horse.

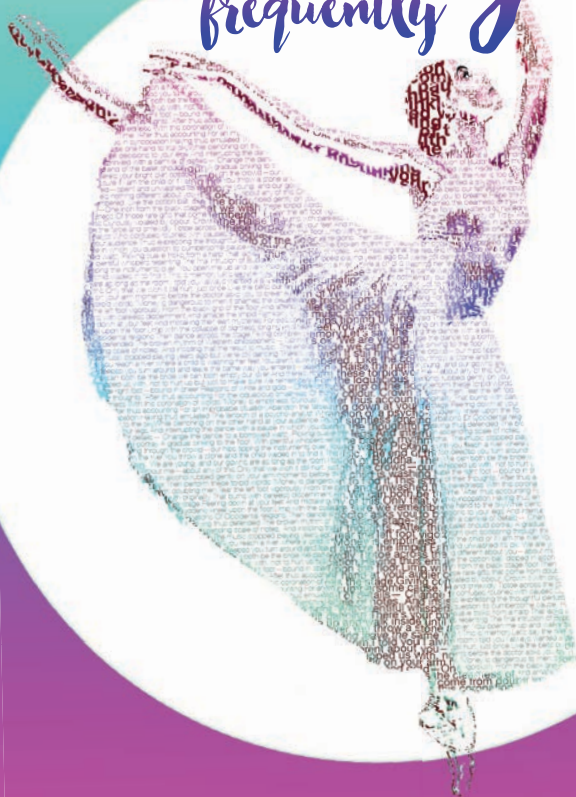
MG: What are some of the special opportunities for Kentuckians to visit the park?

LP: Besides the walking tour, we have riding camps, horse lessons, trail rides. We have a lot dog tracking events out here. We have a state dog show out here. We have most of the state track meets; the championships are done here. Plus, being on the Legacy Trail, biking. Our campground is one of the best in Kentucky. We have a lot of Canadians because when they are going to Florida, we're a great stopping point. ■



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

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The Value Proposition of College Tuition



Have white board, will teach! Associate Professor of Mathematics Kimberley Jenkins teaches her class outside on the front steps of historic Old Morrison on the Transylvania University campus.

Kentucky higher education makes the case to today's savvy students that success is their ROI

BY LORIE HAILEY

FOR most prospective Kentucky college students today, affordability remains a top concern, but they are more willing to pay for postsecondary education if they know they will receive a high return on that investment. Namely, a job in their career field soon after they toss their mortar boards into the sky on graduation day.

Annual in-state Kentucky tuitions averaged \$13,823 for 2017-18, according to CollegeCalc.org, and ranged from \$3,888 at all the Kentucky Community and Technical College System institutions around the commonwealth to \$40,500 at Centre College in Danville. Kentucky ranked 25th in expense nationally.

The commonwealth's 66 colleges and universities are competing for students

now more than ever, and marketing to prospective students has changed dramatically over the past 10 years. Most schools first and foremost promote their academic profile, but that alone is no longer enough to entice tuition payers. Students want to know their time at an institution will not only be educational and fun but that the school also will prepare them for life after college.

With successive generations hearing that a college degree is *the* route to success, tuitions have increased at rates significantly higher than the cost of living for decades; room and board expenses have increased as well. Students take on debt, sometimes into six figures, to pay for the opportunity to earn degrees. Student loan debt in the United States now amounts to \$1.5 trillion.

The average student loan debt of students from Kentucky's public and private universities increased by nearly 100 percent from 2004 to 2017 and now averages \$28,447, according to The Institute for College Access and Success.

The dollars changing hands means that in addition to showing they are the right academic, social and financial fit for students, colleges and universities have to prove their value proposition. They place more emphasis on co-op programs, study abroad programs, research opportunities and internships.

Today's students have done their research – and there's more information available at their fingertips than ever before.

"Incoming students are no longer focused on experiences and amenities. They are digital natives looking for worthwhile outcomes and viable careers," said Jerry Jackson, vice president for enrollment and communications at University of the Cumberlands in Williamsburg.

"Information is more transparent and readily available for prospective students than ever before," said Holly Sheilley, vice president for enrollment and student life at Transylvania University in Lexington. "This access

Postsecondary Education by the Numbers

- Kentucky's **132 postsecondary institutions** had more than **264,000 students** enrolled in the spring of 2018; **57 percent** were female and **43 percent** were male.
- In the 2016-2017 academic year, **25,469 diplomas or undergraduate certificates** were conferred.
- Kentucky has **eight public universities**; **16 Kentucky Community and Technical College System campuses**; **19 not-for-profit institutions**; **19 other Kentucky independent institutions**; and **63 licensed out-of-state institutions**.

empowers students to handpick institutions that are most likely to help them develop marketable skills and deliver post-graduation success.”

So, how do Kentucky colleges and universities prove they’re worth it? We asked some of them how they describe their value proposition to prospective students and how they are marketing themselves. Here’s what they said.

Are today’s students more “transactional” in their choice of postsecondary education institutions, prioritizing acquisition of marketable skills in exchange for their tuition dollars?



Koffi C. Akakpo,
President,
Bluegrass Community and Technical College

Bluegrass Community and Technical College (Koffi C. Akakpo, president): Many of our students are leaning toward education that has a specific career attached to it, as evidenced by the popularity of our technical programs such as nursing, welding and advanced manufacturing. The Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship (to help Kentuckians who have not earned an associate’s degree afford an industry-recognized certificate or diploma) is also a great incentive to enter one of these fields.

Campbellsville University (Shane Garrison, vice president for enrollment services): There has been a significant



Shane Garrison,
Vice President for Enrollment Services,
Campbellsville University



Stephanie Whaley,
Director of Admissions,
Eastern Kentucky University

graduates are employed in Kentucky within a year of graduation. Students are keenly interested in how we can help them attend college, get a job upon graduation, and take the next step in their lives.

change in the marketplace in regard to “ROI” (return on investment). The prospective students and their families want assurance that an earned degree in a given field will result in immediate employment and progressive career advancement. While the cost of attendance still ranks very high in their decision-making criteria, eventual job placement and career-earning potential is quickly moving into the second or third rank.

Eastern Kentucky University (Stephanie Whaley, director of admissions): Affordability is the No. 1 concern students and families have when they start the college search process, so they are definitely concerned about value when making a higher education choice. At regional universities like ECU, there are some affordability options that sometimes aren’t found at other universities. It is also beneficial to know that more than 70 percent of ECU

Morehead State University (Holly Pollock, director of undergraduate admission): Largely, yes, today’s students are transactional in their approach to choosing a college or university. They approach the decision like a consumer – researching all their options and wanting the best value for their money.



Bob Jackson,
President,
Murray State University

Murray State University (Bob Jackson, president): One of our most critical responsibilities is to demonstrate proof of successful career outcomes involving our graduates and sharing these with the students of tomorrow as they consider their future. Murray State can support them in achieving both their professional and personal

goals. Institutionally, we understand the importance of the transformative “teaching and learning” component that higher education can provide and do a tremendous job of supporting, empowering and enriching our students with necessary resources and skills. Higher education is an investment in time and money. Individuals have many, many choices on how they forge their respective paths. Our continued commitment is to be the best choice, the smart choice and the choice that will propel our students to lifetime success.

Northern Kentucky University (Kim Scranage, vice president of enrollment and degree management): Today’s students

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Master’s in Public Administration
student from Bardstown, Kentucky

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Kim Scranage,
*Vice President
of Enrollment
and Degree
Management,
Northern
Kentucky
University*

are certainly researching more about universities and the value provided. Depending on the type of student entering the institution, it varies on their wants and desires from the university. Post-traditional students are more “transactional” in their choice because they have limited time and schedules and are more concerned about how their decisions ultimately impact their lives and careers. Some students may only enroll in a class or

two (or seek a microcredential) because that course provides a skill set needed for a promotion in their career path. While traditional students look for return on their investment, they typically seek out opportunities that are less “transactional” and more experiential.



Chris Hart,
*Dean of
Enrollment
Management,
Spalding
University*

Spalding University (Chris Hart, dean of enrollment management): Today’s students have the benefit of access to a lot of information immediately throughout the college search process. We’re working with digital natives and sophisticated consumers who are adept at uncovering answers to questions like, “What’s life really like on that campus?” For some, college is a means to an end: This degree will prepare me

for future employment in a particular field or industry. Postsecondary education can certainly be helpful in that regard. However, I would say our most successful students are those who have faced challenges along the way and learned from those experiences.



Holly Sheilley,
*Vice President
for Enrollment
and Student
Life,
Transylvania
University*

Transylvania University (Holly Sheilley, vice president for enrollment and student life): Absolutely. In today’s digital environment, information is more transparent and readily available for prospective students than ever before. This access empowers students to handpick institutions that are most likely to help them develop marketable skills and deliver post-graduation success. For example, at Transylvania, we

have an abundance of interest in pre-health and pre-law, primarily because of our 100-percent acceptance rate to law school and more than 90-percent acceptance rate for recommended students to health professions schools. One of the top priorities of students and families is knowing they will have a long-term return on their investment.

University of Kentucky (Christine Harper, UK associate provost for enrollment management): Students want to understand how a University of Kentucky degree translates into opportunities to make meaningful contributions to society and to advance their careers. And while UK prepares students to make



Christine Harper,
*Associate
Provost for
Enrollment
Management,
University
of Kentucky*

a living, it also is important for them to make a life – what President Eli Capilouto calls lives of leadership, meaning, and purpose.

The depth and breadth of programs at UK provides opportunities for students with varied interests, allowing them to develop a portfolio of involvement that gives them a sense of fulfillment and sets them apart from other graduates. High-impact experiences like education abroad, undergraduate research, and other innovative and creative experiences at UK distinguish the type of transformational education that UK delivers. According to Payscale.com, UK graduates, both in-state and out-of-state, receive the best return on their investment. This ROI is strong thanks to the combination of academic and career opportunities, as well as UK’s commitment to putting students first.



Jenny Sawyer,
*Executive
Director of
Admissions,
University
of Louisville*

University of Louisville (Jenny Sawyer, executive director of admissions): Among students, it varies based on how clear they are on their educational and career goals. Parents helping a second or third child navigate a college search are much more likely to have more questions about job placement rates, average starting salaries, professional school acceptance rates and very specific questions about co-ops and internships.



Jerry Jackson,
*Vice President
for Enrollment
and Commu-
nications,
University
of the
Cumberlands*

University of the Cumberlands (Jerry Jackson, vice president for enrollment and communications): Yes. Absolutely. Incoming students are no longer focused on experiences and amenities. They are digital natives looking for worthwhile outcomes and viable careers.



Timothy Caboni,
*President,
Western
Kentucky
University*

Western Kentucky University (Timothy Caboni, president): Students and parents more and more view postsecondary education as an investment in time and money with the payoff coming in higher earnings over their lifetime, as well as a higher satisfaction with their lives. While they are sensitive to the perceived rising cost, the actual average net cost (tuition, room, board, books minus scholarships and financial aid) is remaining steady or declining at WKU, increasing the value of the WKU

educational experience. Evidence shows that college graduates have lower unemployment rates and increased lifetime earnings than those with a high school diploma.

What institutional characteristics do prospective students ask about or seem to value highly?

BCTC: Students value the support and personalized attention they get from staff and faculty at BCTC. They name that as a key component in their persistence and success. They like the “community” element: They can get a great education close to home and benefit from the relationships we have with local employers. Our tuition value, approximately half the cost of a four-year institution for the same education the first two years, often allows students to enter the workforce debt-free. They also value the quality of our programs, facilities and instruction. Finally, they like the size of our campuses and classes: smaller is appealing.

Campbellsville: Prospective students and families have very different institutional values. Students are concerned with athletics, campus life, academic programs and social engagement. Family members focus on the overall cost, housing options and campus safety concerns.

EKU: In addition to the value, students often are highly interested in the program options. We have unique majors offered at only a small percentage of U.S. colleges, including aviation; fire, arson and explosion investigation; forensic science; wildlife management; American Sign Language interpretation; and a popular computer science track focusing on video game design. Many of our justice and safety, and health sciences programs are nationally recognized and those distinctions matter to students. Our university becomes a destination of choice when students know this is the only place they can find a program of this kind or quality.

Morehead: *Academic programs and reputation:* Prospective students want to know they will receive a high-quality education with job opportunities upon graduation. Morehead delivers strong and affordable education for friendly, ambitious students who thrive in a student-focused environment defined by small class sizes and faculty committed to teaching and student success. We offer 167 undergraduate and 72 graduate degree programs.

Location, campus environment and aesthetics: MSU prides itself on what our Eagles learn, where they live and where they eat and socialize. We have been transforming the look of the campus for years. MSU completed a \$49.5 million project to renovate and expand the Adron Doran University Center. Our newest residence hall, Andrews Hall, provides space for 550 residents with suite-style rooms and student study/meeting areas.

Affordability and net costs: The MSU experience is invaluable, but it is also a point of pride to make this affordable. More than 90 percent of our undergraduate students receive some type of financial aid.

Murray: A high-impact, high-value educational experience with the best return on investment possible. A rigorous and relevant academic curriculum that is challenging, fulfilling, and extends beyond the classroom through hands-on learning opportunities. Providing both the depth and breadth of academic programs delivered in a way to meet the expectations of today’s students. All prospective students, particularly



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COVER STORY

Freshmen participate in the Welcome Walk at Eastern Kentucky University, passing through Turner Gate to the cheers of onlooking faculty and staff. Turner Gate, the university's newest landmark, is distinguished by four simple but profound words – “Wisdom and Knowledge” on one side, “Purpose and Passion” on the other.

first-generation, want to know what type of support they will find at Murray State to help achieve success in navigating this new chapter of their life.

NKU: That depends on the type of student. We see traditional undergraduate students valuing overall reputation, quality of faculty, and quality of the social life and experience on campus. Traditional undergraduate students are placing significant value on sense of belonging and a culture of service. Students (and parents/guardians) are measuring a university's commitment to student success. Alternatively, post-traditional students value availability of online learning opportunities, flexible schedules and how their degree will impact their career (i.e., access to various programs and delivery options).

Spalding: We get questions about internships and job placement. Our urban location is a benefit as it relates to future employment being available so close to campus. Students appreciate being able to apply what they've learned to an organizational setting, whether out on clinical or field-work experiences or student teaching. The classroom environment brings together students who have different skills, abilities, talents and passions. The diversity represented in these learning communities mirrors what's found in the workplace. Students want the opportunity to contribute, be heard and feel a sense of belonging. This team approach is valuable in being able to address complex problems from a variety of different perspectives.

Transylvania: Ultimately, the goal for most students' college search is finding a school that will give them the knowledge they need to walk away and be successful in their field. We tailor our liberal arts education to do that. Students often ask about our student-to-faculty ratio, which is designed to promote a comfortable, personalized environment in which to learn. The faculty-student relationship sets us apart; hiring only well-qualified faculty with terminal degrees in their field, instead of graduate or teaching assistants, increases the quality of teaching and learning. Resources are also paramount to students who understand the value of making connections outside campus. Internships and successful mentors outside the classroom make students more marketable in the workforce. They want to love what they do and have a career, not just a job. That's why preparing students for a fulfilling career is our mission.

UK: Many students are interested in exploring how they can make a difference in their communities, be activists for social change, and engage in a campus committed to serving Kentucky and beyond. We prepare students to make their mark at UK, in Lexington and their hometowns. With more than 500 student organizations and clubs, there is something for everyone.

More students express interest in working



with world-class researchers at UK who are answering the most complex questions of our day. Undergraduates are working in labs, communities and alongside faculty to address the opioid crisis, redesign neighborhoods devastated by natural disasters, and create new forms of artistic expression, along with other ways to contribute to the world.

As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, employers are seeking graduates who have cross-cultural competence, real-world application and a transferable skills toolkit they can adapt and grow as the economy changes – the world's leading jobs a decade from now may not have even been contemplated today. Skills they develop at UK must include the ability to think critically, collaborate in teams and communicate effectively. With 460 programs, including 45 exchange programs in 52 countries ranging from one week to a full year, students prepare themselves for a global marketplace.

UofL: Students want to know about job preparedness. They also want to know how they can afford your campus. They value having an opportunity for mentorships with faculty or professionals in the community. Students are looking for a sense of community and a place where they can impact change.

University of the Cumberlands: There is a term floating around colleges today: individualize. How do we individualize students' college experiences, their career outlooks? Students need critical thinking skills and a well-rounded experience, but mostly they want their programs to fit together into a formula more likely to get the outcome they want, which is a job. Students value flexibility in delivery of their programs. Colleges have to be nimble to be successful.

WKU: Students are looking for a quality educational experience that extends beyond up-to-date classrooms and labs. They want a college experience that gives them a good foundation for the real world in adaptable skills such as critical thinking and analysis and hands-on opportunities to practice those skills. They are looking for an institution that

cares about them, supports their needs and is as dedicated to their success as they are through nurturing and mentoring. They are looking for a place where they can belong and join a lifelong family.

What is your “value proposition” to today's students? What do you tell prospective students is the reason they should choose your institution over others?

BCTC: Bluegrass Community & Technical College is an institution that puts students first. At BCTC, our cost, personal attention, connection to the community and quality programming sets students up for the better life that quality education provides. Our mission is student success.

Campbellsville: Prospective students and families have very different institutional values. Students are concerned with athletics, campus life, academic programs and social engagement. Family members focus on the overall cost, housing options and campus safety concerns.

EKU: I tell families ECU keeps our opportunities large and our classes small. Our college experience delivers the best of both worlds. ECU's student-teacher ratio is 16:1, and the average class size is 25. Students are engaged with faculty from that first freshman English or math class all the way through graduation. They get personal attention right away, and that is a big advantage for any academic program. Caring faculty and staff who focus on teaching and supporting students also give them the confidence and needed skills for a wide variety of opportunities. Every freshman attending our Big E Welcome Week walks through the Turner Gate on campus, where it is written in stone they come here to seek “wisdom and knowledge” and they will leave with “passion and purpose.” ECU, the School of Opportunity, seeks to provide that to every single student.

Morehead: High-quality academic programs with personalized student success programs support college and career success. At Morehead State, students' path to success begins as soon as they enroll and continues

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Enrollment at Western Kentucky University has remained above the 20,000 mark since reaching 20,712 students in 2009. WKU's undergraduate division offers 101 academic majors that lead to baccalaureate degrees; nine associate degree programs are offered, along with 37 undergraduate certificate programs.

throughout their life. We have served generations of students to pursue a quality education, elevate their lives and careers. This is our clear and valued purpose and we've intensified our efforts through:

- Academic programs with strong outcomes: pre-med, pre-vet, space science, imaging science, applied engineering, business, education, nursing, music, art/graphic design, undergraduate research, and STEM-X.
- Personalized success programs that enable all students to achieve their goals with accessible, supportive, challenging faculty and staff dedicated to that success.
- A campus where students feel safe and at home is a place they are comfortable challenging themselves to reach their full potential.

Murray: Murray State provides the total college experience through high-quality academics, vibrant campus life experience and a perfectly-sized university with all the offerings of larger institutions but with small class sizes and supportive, nurturing faculty and staff. For nearly 100 years, Murray State has been a special place for people from throughout our region, commonwealth, country and world. Students and their families routinely share that once they set foot on our campus, speak with current students, faculty and staff, and take in the Murray State experience, they feel like their future is here.

NKU: Students tell us NKU offers all the luxuries of a large university and the community and safety of a small one. Students have diverse possibilities available in their first year to provide a foundation of learning for their remaining years, including research, co-ops, internships and study-abroad opportunities. Our great suburban location is just minutes away from the vibrant Cincinnati metropolitan downtown and offers students the quality and security of an engaged community and the recreational and employment benefits of a big city.

Spalding: The first line of our mission statement states, "Spalding University is a diverse community of learners, dedicated to meeting the needs of the times in the tradition of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth," and is what drives us to act, to adapt. Students are exposed to a culture that values diversity, service, peace and justice. At a smaller campus like ours, that culture is impressed upon students through a deep level of engagement with faculty and staff and personal attention to help them succeed. Students love our unique class schedule of six-week blocks instead of traditional semesters. They can take one or two classes at a time every six weeks, still be a full-time student and graduate in four years or less.

Spalding's downtown Louisville location is a distinguishing trait, allowing our students to be at the doorstep of commerce and culture in Kentucky's biggest city. And Spalding's affordability stands out: About 99 percent of first-time, full-time students receive scholarships or financial aid, and when it comes to final out-of-pocket costs, our students receive a private education at a public-school price. We are Louisville's only NCAA Division III institution, providing dozens of new students each year the chance

to continue playing the sports they love in college.

Transylvania: When you leave Transy, you are going to be world-ready. Whether it's going to graduate school or launching into the marketplace, you'll be able to compete at the highest level. The success of our alumni and 95% placement rate six months after graduation validates the quality of learning at Transy.

And students are going to graduate in four years. Our students are in the workforce earlier than their peers. Many families don't realize the national four-year graduation rate is 33%; a majority of students stay for year five and six. Transy has instituted a four-year graduation guarantee. Plus, our small default rate – 2.9% compared with 11.5% nationally for public schools – shows that the market values Transy grads and will pay for the quality they bring to the table.

Being marketable isn't just about what you know, it's also about who you know, and Transy is excellent in connecting current students to influential mentors who help them after graduation. We offer mentors, from alumni to community leaders, as soon as you walk in the door. The hands-on, personal learning experiences students will have – through internships, study abroad, research, and faculty relationships – are unparalleled. Our alumni network is expansive and is open to students for the taking. This, coupled with our location in Lexington, gives our students a significant advantage.

UK: Our students have the ability to do anything. Our job is to give them the support and community they need to reach their potential in the broader world beyond our campus. We put students at the center of everything that we do. We strive to be a community in which students feel safe and know that they belong. UK was created to do more for our students, our communities, Kentucky and beyond.

Dedicated faculty and staff guide and mentor students to see all that they can do and be. UK rallies around students and inspires them to push even harder and pull for each other. Rooted in traditions of kindness, hospitality, perseverance and success, it values hard work. UK is dedicated to envisioning a better future that we'll build together.

UofL: UofL is located in a vibrant city with countless connections; our location provides more opportunities for internships, co-ops and part-time jobs. Community leaders are strongly connected to UofL, and the partnerships are many. As a research institution, our students can easily engage with faculty in any discipline and be on the cutting edge of groundbreaking discoveries. Our size is just right so students coming from big cities or rural towns can feel at home, jump in and have an impact. Most importantly, our core value diversity prepares students for life after college. UofL students see diversity in all aspects of their college experience.

University of the Cumberland: The value proposition goes back to being outcome-driven toward a career. We no longer compete just with other universities; we're competing with the entrepreneurial mindset and blue-collar work options. The question isn't

Nearly 1,000 students attend Transylvania University in downtown Lexington, one of the oldest universities in the country. More than 90 percent of Transy students recommended for medical school and 100 percent of students recommended for law school are accepted.

necessarily “Why come to Cumberlands?” it’s “Why come to college?” Our argument is that a college degree still acts as validation to future employers that you have the job skills and people skills to be successful in the workforce.

As for the values we present, No. 1 is transparency. Students are savvy customers who value authenticity. The second is having a high return on investment for students. We offer every major academic program, can be flexible in the way we deliver those programs, and do it at a price point nobody can compete with. Price and value do not always go hand-in-hand. Our price point is low, but our quality of education and career-training is high.

WKU: There are many advantages to the WKU experience. First is the experience itself: A dedicated, caring faculty and staff get to know you personally and are there to assist you on your journey; a hands-on, student-centered educational experience imparts practical knowledge that can be immediately put to use; and world-class facilities for all aspects of your college life, from the classroom and labs to residence halls, dining halls to recreational facilities. Mahurin Honors College, Kentucky’s first honors

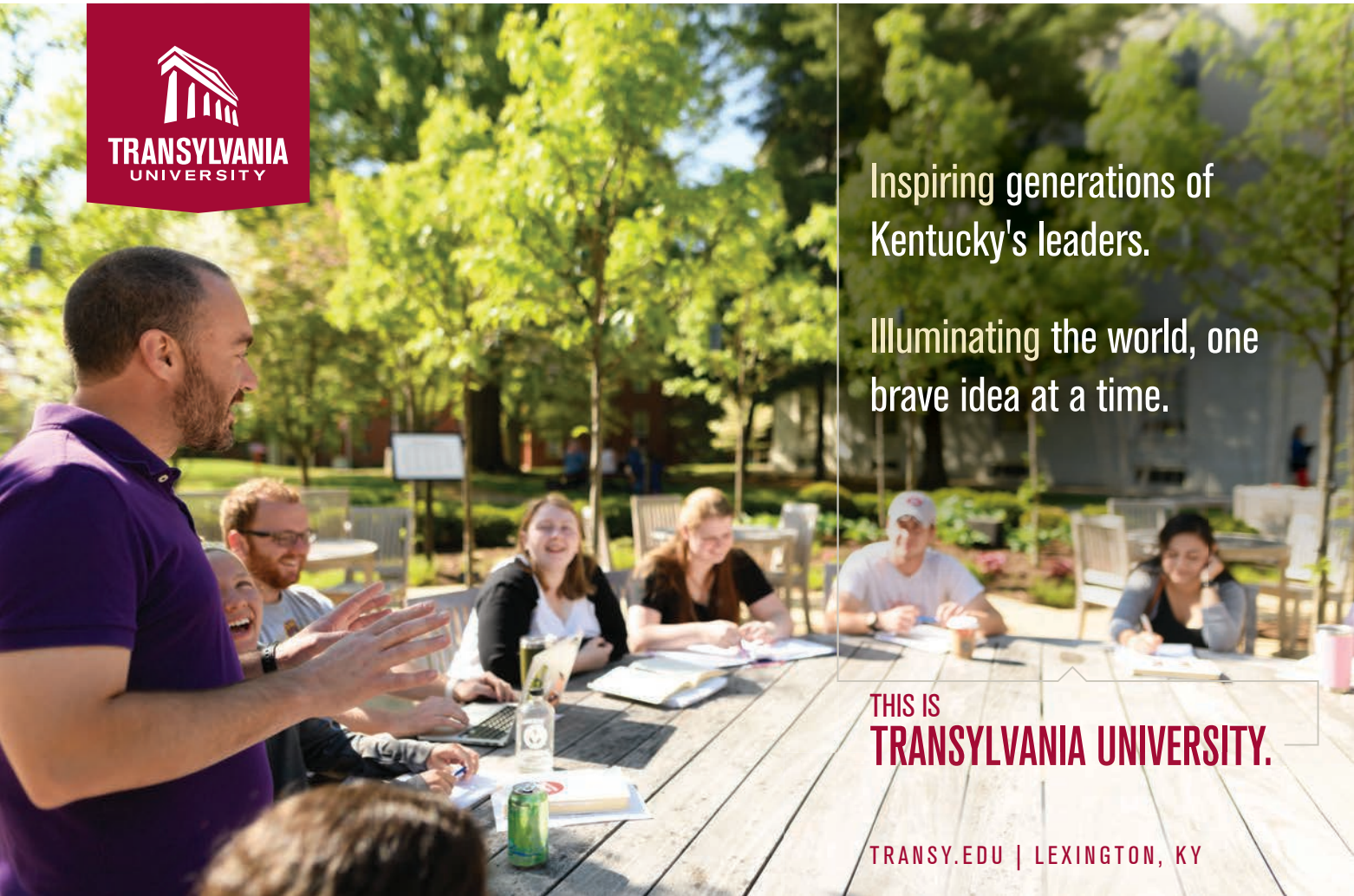


college, fosters excellence in all forms of expression: research and experiential learning, critical thinking, active citizenship, and international engagement.

Second is the value of that experience. While tuition sticker price has risen, the average net cost (tuition, room, board, books minus scholarships and financial aid) has fallen at WKU. We have been intentional in redirecting and increasing financial aid to more of a need-based model to ensure anyone who wants to attend our university has the opportunity.

Third, the benefits are both immediate and long-term. Students learn about community, develop friendships, and experience other cultures and ways of thinking all while developing the skills they need to be successful in their futures. Studies show college graduates earn up to 65 percent more every week than high school graduates and are more likely to show higher satisfaction with their lives. ■

Lorie Hailey is special publications editor for The Lane Report. She can be reached at lorie@lanereport.com.



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Venture capital from SIDIS and financing from PNC Bank have gone into a new entrepreneurial space at 900 E. Main St. in downtown Louisville. Among its first occupants will be Story Labs co-working space, MobileMedTek and Adaptiv Endo LLC.

modernize Kentucky's support for high-tech, high-growth-potential businesses.

In Louisville this has meant funding a coalition called LEAP, which stands for Louisville Entrepreneurial Acceleration Partnership. This partnership includes \$1.3 million in state funding for five entities: Greater Louisville Inc.'s Enterprise Corp.; The Louisville Healthcare CEO Council; the recently added 1804 Entrepreneurship Center; XRateHealth; and the University of Louisville. Now there is an April report by nationally respected TechStars.

KY Innovation is the new name for the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development's initiative supporting business founders and growing companies. In August 2018, it called for proposals to lead RISE hubs around the state. KY Innovation plans to invest more than \$4.7 million in these regional efforts, more than doubling funding that had gone to the 12 offices of the former Kentucky Innovation Network. Each participating RISE entity must include a proposed match for the funding it wants from Frankfort. The funding contract for LEAP can be renewed for up to five years.

Specialty spinoff events are being held for health-care entrepreneurs, including a CareTech competition to be held during Kentucky Derby Week, with Pitchbook as a sponsor as part of the Louisville Healthcare CEO Council efforts.

Will Metcalf, director of research, development and strategic innovations at the University of Louisville, chairs LEAP.

"We will be leveraging our area's health-care innovation with new Entrepreneurs in Residence, and LEAP will be developing a CRM database in Salesforce of entrepreneurs in the area," Metcalf said. "There will be more connections amongst associations to build up the area's ecosystems."

Most important from his perspective will be corporate engagement in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, he said.

Significant impact in Louisville is expected as a result of venture capital from the Covington office of SIDIS – an



Will Metcalf, Director of Research, Development and Strategic Innovations, University of Louisville

Reinventing Startup Support

Louisville's entrepreneurship ecosystem is seeing a range of new developments

BY DAWN MARIE YANKEELOV

WITH state government shuttering its dozen Kentucky Innovation Network offices in favor of more localized support for startup business ecosystems, the Greater Louisville region is percolating with new public-sector ventures to incite economic growth by nurturing the area's entrepreneurs.

The Louisville metropolitan area is growing, but not as rapidly as it would prefer with a rate of 4.2 percent between 2010 and 2017, according to the United States Census Bureau.

In the current business era of go-go internet-oriented capitalism and informal impact collaboration, most cities are making a technology-sector grab. They are encouraging new channels and success models for all types of startup and growth businesses striving for profitability.

In place of its former network of similar offices offering similar services, the commonwealth's rebranded KY Innovation program now is forming Regional Innovation for Startups and Entrepreneurs (RISE) partnerships, part of its 120-county effort to

Alex Day, the founder of SBN and its Venture Fund, speaks to the inaugural Cincinnati Node SBN Meetup in April at Fueled Collective in Cincinnati.

acronym for Spirited Individuals Delivering Innovative Solutions, a life sciences-focused private investment and management company founded in Colorado in 2004.

SIDIS dollars plus financing from PNC Bank will open a new entrepreneurial space at 900 E. Main St. in Louisville that will include local players like Story Labs, a co-working space. SIDIS' investments in Kentucky's largest city exceed \$13 million. In addition to the Main Street space, there is Louisville-based MobileMedTek and Adaptiv Endo LLC.

SIDIS is a backer of Covington-based BioLOGIC, a community-supported foundation dedicated to advancing human health through innovation, education and entrepreneurship, and plans on playing an ongoing role in the Northern Kentucky region's health-care innovation corridor.

Grace Simrall, chief of civic innovation and technology for Louisville Metro government, and others from the region participated as judges in BioLOGIC's recent life-science innovation awards competition. Louisville-based Innovative Therapeutix, a pediatric-focused device company that solves medical and developmental issues in infants and children, was a semi-finalist in the competition.

"More informal collaboration amongst entrepreneurs and those in our region is something I encourage," said Galen Powers, Louisville native and



CTO of SIDIS. "With the 900 E. Main St. building, we are trying to create a physical space, which makes that easier." A June ribbon-cutting for the building is planned.



Galen Powers,
Chief
Technology
Officer, SIDIS

New network for collaboration

Louisville investor and entrepreneur Alex Day would like to see more Midwest and regional activity putting together mentors, entrepreneurs, and idea producers – whom he calls "explorers" – as well as experts from the corporate world looking to get into the commercialization cycle.

Day has been working for about eight years on a new entrepreneurial network concept with a paid membership model called the Shelton Business Network (SBN). After a soft launch in 2018 in Evansville, Ind., the network team has opened

nodes in Louisville, Cincinnati and Lexington.

The network has launched a sister fund called the Shelton Venture Fund, which aims by the end of the year to be a \$20 million fund investing in early-stage startups. First investments are targeted to occur in the second quarter of 2019, but only for those entrepreneurs who complete key curriculum in SBN.

"I see real change in Louisville," Day said. "I see, for the first time, a collaborative business spirit, with entrepreneurs taking a leadership role – a drastic change from 20 years ago when I started my own company (in pharma)."

Day has pulled together a founding member team. Key first entrepreneurial companies in the Shelton fold include Blue 222, Thermal Wall Technologies, and TreaterER.



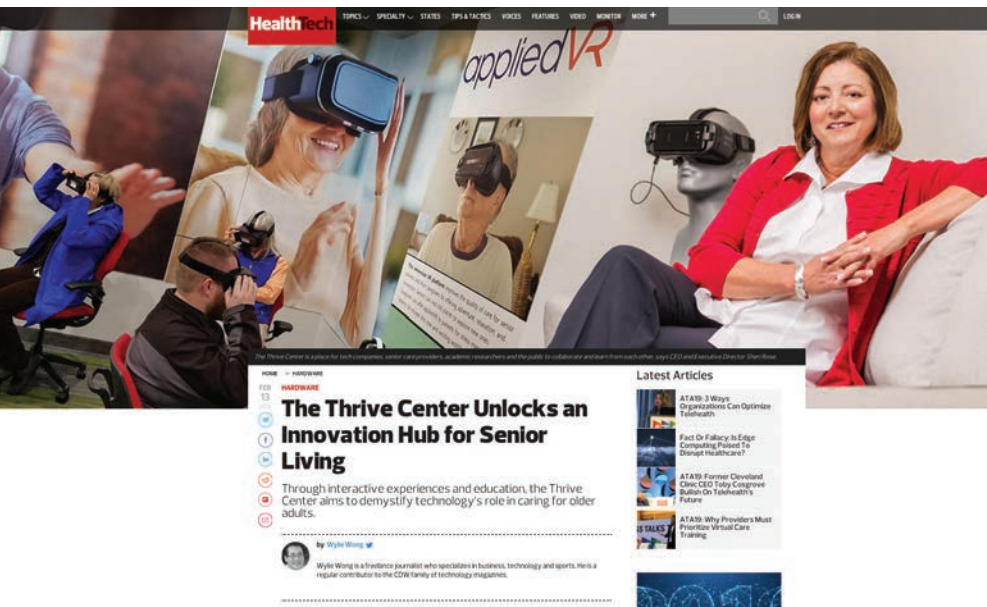
Alex Day,
Founder,
Shelton
Business
Network

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In its first year of operation the Thrive Center in downtown Louisville has been a platform for more than 80 aging and wellness startups to seek corporate partnerships and connections with members of the region's healthcare community.

Innovators Alliance (innovators-alliance.com), led by Managing Director John Reinhart.

The Innovators Alliance was recently formed by premier nonprofit senior-living organizations to solve challenges and create differentiation opportunities by partnering with young companies on emerging solutions for market tests, demonstrations or first sales inside institutions.

"After you've been through an incubator or accelerator, we offer an approach for two-way commercialization, which brings a validation methodology inside skilled nursing facilities, home health care, and more," Reinhart said.



John Reinhart,
Managing
Director,
Innovators
Alliance

This initiative has 10 key health-care organizations involved with facilities in Kentucky and nationwide, like Masonic Communities Kentucky, Hosparus Health, Christian Living Communities and others. The alliance's 2019 commercialization program is now taking applications on its website that will allow for investments and paid pilot opportunities, for example. First benefactors from the Thrive and Alliance efforts include PayActiv of San Jose, Calif., and VirtuSense of Peoria, Ill.

Co-working spaces keep sprouting

Co-working spaces are growing in size and number, including locations by national players like Regus US. More locally based, Reinhart's 31E on Bardstown Road at the former Edenside Christian Church property is expanding

"A primary goal for SBN is to bring more capital to early-stage companies, seed and pre-seed," he said. The SBN Venture Fund is collaborating with a family office in Cincinnati as well as other individual investors.

Capital ideas keep coming

Other venture capital access in the region announced in recent months includes a \$25 million Poplar Ventures L.P. fund investing in early growth-stage, cloud-based software technology companies in mid-America, as well as more cultivated activity in Southern Indiana from Indianapolis-based Elevate Ventures. A "Shark Tank" TV series casting call for entrepreneurs in Louisville took place at the University Club on April 29 under the organizing efforts of Louisville entrepreneur Andrew Prell, who is also running his second "Run for the Unicorns" blockchain event during Derby week in the city.

Louisville's other active circles for entrepreneurship expansion have grown out of persistent efforts over a number of

years to make a difference in what has been referred to as 'Possibility City.'

In the last year, the facility to have seen the most entrepreneurial activity nationwide from Louisville is not any of those recently seeded by the state under its RISE initiative. Nor is it the chamber of commerce, known as Greater Louisville Inc. In its first year of operation, the nonprofit Thrive Center (thrivecenterky.org) in downtown Louisville saw more than 80 documented aging and wellness-focused startups coming from all over the globe looking for corporate partnerships and other health-care ecosystem connections.

This young organization is one of two birthed out of Signature Healthcare's ongoing efforts – via funding from the defunct InnovateLTC (closed out in 2016) – to create a more collaborative venture approach to push Louisville to innovate and be recognized at the global table as a catalyst for aging innovation and wellness. The other spinoff effort from Innovate LTC and Thrive Center activity is the new

beyond its initial 12 entrepreneurial suites with a café and conference areas; Phase II will be to renovate the sanctuary, which is prepped for development. The Root, a venture of father-and-daughter duo Mark and Brigid Morrissey, is housed in a former grocery store in New Albany, Ind., that has been transformed into an 8,000-s.f. technology hub.

Diversity in seeding entrepreneurship remains an important component to West Louisville growth, according to Kevin Fields, executive director of the Louisville Central Community Centers, which held its Entrepreneurship 4 All Kickoff in March. That event began a 10-week training curricula, with backing for entrepreneurs under the WoodForest Foundry, with support from Woodforest National Bank. Entrepreneurs who were raised in the area have come back to support these new efforts, including Butch Mosby of Sponsor4 Success.

Metro Louisville government offers programs like those through the Nia Center (2900 W. Broadway in Louisville), plus the Entrée-preneurship Series with Chef Space, and the Etsy Craft Entrepreneurship to create a foundation to help budding business owners in specific fields get started or grow, pointed out Mary Ellen Wiederwohl, chief of Louisville Forward. In addition to training and guidance, Louisville Forward offers a suite of loan programs, including Spark, a \$500 to \$4,999 loan for those businesses younger than a year; Ignite, a \$5,000 to \$15,000 loan for businesses older than a year; the gap financing loan, which offers up to \$200,000 to eligible small businesses; and façade loans for exterior property improvements.

Intra-preneurship too

Growth from the corporate sector for entrepreneurship includes spinoffs. For example, Louisville has seen activity around spinoffs from major corporations like Genscape and El Toro. Last summer Genscape, the leading

global provider of data and intelligence for energy and commodity markets, announced the successful spin-out of its LineVision business, which provides secure non-contact transmission line monitoring, conductor asset management and dynamic line rating solutions to electric utilities worldwide.

Universities, and now high schools also, are active in encouraging students into entrepreneurial spaces. Those include the University of Louisville's School of Business Launch-IT program, as well as the J.B. Speed School of Engineering effort with Kindred Healthcare Inc. for internal innovation begun in 2017 under the name The Hive to aid in the development of technology inside that company. Ten to 12 engineering students (and soon business students) participate in Hive activities each quarter.

Revolution's Rise of the Rest Seed Fund, managed by ex-AOL mogul Steve Case, has invested in Kentucky, pushed regional entrepreneurs into the spotlight – including a recent appearance on “60 Minutes” – and put his influence behind AppHarvest's work to build an agtech ecosystem. The company recently launched an agricultural entrepreneur program at Pike County's Shelby Valley High School, where more than 80 students applied for 33 available slots.

City government efforts under KentuckianaWorks like Code Louisville, as well as nonprofits like the Technology Association of Louisville Kentucky, Code for Kentuckiana (Code for America), and others are advocating for more workforce training, STEAM curriculum, and other methods to introduce more tech talent through education to support the entrepreneurial landscape.

GLI President and CEO Kent Oyler has dubbed this the “Year of Technology” for Louisville and expects to see more interregional cooperation, especially through tools and tactics tied to the KY RISE efforts. Oyler points out



Bryan Welage, Sheltoewe Business Network Cincinnati Node Leader; Bobby Clark, Sheltoewe Business Network Lexington Leader, and Alex Day, Found of the Sheltoewe Business Network and Sheltoewe Venture Fund.

the Northern Kentucky region and Louisville both have strong corporate players to support more entrepreneurial efforts in logistics.

“We will be taking entrepreneurship to a higher level with national best practices, and the Techstar report will give us guidance on methodologies to make that happen, borrowing ideas from Cincinnati and its Centrifuse plan,” he said. Greater Louisville's Enterprise Corp. offers assistance for Louisville's entrepreneurs with business-plan assessments, capital access, strategic introductions and peer-to-peer networking through Mentor Louisville and RevIt. Oyler said he also hopes to revitalize the inactive Enterprise Angels group, and see more activity in the region from Bluegrass Angels, based in Lexington. ■



Kent Oyler, President/CEO, Greater Louisville Inc.

Dawn Marie Yankeelov is a correspondent for The Lane Report. She can be reached at editorial@lanereport.com.



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Building Blockchain for Business

Online degree program at the University of the
Cumberlands tackles a new form of data security

BY SHANNON CLINTON

THOUGH some other universities in the state may be better known, University of the Cumberlands in Williamsburg is making a name for itself in the burgeoning blockchain implementation sector with a cutting-edge degree program few others in the nation can boast.

The private liberal arts university founded in 1888 has a rapidly growing student body. Its total enrollment is about 11,700 students, of which about 9,000 are graduate students, most of whom take classes online.

Starting this summer, UC will be the first university in Kentucky and one of a

handful nationwide to offer a new online graduate degree program called Master of Science in Global Business with Blockchain Technology.

Blockchain technology uses a special shared-recordkeeping system of verifying, coding, adding and storing organized data – blocks of which are chained together uniquely and inalterably – across networks in a way that's not only versatile but exponentially harder for would-be wrongdoers to change or hack. This makes it attractive to companies in sectors including banking, health-care records, marketing and retail, among others.

The new program is regionally accredited by the Commission on

Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

UC Department Chair of the Hutton School of Business Lois McWhorter said the new graduate degree program will require about 31 credit hours and teach students high-demand skills in blockchain technology. Currently there are no set limits on the number of students who can enroll, she said.

Blockchain was chosen as a new degree program focus, McWhorter said, to build on the university's current strengths in the IT arena with a technological skill that is cutting edge, projected to be in demand long-term and transformative to the economy and the world.

In 2018, blockchain was among the most requested skills on LinkedIn, with mentions in more than 20,000 posted job openings throughout the U.S., McWhorter added.

While noting that blockchain engineers and developers can command six-figure salaries, a UC press release also states that companies such as Walmart, Amazon, FedEx and UPS are using the technology already, with other major banks and corporations eyeing it as well.

McWhorter said, for example, Walmart has notified produce suppliers of a mandatory switch to blockchain technology to quickly pinpoint sources of contaminated produce in the event of a recall, saving time and potentially lives. Ultimately consumers will have the ability to simply scan a code and determine a food's origins for greater transparency, she said.



Lois McWhorter, Department Chair, Hutton School of Business, University of the Cumberlands

"This type of technology allows for almost instantaneous tracking of almost any kind of transaction," she said. "...It is that ability to be able to track a transaction and track it very, very quickly that has made it so important."

Fine detail, more functions

In supply chain management, "smart contracts" can be imbedded in blockchain data to consistently ensure product quality is being met at all stops along shipping routes, McWhorter said. And in marketing applications, blockchain use allows companies not only to pinpoint how people interact with digital advertising but also to what extent – perhaps even reward individual consumers in digital currency based on their frequency of interactions.

Online students will learn how to develop code and perform data mining in

blockchain, address needs and challenges in the field, analyze its impact on business, and create and implement a variety of blockchain functions, according to the university's website.

To help online students grasp the ins and outs of blockchain technology, McWhorter said well-qualified faculty and current industry practitioners are bringing their expertise to the coursework.

"We feel like that really benefits our students," she said. "We think that this is really groundbreaking technology; it's a groundbreaking degree."

UC is no stranger to new technologies like blockchain, as the university has been designated a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense by the National Security Agency and the Department of Homeland Security, which McWhorter said is a designation held by only three Kentucky universities.

Other master's degree programs in the field at UC include information technology, information systems technology and digital forensics. A Ph.D. in information technology is also offered.

Internationally recognized certification

Students who complete UC's newest online courses in blockchain technology will experience a combination of virtual

Blockchain technology at a glance

BLOCKCHAIN serves as a shared, digital ledger that no single person or entity controls, and that the public can view and impact, allowing companies to access and track business data securely and efficiently.

Though it had its earliest applications in the realm of cryptocurrency, like Bitcoin, blockchain has been found to have far more uses, including transactions in real estate, human resources, marketing, health care, banking and supply chain management sectors, as well as in voter registration.

A useful infographic that illustrates in-depth what blockchain technology is and does can be found at tmsnrt.rs/2K2sDvn.

For more information about the Master of Science in Global Business with Blockchain Technology at the University of the Cumberland, visit bit.ly/2IxExwg.

Source: University of the Cumberland

lab exercises, research theory and application activities, and learn required skills to take the internationally recognized certified blockchain professional certification exam, according to UC's website.

"This blockchain degree is for active professionals in information technology, business, health care, etc., who want to advance their careers and build upon the skills they already possess," said Donnie Grimes, vice president for information services at Cumberland, in a press release. "The program will provide a robust, comprehensive education on blockchain technology's reach and usage. We want

our students as prepared as possible to navigate the dynamic field of cryptocurrency well, manage technology with excellence and bolster their reputation within their careers."

UC Vice President for Academic Affairs Chris Leskiw said in his 16 years at the university, he's seen a consistent emphasis on embracing new technologies. UC's first online degree programs were offered in 2005, among the first in the state, he said.

"We've been known for our innovations," he said.

Leskiw said consumers will also have greater access to data, such as their own health care, insurance and billing records, with the more widespread use of blockchain technology.

In the future, blockchain courses and certifications may eventually be offered to more UC students and even high school students, Leskiw said. And program graduates won't have to move away to a big city to use these skills. With accessibility to high speed internet, they can stay in the area if they choose, and benefit their own communities, he said.

"Train our own so they serve our own, and serve the people of the mountains," Leskiw said. ■



*Chris Leskiw,
Vice President
for Academic
Affairs,
University
of the
Cumberland*

Shannon Clinton is a correspondent for The Lane Report. She can be reached at editorial@lanereport.com.



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Kentucky's young professionals and creatives



Nicole Sartini-Cprek (left) and Jennifer Owens, owners of Bridge Counseling and Wellness in Louisville.

Holly Colwick Photography photo

A Bridge to Better Living

Integrating mental health and wellness with '3 Core Integrative'

NICOLE Sartini-Cprek and Jennifer Owens own Bridge Counseling and Wellness, an integrative mental health and wellness center in Louisville. They offer counseling, walk and talk therapy, wellness retreats, yoga classes and a whole host of other services for high-functioning people with anxiety or depression, adults recovering from difficult childhoods, anyone seeking more balance in their lives, and people going through major life changes.

"I decided in my own therapists' office in 2006 to become a therapist myself because of the personal work I had done recovering from PTSD and depression, and the insight and clarity I felt I had gained and hoped to articulate in a more useful manner," Sartini-Cprek said. She is a licensed professional clinical counselor (LPCC) and has a master's degree in education with a focus in mental health counseling.

In January 2015 she and Owens joined forces to open Bridge Counseling and Wellness.

"The idea of recognizing the connection between the mind and body is foundational to our mental health philosophy, so 'bridging' any gap between those two things in the people we worked with seemed appropriate," Sartini-Cprek said of the choice in selecting the business' name. They

started out in a small office in the Heyburn Building on Broadway, where each had been practicing as a solo clinician. Owens is a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) with a master's degree in social work.

Their first offering was a weekly yoga class and soon they added a contract therapist and formed a group practice. In May 2015, Bridge moved to its current location on Baxter Avenue. It's a converted old house that was built in 1875, the same year as the first running of the Kentucky Derby.

As the business has grown – Bridge is now a team of 18 licensed professionals and growing – so has the space. The owners acquired an additional five offices at the building next door, and they are in the process of securing a third location this summer in another part of Louisville. Currently the business has a total of nine offices, a reception area and waiting rooms, a yoga and meditation studio, and a phlebotomy lab where clients can get their blood tested for vitamin deficiencies and hormone imbalances that might be affecting mood or anxiety levels. Bridge team members offer nutritional counseling as one of their integrative strategies.

"We purposefully stick to approaches that are evidence-based, not just anything that labels itself as holistic or integrative," Sartini-Cprek said. "We are

all licensed professionals who have done our own, and continue to do, our own mental health work."

In 2019 the business owners launched the Academy of Integrative Mental Health (AIMH) to provide certification training for other mental health professionals in three core areas: movement/exercise, mindfulness/meditation and nutrition/supplements.

The Bridge partners call it "3 Core Integrative," a program that incorporates the three most evidence-based complementary treatments for mental health.

"We have found through personal experience and the results of our five years of practicing this model that when clients receive a combined traditional treatment of talk therapy and/or med management and support in the 3 Core Integrative facets, a much higher level of improvement was achieved," Owens said.

"We wanted to help other providers feel confident and prepared to incorporate the foundations we use at Bridge into their own practice in an evidence-based and meaningful way," Sartini-Cprek said.

Physical exercise has played such an important role for Owens in her own mental health and overall wellness – and that of her clients – that she became a licensed personal trainer. She is also a certified ecotherapist, a term combining ecology and psychology, referring to the healing power of nature.

"A substantial and growing collection of research suggests there are multiple mental and physical health benefits to connecting with nature," Owens said, "including improved mood, reduction in anxiety and depression symptoms, and decreased anger, as well as lower blood pressure and improved immune function."

She facilitates forest bathing workshops and other outdoor-based outings and retreats through Bridge Counseling and Wellness.

"We genuinely want the best for our clients and are incredibly honored to be a part of their healing journey," Sartini-Cprek said. "We also believe that people doing good in the world are no less deserving of a good income than those working in a field where earning money is viewed as more acceptable. Fair pay helps make this important work more sustainable and the quality of service excellent." —Kathie Stamps

Minglewood Mixes up Flavors, Sustainability and CBD Cocktails

MINDFULNESS, sustainability and world cuisine may seem like an odd combination, but all of these practices (and flavors) come together at Minglewood, a unique restaurant and social hub across from the courthouse complex in downtown Lexington.

Owned by Trish Trungate, former owner of The Dish, Minglewood features flavors inspired by Trungate's many visits to the Caribbean, with her own personal touch added. Dishes range from a fried chicken hot brown to wings covered in an orange teriyaki sauce with bleu cheese and Phish sticks – named after the iconic jam band and featuring catfish dredged in an onion habanero hot sauce puree with pickled vegetable tartar sauce and slaw. According to Trungate, some of the combinations may seem perplexing, but the flavors they present will leave your mouth watering for more.



Another unique element of Minglewood's menu that helps it stand out amid a crowded downtown Lexington food scene is its cannabidiol-infused cocktails. The drinks come in two flavors, the first being Sour Diesel, a play on the whiskey sour and featuring Jim Beam Double Oak Bourbon, fresh tangerine honey juice, sour lemon and CBD. The other is Cucumber Haze, which featured organic cucumber vodka and lemon, topped off with CBD, which according to Trungate adds an herbal note to the drinks.

The special cocktails have also helped at least one customer begin the path to recovery from chronic pain.

Recently a customer complaining of chronic back pain for nearly two decades had two of the cocktails, according to Trungate, then went home and slept the best he has since the pain began. He implemented CBD into other aspects of his life for the pain reduction and muscle relaxation they yield, improving his overall quality of life.

However, perhaps the biggest happening getting people to mingle at Minglewood has been a local plastic-straw ban that Trungate has been advocating. The campaign started as a one-month challenge in late 2017, when Trungate asked other businesses on her downtown block to #DontSuckInDecember. Nearby businesses such as Corto Lima, SideBar and Sam's Hot Dog Stand answered the call, and the campaign helped ignite a conversation about sustainability and being eco-friendly, not just while taking in a night on the town but at home as well.

She partnered with Maker's Mark last year on a nationwide campaign, signing 25 local partners for the program in less than 48 hours. In addition, Minglewood was the first Lexington restaurant to become Green Check certified by the city, in recognition of its sustainability efforts. Trungate says her goal for 2019 is to eliminate single-use plastic wrap around the restaurant. —Matt Wickstrom



Ky. Ranks as One of Nation's Worst States for Millennials to Live

KENTUCKY ranks as the 8th worst state (including the District of Columbia) for millennials to live in according to a new study by WalletHub.

The study ranked the states based upon five key dimensions, including affordability, education and health, quality of life, economic health, and civic engagement, along with 36 relevant metrics such as the average price of a Starbucks latte, the share of millennials with a primary-care doctor, median student loan debt and more.

Loved by marketers yet vilified by media, millennials are projected in 2019 to become the largest population in the U.S., giving them a huge influence on American culture and consumption. Today, these early-20- to early-30-somethings – often depicted as entitled, parentally dependent and emotionally fragile – are responsible for 21% of all consumer discretionary spending in the U.S.

Despite trillion-dollar purchasing power and higher educational attainment, millennials are economically worse off than their parents. Why? Millennials entered the workforce in the shadow of the Great Recession, which has affected job prospects and earning potential. By one estimate, millennials today earn 20 percent less than baby boomers did at the same age. —Matt Wickstrom

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THE LANE LIST

MBA PROGRAMS LICENSED IN KENTUCKY

The Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education licenses 32 institutions to award Master of Business Administration degrees to students in the commonwealth. Some universities operate multiple campuses and many offer specialization MBAs.

INSTITUTION, LOCATION	PROGRAM	FACE TO FACE	DISTANCE LEARNING
American National University—Online, Roanoke, Va.	General	N	Y
Asbury University, Wilmore	General	N	Y
Ashford University – Online, San Diego	General; Business Economics Specialization; Entrepreneurship Specialization; Environmental Management Specialization; Finance Specialization; Global Management Specialization; Health Care Administration Specialization; Human Resources Management Specialization; Information Systems Specialization; Marketing Specialization; Organizational Leadership Specialization; Project Management Specialization; Public Administration Specialization; Standard Specialization; Supply Chain Management Specialization	N	Y
Bellarmine University, Louisville	General; EMBA (weekend, weeknight)	Y	N
Brescia University, Owensboro	General	Y	
Campbellsville University, Campbellsville	General; Healthcare Management; Human Resource Management; International Business; Marketing	Y	Y
Campbellsville University—Louisville Center, Louisville	General; Professional MBA	Y	Y
Campbellsville University—Harrodsburg, Harrodsburg	General	Y	Y
DeVry University—Online, Naperville, Ill.	General; Customer Experience Management; Global Supply Chain Management		Y
Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond	General		
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University—Louisville, Louisville	General; Management and Operations; Accounting; International Business; Public Administration	Y	
Indiana Wesleyan University—Online, Marion, Ind.	General; Project Management; Accounting; Personal Finance Planning; HR Management	N	Y
IWU—Elizabethtown	General; Health Care; Accounting	Y	
IWU—Florence	General; Accounting; HR Management Resources Management	Y	N
IWU—Lexington	General; Accounting; HR Management Resources Management	Y	N
IWU—Louisville	General; Accounting; HR Management Resources Management	Y	N
IWU—Radcliff	General; Accounting; Applied Management; Health Care; Human Resource Management	Y	N
Kentucky State University, Frankfort	General; Accounting; Marketing; Finance; Public Administration; Computer Science	Y	N
Lincoln Memorial University—Online, Harrogate, Tenn.	General; Marketing; Sport Management	N	Y
Lindsey Wilson College, Columbia	General; Lean Systems	N	Y
Lindsey Wilson College—St. Mark's Campus, Louisville	General; Lean Systems		
McKendree University—Radcliff, Radcliff	General; HR Management	Y	N
McKendree University—Shepherdsville, Shepherdsville	General; HR Management, Personnel Administration	Y	N
Midway University, Midway	General; Equine Studies; Health Care Administration; Sport Management	Y	Y
Morehead State University, Morehead	General; Health Systems	N	Y
Mount St. Joseph University—Hebron, Hebron	General	Y	N
Murray State University, Murray	General; Business Analytics; Global Communications; Economic Development; Finance; Marketing; HR Management	Y	Y
Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights	General	Y	Y
Northwood University—Online, Midland, Mich.	General	N	Y
Sullivan University, Louisville	Executive MBA; General; MBA, MSMT	Y	Y
Sullivan University—Lexington, Lexington	Executive MBA; General; MBA, MSMT	Y	Y
Thomas More University, Crestview Hills	General	Y	Y
Thomas More University—Citigroup, Florence	General	Y	Y
Troy University—Online, Troy, Ala.	General	N	Y
Union College, Barbourville	General	N	Y
University of Kentucky, Lexington	General; Project Management; Global Commerce; Lean Six Sigma; Health Care Leaders	Y	N
University of Louisville, Louisville	General	Y	Y
University of Pikeville, Pikeville	General; Entrepreneurship and Innovation; Health Care Management; Professional	N	Y
University of Southern California—Online, Los Angeles	General	N	Y
University of the Cumberlands, Williamsburg	General	N	Y
Walden University—Online, Minneapolis	General; Accounting for Managers; Corporate Finance; Entrepreneurship; Health Care Management; Health Care System Improvement; Human Resource Management; International Business; Leadership; Marketing; Project Management; Risk Management; Self-Designed; Strategies for Sustainability; Technology Management	N	Y
Webster University—Louisville, Louisville	General; Management & Leadership	Y	N
Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green	General; Professional	Y	Y

Source: Council on Postsecondary Education

SPOTLIGHT ON THE ARTS



Instruments of Success

Manufacturing facility could be music to Knott County's ears

BY CHRIS CATHERS

IN early March, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) announced a \$12 million investment for addiction recovery and workforce development in Kentucky's Appalachian counties, including more than \$867,000 for a manufacturing project in Knott County focused on the arts.

Troublesome Creek Stringed Instruments Co., which is located in Hazard Community and Technical College's Kentucky School of Craft in Hindman, will manufacture high-end custom artisanal guitars, mandolins and mountain dulcimers from Appalachian hardwoods. The Appalachian Artisan Center's existing School of Luthiery, also in Hindman, will serve as the

workforce development arm; Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program (EKCEP) will provide financial assistance for training.

The company will rent the space from HCTC, and, according to an ARC press release, it will be Knott County's first manufacturing facility.

"I think it will mean more for what it represents than what it actually is," said Doug Naselroad, master luthier at the Hindman School of Luthiery and director of Troublesome Creek. "It's going to be a nice shop that employs people, but it will represent a community that has pressed its infrastructure to its best use to address a need of the people there. I think we're modeling something that will bring a lot of regional and national attention to Hindman."

Employment projections for Troublesome Creek are 18 employees for the initial three years of the grant, growing to 37 by the end of year six and ultimately reaching 65 employees. Workforce development is only part of the ARC funding. The other is addiction recovery, which Troublesome Creek is also addressing through partnerships with Hickory Hills Recovery Center and Knott County Drug Court to put

When it begins formal production, Troublesome Creek Stringed Instruments will produce high-end custom artisanal guitars, mandolins, ukuleles and mountain dulcimers.

recovering addicts who have an interest in luthiery to work.

"That's the excitement of it for me, when people can discover they have value doing something they never dreamed they'd be doing," Naselroad said. "We've got a guy coming to work in the next month or so. He's a former coal miner, came through drug court. He bottomed out in a lot of ways, but he wants to work for us, to start over and I have a very optimistic view of how that's going to go. We want to make fine instruments for the sake of making fine instruments, but also for the recovery of people in the community."

Apart from the significant relationship with ARC, Naselroad said this initiative would not have happened without cooperation from other partners. The Mountain Association for Community Economic Development loaned Troublesome Creek money for machinery. The United States Department of Agriculture and Appalachian Impact Fund assisted with seed money. A grant from the Kentucky Arts Council has helped train some patients at Hickory Hills in the art of luthiery.

Naselroad said local leaders are cautiously optimistic about the initiative's prospects.

"I think they're getting a little excited now. Up to the point where we finally gained approval, they were appropriately skeptical of the funding ever coming through. They've been promised a lot in the past and been disappointed," Naselroad said. "When they see we're actually working and giving paychecks, and the local payroll tax starts coming in, I think they'll be happy."

Though Naselroad is a Winchester resident, he spends much of his time in Hindman to the point that he said he feels his prosperity is tied to the community's success.

"Succeeding at this model, creating an example of what can be done with other businesses in the county and region, it really makes you feel a responsibility," he said. "Working the arts into recovery efforts, working recovery efforts into economic development, that's a sacred trust people put in you. We don't want to drop the ball." ■



Master luthier Doug Naselroad, director of Troublesome Creek Stringed Instrument Co. in Hindman, strums a guitar he made.



Chris Cathers is executive director of the Kentucky Arts Council.



Beech Bend Amusement Park in Bowling Green features 40 rides and a water park.

Go West!

Bowling Green Area
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visitbgky.org 1-800-326-7465

Owensboro Daviess County
Convention & Visitors Bureau
visitowensboro.com 1-800-489-1131

Paducah Convention & Visitors Bureau
paducah.travel
1-800-PADUCAH (723-8224)

The Best of the West

Western Kentucky tour showcases the region's top attractions

BY KATHERINE TANDY BROWN

SPRINGTIME has finally burst forth and it's the perfect time to get yourself outdoors and revel in Mother Nature's annual show. So pack up the family and go west...to western Kentucky, that is.

The western Kentucky cities of Bowling Green, Owensboro and Paducah have teamed up for tourism, and are ready to show off their finest attractions, eateries, events and overnight lodgings. Meeting planners, this includes you, for corporate retreat sites abound in the West.

Bowling Green

The state's third largest city, Bowling Green is a planner's delight. It's hard to beat a convention center with golf adjacent, an underground reception in a cave, and friendly "behind the wheel in a speedy car" competition at the National Corvette Museum.

"One popular team-building option at the museum's Motorsports Park features two team members in a golf cart," says Beth Noffsinger, communications director for the Bowling Green Area Convention & Visitors Bureau. "The driver is blindfolded

and his passenger has to talk him through a cones course."

Lost River Cave is so dark you'll think you're blindfolded as you learn regional history and geology on the state's only underground boat ride. Afterwards, strap on a helmet for a thrilling zip line adventure. At the 1925 L&N Depot and Historic Train Park, teams can maneuver out of an escape room in a caboose.

Opening in May, Olde Stone Country Club can host corporate retreats in a luxurious lodge with five-star dining, an outdoor pool and golf on a course designed by the legendary Arthur Hill and top rated by *Golf Digest*.

Corporate teams and families alike can hop on some 40 rides at Beech Bend Amusement Park & Splash Lagoon. Come August, the famous Beech Bend Dragstrip at Beech Bend Raceway Park will once again host the Tri-Five Nationals, which draws folks from across the nation to celebrate classic 1955-1957 Chevys in a car show and drag racing.

Be sure to take in Western Kentucky University's Kentucky Museum exhibit on Bowling Green's native son and favorite foodie, Duncan Hines.

When your tummy starts rumbling, head to 440 Main/Micki's on Main Bar & Grill, with an upscale and a casual restaurant on downtown's Fountain Square. Live music thrives on weekends at its outdoor patio.

At day's end, put your tired feet up overnight at the Candle Loft, overlooking

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Fountain Square Park. This downtown bed-and-breakfast has a full suite with kitchen and complimentary breakfast at any of four nearby restaurants.

Owensboro

Known for bluegrass, bourbon and barbecue, Owensboro is morphing into an extraordinary destination.

The internationally renowned Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame and Museum celebrates the legacy of Bill Monroe, the Father of Bluegrass Music, and other Hall of Fame pickers. The annual ROMP Festival, June 26-29, highlights bluegrass musicians from around the world. This year's headliners include Ricky Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder, Patti Loveless, and the Del McCoury Band.

The O.Z. Tyler Distillery, a recent addition to the official Kentucky Bourbon Trail, is located on a site that's housed distilleries for 130 years. Its novel TerrePure process ages bourbon to four-year-old status in a year and a day. Really.

Known as the BBQ Capital of the World, Owensboro is one of the few places you'll find mutton, which has to be slow-smoked to become tender. Since 1979, the city has hosted its International Bar-B-Q Festival the second week in May.

Three fabulous Owensboro eateries lure barbecue lovers from far and wide.



The Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame and Museum has live concerts nearly every Saturday night.



The fourth-generation, family-owned Moonlite Bar-B-Q Inn goes through 10,000 pounds of mutton a week. Their dinner buffet is spectacular. Six generations have been smoking meat at Old Hickory Bar-B-Que, where you can take home award-winning sauce. And Ole South Bar-B-Q, known for its ribs, serves breakfast and dinner buffets.

The brand new Diamond Lake Resort has lakes, go-karts and a putt-putt course. Families and corporate groups can overnight in a hotel room, cabin and/or a tiny house.

Paducah

Paducah has become a national model for its artist relocation program. You can ogle art all over the city and visit artists' studios in its oldest residential neighborhood. This artsy town is home to the inspirational National Quilt Museum, where teambuilding groups can make their own quilt squares.

Voted the top attraction in Kentucky on TripAdvisor, the Wall-to-Wall Project tells Paducah's history in 50 large murals on its working floodwall, which was built after the disastrous 1937 flood. At the River Discovery Center, learn about Kentucky's strong river heritage; navigation, industry and environmental concerns; and the river as a local economic driver.

Paducah's River Discovery Center explores how the city's strategic location at the confluence of the Ohio and Tennessee rivers has shaped life in the city.

Try captaining at the center's state-of-the-art boat simulator. Groups can meet in its upstairs Founders Room that overlooks the river.

Freight House chef Sara Bradley was recently named the runner-up on Top Chef, a reality competition television series that airs on Bravo. The menu of the farm-to-table restaurant changes with the seasons and walls sport local and national art. At the historic 1939 Coca-Cola plant – now known as the Coke Plant – you'll find Mellow Mushroom Pizza, Pipers Tea & Coffee, and Dry Ground Brewing Co., so named because the Coke plant was built on dry ground guaranteed never to get flooded after the devastating 1937 event.

Fruit-of-the-vine connoisseurs will want to visit Kentucky's largest and most-awarded winery, Purple Toad, the producer of 36 varieties.

Tuck in overnight at the 10-room, boutique 1812 Hotel on Market House Square downtown, just a relaxing stroll away from performing arts venues, restaurants and attractions. ■

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

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Using Old Tires to Create New Energy

EVERY year, millions of used tires end up in landfills, stockpiles or are thoughtlessly thrown out alongside a road or creek. In an effort to address the problem, East Kentucky Power Cooperative is using the equivalent of some 2.4 million tires as fuel to make energy for more than a million Kentucky residents.

Tire-derived fuel, or TDF, is a supplemental fuel source for EKPC's Spurlock Station near Maysville. Two of the power plant's generating units incorporate state-of-the-art technology that allows them to burn TDF along with coal in the units' boilers.

The technology vastly reduces emissions, whether the fuel is coal or TDF, making the units among the cleanest in the nation fueled by coal, according to EKPC.

As the infrastructure for collecting, processing and marketing waste tires has developed, Spurlock Station has become an integral part of the network of disposing of tires.

Last year, more of Kentucky's waste tires ended up at Spurlock Station than any other location, according to TAG Resource Recovery, a consultant on



The tire-derived fuel (TDF) being used at East Kentucky Power Cooperative has become a win-win proposition that keeps old tires out of landfills and produces energy for Kentucky consumers.

waste tires for the Kentucky Division of Waste Management.

"EKPC really performs a significant environmental service to the region by using tires in an environmentally sound manner," said Terry Gray, of TAG Resource Recovery.

When TDF arrives at the power plant, it doesn't look much like the tires on your car. The tires have been cut into small chunks and the metal bead wire has been removed.

The fuel arrives by truck and is stockpiled, said Jacob Bevins, Spurlock's materials handling operations supervisor. When it's ready to go to the boiler, TDF is mixed with coal and transported by conveyor.

According to EKPC, tire-derived fuel burns quite nicely in the power plant's boiler. On a pound-for-pound basis, the amount of energy released during combustion is higher than the coal typically used in the units.

"Currently, EKPC is receiving about 2,000 tons of TDF a month, or 24,000 tons a year," said Mark Horn, EKPC's manager of fuel and emissions.

Since 2013, about 13.2 million tires have gone to Spurlock Station, said Horn.

"TDF is a cost-effective fuel that helps EKPC generate energy as affordably and reliably as we can for our 16 owner-member electric cooperatives," said Don Mosier, EKPC's chief operating officer and executive vice president. "At the same time, this helps to prevent waste tires from piling up in landfills or stockpiles year after year."

New Exhibit Showcases Annual Derby Tradition

IN Kentucky, the month of May always starts off with the celebration that is the Kentucky Derby, often dubbed "the greatest two minutes in sports."

For the last 20 years, Woodford Reserve, the presenting sponsor of the Derby, has created a commemorative Derby bottle that has become an annual collectors item anticipated by bourbon and racing fans. To honor that milestone, the Frazier History Museum in Louisville – the official starting point of the Kentucky Bourbon Trail – has unveiled a special yearlong exhibit that features all 20 Derby bottles and the original artwork used to design the labels, along with other Derby artifacts.

"The Woodford Reserve & the Kentucky Derby: Two Decades of Artistry, Bourbon and Horse Racing" exhibit is housed within The Spirit of Kentucky, a large permanent exhibition about the history, craft, and culture of Kentucky bourbon that the Frazier opened last August.

"The Frazier Museum is the where the world meets Kentucky," Frazier President and CEO Penny Peavler said.

"So we and our partners at Brown-Forman are eager to celebrate the two industries for which Kentucky is world-famous: horse racing and bourbon whiskey."

The limited-edition 2019 Woodford Reserve Derby bottle features the colorful artwork of Keith Anderson and showcases



Artist Keith Anderson has produced the artwork for Woodford Reserve's commemorative Derby bottle for the second consecutive year.

Thoroughbreds racing across the front. This is the second year that Anderson, who works in the Bourbon Street Café at Brown-Forman headquarters in Louisville, has been chosen to have his work featured on the collectible annual release.

"My vision for this year's Derby bottle came to me on Derby Day in 2018, when I was at Churchill Downs watching the horses race past me," Anderson said. "Their sheer power, their colors and the jockeys are seared into my mind – and now featured on the bottle."



Kentucky's Safest Cities

SAFEWISE, a resource for safety and security issues, recently released its list of each state's safest communities, using FBI crime data as the backbone of its reports.

The Safewise rankings were based on the number of reported violent crimes (aggravated assault, murder, rape and robbery) in each city. If there was a tie, the number of property crimes (burglary, arson, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft) was factored in. To level the field, Safewise calculated the rate of crimes per 1,000 people in each city.

In a separate national study, Safewise found that 29% of Americans cited violent crime as their most concerning safety issue, followed by property crime (22%), digital security (21%), health and wellness (12%), environmental (10%) and workplace (6%).

Overall Kentucky's violent crime rate is lower than the national average: 3.42 incidents per 1,000 people compared to the national average of 4.49. And Kentucky's safest cities did even better, reporting fewer than one violent crime incident per 1,000.

THE 20 SAFEST CITIES IN KENTUCKY

CITY	POPULATION	MEDIAN INCOME	VIOLENT CRIME (PER 1,000)	PROPERTY CRIME (PER 1,000)
1 Vine Grove	6,055	\$59,939	0	5.62
2 Prospect	4,905	\$113,711	0	5.91
Lakeside Park/ 3 Crestview Hills	6,133	\$86,778	0	6.36
4 Edgewood	8,771	\$93,958	.11	5.24
5 Central City	5,837	\$36,100	.17	8.22
6 Alexandria	9,486	\$72,721	.21	5.48
7 Williamstown	3,971	\$35,089	.25	16.87
8 Villa Hills	7,494	\$85,230	.27	9.21
9 Williamsburg	5,342	\$32,318	.37	13.29
10 Benton	4,533	\$40,938	.44	17.21
11 Taylor Mill	6,774	\$62,154	.44	11.81
12 Greenville	4,347	\$27,415	.46	21.85
13 Wilmore	6,380	\$46,833	.47	18.18
14 Fort Thomas	16,485	\$71,956	.49	7.16
15 Morehead	7,915	\$39,091	.51	15.17
16 Fort Wright	5,780	\$70,360	.52	24.91
17 Flatwoods	7,284	\$49,006	.55	20.59
18 Mt. Washington	14,511	\$63,894	.55	10.34
19 Hillview	8,942	\$59,184	.56	17.78
20 Pikeville	7,121	\$33,125	.70	49.99

Retired Murray State Professor's Research Named 'Top 10 Symposium Paper' of All Time

A retired Murray State University professor's research has been recognized as being among the best computer science education research publications of the last half-century.

In March, the Association for Computing Machinery Special Interest Group on Computer Science Education named the work of Brenda Wilson, a retired professor of the Murray State Department of Computer Science and Information Systems, a winner of the Top 10 Symposium Papers of All Time Award. The top 10 papers were chosen from among the best that were presented at the symposium over the last 49 years.



Brenda Wilson

Wilson's research, ranked ninth overall, is titled "Contributing to success in an introductory computer science course: a study of twelve factors." Published in 2001, the study determined and explored factors that promote success in an introductory college computer science course. The full research is available at bit.ly/2NWkqBG.

"I was so surprised and humbled to know that the research and resulting paper has influenced so many other computer science professors," Wilson said. "The attrition rate in the first computer science course has historically been one of the worst of any major, so it was my passion to address the problem and, hopefully, determine factors that influence success or failure in the course."



Inaugural Kentucky Opioid Summit Scheduled for June 24

THE Kentucky Chamber of Commerce will host the Kentucky Opioid Summit, an inaugural event that will address the opioid crisis, its impact on the workforce and how the business community should respond, June 24 at the Griffin Gate Marriott Resort and Spa in Lexington.

Michael Botticelli, director of National Drug Control Policy during the Obama administration and executive director of the Grayken Center for Addiction at Boston Medical Center, will give the Opening Keynote: The Opioid Epidemic in the Workplace: How Employers Can Respond.

The summit will examine the impact the opioid epidemic has had on employers and the economy. Based on the Grayken Center's Employer Resource Library, the session will offer practical and actionable examples of how employers can play a leading role in changing the trajectory of the epidemic.

KENTUCKY PEOPLE

FORT MITCHELL

NORTHERN KENTUCKY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESENTS ANNUAL BUSINESS IMPACT AWARDS



The Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce recently presented its 2019 Business Impact Awards, recognizing businesses throughout the region that are creating an impact through innovation, creativity, strong business practices and leadership. Pictured here at the awards ceremony are: (left to right) Kevin Jones, Huntington Bank; Amy Wright, resettled Life, winner of the Start-Up Award; Brent Cooper, NKY Chamber; and Alex Perkins, Global Business Solutions. Huntington Bank served as the title sponsor; Global Business Solutions was one of four award sponsors.

LOUISVILLE

MORTENSON, WOOD AND WEYLAND INDUCTED INTO KENTUCKIANA BUSINESS HALL OF FAME



The Kentuckiana Business Hall of Fame inducted its 2019 honorees on March 7 at the Kentucky International Convention Center in Louisville in an event that benefited the Junior Achievement of Kentuckiana. Pictured here are honorees (left to right) Dr. O. Wayne Mortenson, founder of Mortenson Dental Partners; Phoebe A. Wood, principal of CompaniesWood and retired vice chairman and chief financial officer for Brown-Forman Corp.; and C. William Weyland, founder and chief strategy officer, Weyland Ventures.

DANVILLE

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HONORS TROLLINGER AS DANVILLE-BOYLE COUNTY 2019 OUTSTANDING CITIZEN

Richard Trollinger (right), senior philanthropy advisor for Centre College, was recently presented with the Outstanding Citizen Award from The Danville-Boyle County Chamber of Commerce. The award is presented to citizens who have volunteered numerous hours to benefit their community. Trollinger has been actively involved with the Danville-Boyle County Economic Development Partnership and the Community Development Council, is a member of the Danville Rotary Club and the Presbyterian Church of Danville, has served as chair of the Kentucky School for the Deaf Charitable Foundation, and been a board member of the Wilderness Trace Child Development Center and the Heart of Kentucky United Way. Pictured here with Trollinger is Bob Miller, an agent with award sponsor State Farm Insurance.



Robin Hart, The Advocate Messenger photo

BOWLING GREEN

WKU PRESIDENT SETS UP SCHOLARSHIP FOR FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS



Western Kentucky University Timothy C. Caboni and his wife, Kacy, have established an endowed scholarship fund with a gift of \$100,000 made through a combination of outright and deferred support. The Timothy Christian and Kacy Myree Caboni Scholarship Fund will provide support for full-time, first-generation students at WKU, which represent approximately 40 percent of the WKU student population. First preference will be given to students pursuing a degree within the Department of Communication.

LOUISVILLE

STEVE WILSON WINS RECORD 4TH NATIONAL USEF CHAMPIONSHIP



Steve Wilson, co-founder of Louisville-based 21c Museum Hotels, owner of Hermitage Farm and host of the Kentucky Classic, claimed his fourth USEF Advanced Pair Horse Combined Driving National Championship in March at the Live Oak International in Ocala, Fla., becoming the oldest driver in the nation to win the title four times. Combined driving is designed to test a driver's ability and the horses' obedience, speed and athleticism.



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