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## CONTINUING GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY

Kentucky leaders see mostly bright prospects  
in the coming year, making it a good time to  
better position commonwealth for the future

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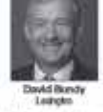
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## PERSPECTIVE

### YOU ACTUALLY CAN HELP THE HOMELESS

501(c)(3) groups serve truly  
needy, address root causes

BY MARK GREEN

**S**TRONGLY consider charitable action benefiting the surprisingly numerous homeless in our communities today. Dozens of deserving organizations across our commonwealth work day and night to help Kentuckians whose lives aren't working out as they – and we – had hoped.

More than 4,000 or about one-tenth of 1% of all Kentuckians were experiencing homelessness when data for the 2018 federal Continuum of Care report was compiled, in part by going onto the street and counting.

Establishing an ongoing charitable relationship with one of these aid and service operations can have a far-reaching impact. If the organization is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, and most are, all the support is tax deductible.

Importantly, you can be confident it's one of the most efficient ways to help your community. Dollars and donations are stretched to benefit the truly homeless and in need, and almost all these operations have programs that directly address root causes – which generate a spectrum of problems eventually laid at taxpayer feet.

It is not enjoyable to think about the homeless and generally we don't. Meanwhile, the most visible among them, aggressive panhandlers on urban street corners, generate at least as much suspicion as sympathy – is that person even really homeless, and will any dollars they guilt out of me go to substance abuse?

There may be some truth in presumptions about those different from us, but our stereotypes are always a superficial perspective. The deeper, full truth is complex and conflicted. We know life is complicated when it goes well and we act responsibly. Our fellow Kentuckians did not become homeless by design (nor sometimes did those focused on helping them plan to take on their role).

Jeffrey White has special insight into Kentucky homelessness. For nine years he has been executive director of The Nest ([thenestlexington.org](http://thenestlexington.org)), a Lexington-based center for women, children and families in crisis serving 17 counties. A banker for most of his adult life, White got a call in 2010 from the

previous director, who asked if he could help The Nest with budget projections and financials. He met the board, helped them with the financials and at his own suggestion created an HR manual.

When the executive director suddenly left, the board asked White to take the position. He didn't want it – "... then I met the kids." White couldn't say no to the opportunity to have positive, life-changing impact.

"The children are so fresh," he said. "They are just starting out in life."

White said the services The Nest and similar entities provide at moments of peak difficulty – removing the stress of where a child is going to be able to sleep, eat, bathe and have simple needs met – "are so critical to their character, their ability to imagine or laugh or whatever."

Parent-child units are common, but The Nest occasionally cares for infants in need, White said.

"We are helping the homeless, but mostly we are helping the working poor," White said. "It's not that they aren't working, but they make \$8, \$9, \$10 an hour, and they have children."

In the absence of other familial support, a car repair or illness means deciding what they will do without. The Nest helps 400 families a month meet basic human needs such as food, diapers, clothing and more, he said.

There are dozens of similar organizations in Kentucky. Examples in Lexington include Step By Step ([sbslex.org](http://sbslex.org)) and Arbor Youth ([arborky.org](http://arborky.org)).

In Louisville, Wayside Christian Mission ([waysidechristianmission.org](http://waysidechristianmission.org)) provides an expansive range of programs and services. Home of the Innocents ([homeoftheinnocents.org](http://homeoftheinnocents.org)) has provided residential care for abused, neglected and abandoned children since 1880. Re:Center Ministries ([recenterministries.org](http://recenterministries.org)) opened as Louisville Rescue Mission for women and children in 1881, rebranding last year and expanding its Southern Baptist-based spiritual care programs into nearby Indiana.

There are many more in our commonwealth that are worth helping. They will invest any goods, personal time and cash they get well. Go to their websites and find the "donate" link. Small regular monthly contributions make a big difference. You'll get a thank you letter as your tax receipt. ■



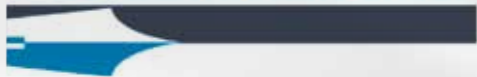
Mark Green is executive editor of The Lane Report. Opinions expressed are those of the writer and not The Lane Report.



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# FAST LANE

A compilation of economic news from across Kentucky

## STATE

### KY FIRST IN NATION TO PILOT CERTIFICATION THAT SOFT SKILLS COMPETENCY IS PART OF ACADEMIC DEGREE



KENTUCKY is the first state in the nation to pilot a certification process that ensures college graduates are ready for the workforce with essential employability skills, or the so-called “soft skills,” that employers say are often lacking in graduates.

The **Essential Employability Qualities (EEQ) certification** signals to employers that academic programs integrate essential skills into the curriculum. Essential skills include communication, thinking and problem solving, inquiry, collaboration, adaptability, learning, principles and ethics, and responsibility and professionalism.

“Employers are telling us that we do a pretty good job training our graduates in their academic area, but we don’t do as well in helping them to understand the competencies that they will need in the workplace, whether it’s showing up on time, communicating or solving problems,” said Aaron Thompson, president of the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE). “These are essential skills, or employability skills, that our graduates need for successful careers.”

Three programs have already achieved certification: bachelor’s degree programs in construction engineering technology and occupational health and safety at **Murray State University** and an associate degree program in medical assisting at **Bluegrass Community and Technical College**. Four other campuses are pursuing certification of their programs, including **Kentucky State University**, **University of Kentucky**, **Gateway Community and Technical College**, and **Jefferson Community and Technical College**. Criteria used to evaluate the programs relate to graduate preparation, career support services, employer engagement, student and alumni engagement, and career information.

In addition, the CPE has created the Faculty Employability Fellows, a group of 14 faculty members who are developing “employability” best practices that faculty can deploy in college classrooms across Kentucky.

## STATE

### PUBLIC-PRIVATE CONSORTIUM FORMS TO PUSH BETTER COMMERCIALIZATION OF KENTUCKY MEDICAL RESEARCH

A \$4 million **National Institutes of Health** grant has been awarded to the **University of Kentucky**, **University of Louisville**, the Commonwealth Commercialization Center (C3) and the **Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development** that will help fund a public-private consortium that will focus on advancing promising biomedical research from the state’s public universities.

The goal of the **Kentucky Network for Innovation and Commercialization** (KYNETIC) will be to create startup companies to commercialize new med-tech and health-related companies across the state.

KYNETIC, whose founding members will contribute a \$2.56 million direct-cost match, will also provide guidance and technical resources to advance the technologies toward commercialization and assist in scaling the resulting startups to help tackle some of the biggest health challenges facing the U.S. population, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and cancer.

“C3’s collaborative model is unique in the nation and a primary reason the NIH selected Kentucky’s proposal. This grant bridges a gap for the whole state by providing funding, expertise and a continuum of support for commercializing the most promising research,” said Brian Mefford, C3 interim CEO and executive director of KY Innovation, the Cabinet’s office for entrepreneurship.



## HAZARD

### WORK BEGINS ON \$19.6M DAJCOR ALUMINUM PLANT THAT WILL CREATE 265 JOBS

**DAJCOR Aluminum**, a Canada-based manufacturer of extruded and fabricated aluminum products, has launched a \$19.6 million project to renovate the former **American Woodmark** facility near Hazard to house its first U.S. operation.

Once operational, the plant is expected to create 265 new jobs for the Perry County area.



*Dajcor produces extruded and fabricated aluminum products for a wide range of applications.*

The project was recently awarded a \$6.5 million grant through the Abandoned Mine Lane (AML) Pilot Funds program. The grant covers the purchase, shipment and installation of a new aluminum extrusion press from Italy. **Perry County Fiscal Court** will own the equipment and lease it to Dajcor over 15 years.

The renovation is expected to be complete by February, though company leaders say some production may begin by year-end.

Dajcor was founded in 2010 by a group of businessmen, following their purchase of Daymond Aluminum’s assets. Daymond served the automotive industry exclusively, but Dajcor President and CEO Mike Kilby and his partners have expanded the company’s reach to serve a range of markets, including renewable energy, medical equipment, transportation, building trades, military, marine, recreation and consumer-product industries. The Hazard plant, which is located in the Coalfields Industrial Park, will improve Dajcor’s access to U.S. customers and boost aluminum extrusion and fabrication capacity overall to better serve North American industries.

## HOPKINSVILLE

### EBONITE BOWLING BALL PLANT CLOSES AFTER 52 YEARS, 171 JOBS ELIMINATED

**T**HE Ebonite bowling ball manufacturing plant in Hopkinsville closed abruptly in mid-November, following the news that the company's brands, trademarks and technologies had been acquired by **Brunswick Bowling Products**.

The plant has been in operation in Hopkinsville since 1967 and employed 110 hourly workers and 61 salaried employees.

According to a release from Brunswick, all of the Ebonite brands will continue to be produced but production is being moved to the Brunswick plant in Reynosa, Mexico.

In an interview with **Bowlers Journal International**, a professional bowling magazine, Brunswick CEO Corey Dykstra said, "The decline in league bowling over the past 20 years certainly has made it a challenging business, and challenging businesses are hard to invest in. When you have more efficient use of manufacturing capacity, it enables us to invest more in people and technology than we did in the past.

"We need help in sales, marketing, and research and development to try to manage those brands now," Dykstra added. "We're certainly excited to bring many of the Ebonite International team onto our team if they're interested and it works for them. We are certainly open to and excited about talking with as many of those folks who are interested in working for Brunswick as we can and plan to do that as soon as possible."

Dykstra noted that Brunswick's equipment is different from EBI's and "we'd certainly love to learn from them what they have learned from more than 50 years in manufacturing. I'm hoping that if we put the right people in the room, we can learn from each other, and that creates some pretty outstanding new products."



*The Ebonite plant in Hopkinsville produced bowling balls for more than 50 years before being closed in November.*

## SHELBYVILLE

### BEKAERT CLOSING WIRE MANUFACTURING PLANT IN JANUARY, 100 JOBS IMPACTED

**B**EKAERT Corp. plans to close its steel wire manufacturing plant in Shelbyville in January, eliminating more than 100 jobs there.

The facility produces steel wire for a variety of applications and markets, but the company says external developments in demand and pricing trends have had a negative impact on the plant's profitability and competitive position. As a result, the company has decided to realign its steel wire business segment.

Following the Shelbyville plant's closing in January, some product lines will be moved to Bekaert plants in Arkansas and Ohio, while others will be "stopped or sourced and distributed through alternative channels."

The plant's Dramix production line serving concrete reinforcement markets will remain in Shelbyville until a permanent location is determined.

## BUSINESS BRIEFS

### BARDSTOWN

■ Bardstown-based **Heaven Hill Brands** has completed its acquisition of **Black Velvet Canadian Whiskey** and the historic Black Velvet distilling facility in Lethbridge, Canada, from **Constellation Brands Inc.** The acquisition fills an important gap in Heaven Hill's portfolio by substantially expanding sales activities in the imported whiskey category. Heaven Hill brands include **Evan Williams** bourbon, **Burnett's** vodka, and **Christian Brothers** brandies.



### BEREA

■ Forklift manufacturer **Hyster-Yale Group** has broken ground on a \$25.7 million expansion that will add 160,000 s.f. to its Berea facility. The Cleveland-based company opened its Berea plant in 1973 with annual production of approximately 5,000 trucks. The consolidated Hyster-Yale business has since grown to become an international company that shipped over 100,000 units globally in 2018, and currently employs approximately 7,900 people worldwide.

### BOONE COUNTY

■ **Post Glover LifeLink Inc.** is investing nearly \$4 million to expand its operations in Boone County to meet increasing demand for the company's products, which include power strips, power poles, overhead service carriers and more. The project involves adding 12,800 s.f. to the existing 20,000-s.f. facility, additional space that will house manufacturing and warehousing operations. The expansion will create 15 new full-time jobs.

■ **Post Glover Resistors Inc.**, which produces power resistors, is expanding, adding more than 30,000 s.f. at its facility near Erlanger as part of a \$4.63 million expansion project. Founded in 1892, Post Glover began as a distributor to the railroad industry. The company now offers high- and low-resistance grounding products for equipment and personnel protection, dynamic braking resistors, motor/crane control resistors and harmonic filter resistors for electrical noise dampening. The company currently employs more than 100 people at its lone facility in Boone County.

### BOWLING GREEN

■ Louisville-based **Commonwealth Bank & Trust Co.** has acquired a majority interest in **Landmark Financial Advisors LLC**, an independent, privately owned company headquartered in Bowling Green. Landmark will retain its name but will be able to offer Commonwealth's broader range of fiduciary services, including trust administrations, family office and private banking services. Landmark, which operates as a fee-only practice, currently has \$335 million in assets under management.



Farmers National Bank photo



### DANVILLE

■ **Boyle Bancorp Inc.** and its subsidiary bank, **The Farmers National Bank of Danville**, have announced plans to acquire **Farmers Deposit Bank of Middleburg**, a subsidiary of **John R. Turner Holding Co.** Farmers National Bank currently has 10 locations in Boyle, Garrard, Lincoln and Mercer Counties. The merger will add strategic locations in Liberty and Middleburg in Casey County. The transaction is expected to close during the first quarter of 2020.

### EASTERN KENTUCKY

■ **Nally & Hamilton Enterprises** has notified the state that it plans to lay off a total of 170 workers at its mines in Harlan, Leslie, Laurel and Bell counties. The layoffs, which will take effect Jan. 1, 2020, will impact 21 workers at the **Stinnett Mine** in Leslie County, nine employees at the Stinnett Mine in London, 97 employees at the **Balkan** mine and facilities in Bell County, and 38 employees at the **Bailey's Creek**, **Cranks Creek** and **Day Branch** mines in Harlan. Five workers are also being laid off from the company's main office in Bardstown.

## BUSINESS BRIEFS



### ERLANGER

■ **ABB Optical Group** has opened a new optical lens fabrication facility in Erlanger that will produce up to 3,000 lens jobs per day. The 42,000-s.f. facility replaces ABB's existing 8,000-s.f. building in Cincinnati and houses a lab along with fabrication,

distribution and office space. The lab will initially employ more than 60 people and future plans call for that number to grow to around 200.

### LEXINGTON

■ Emerging health IT start-up **OmniLife** (formerly known as **HealthTech Solutions**) has been awarded a \$1.5 million Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Phase II grant from the **National Institutes of Health**. The grant will support research and development of the company's proprietary software to make organ transplant communication more efficient and effective. The NIH approved only 257 grants from over 618 SBIR Phase II applications in 2018.

■ Lexington-based **CLARK Material Handling** has opened a new manufacturing facility in Vietnam to support product demands for North America, Europe and Australia. The new facility will



CLARK photo

augment the assembly done at the company's Lexington plant and will handle complex welding, painting and assembly in addition to providing finished goods storage. The facility also houses purchasing and engineering teams. CLARK invented the first material handling truck in 1917 and now supplies a full line of electric and internal combustion forklifts and pallet jacks.

■ Lexington-based **Exceptional Living Centers** has acquired nine skilled nursing facilities in Kentucky and Ohio that will add a total of 1,162 beds to the company's portfolio, which includes 16 health care centers across five states. The Kentucky facilities joining Exceptional Living Center's group of facilities includes **Stanford Care and Rehabilitation**, **Vanceburg Rehabilitation and Care**, **Frankfort Care and Rehabilitation**, **Green Hill Rehabilitation and Care** (Greensburg), **Clifton Oaks Care Center** (Louisville), **St. Matthews Care Center** (Louisville), **Lyndon Woods Care and Rehabilitation** (Louisville), and **Hillcreek Rehabilitation and Care** (Louisville).



■ **CHI Saint Joseph Health – Cancer Care Centers** in Lexington and **Cleveland Clinic Cancer Center** have launched a formal affiliation that expands access to highly specialized cancer treatments, clinical expertise and research studies for patients in central Kentucky. Oncologists with CHI Saint Joseph Health will be able to present cases to and consult with the Cleveland

Clinic tumor board, which will provide a consensus opinion to the Lexington physicians to incorporate into the treatment plan.

### LOUISA

■ The **Kentucky Department of Financial Institutions** closed **Louisa Community Bank Inc.** on Oct. 25, 2019, after determining that the bank was critically undercapitalized. Both the DFI and the **Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.** (FDIC) had notified the institution earlier in the year to provide time for the bank to either raise capital or locate an acquisition partner, but the bank's actions were unsuccessful. All deposit accounts have been transferred to **Kentucky Farmers Bank Corp.** of Catlettsburg, which has agreed to purchase the bank's assets.

### LOUISVILLE

## NATIONAL WOMEN'S SOCCER LEAGUE IS PUTTING EXPANSION TEAM IN LOUISVILLE



*Louisville's new pro women's soccer team will play at Lynn Family Stadium, a soccer-specific venue set to open this coming spring.*

THE **National Women's Soccer League** has selected Louisville to become its fourth expansion team.

The expansion marks the first time the city of Louisville has had a top-tier pro sports team since the **Kentucky Colonels** of the **American Basketball**

**Association** ceased operations in 1976.

The **Proof Louisville FC** team will begin playing in the 2021 season at **Lynn Family Stadium**, a soccer-specific venue set to open in spring 2020 with a seating capacity of nearly 14,000. The team will share the stadium with **Louisville City Football Club**, the men's pro soccer team.

**Soccer Holdings LLC**, the ownership group of Louisville City Football Club, will operate the NWSL team using the existing management group, headed by Louisville City Football Club President Brad Estes. Louisville City won back-to-back USL Championship titles in 2017 and 2018.

The announcement comes at an exciting time for the NWSL and women's professional soccer, which is seeing unprecedented interest and success. Earlier this year, the U.S. Women's National Team won its record-setting fourth FIFA Women's World Cup.

"This market is hungry for more pro soccer," said Estes, "and we know our NWSL team will be a shining star in this league and in our community."

### LOUISVILLE

## KCC MANUFACTURING TO ADD 400 JOBS OVER 10 YEARS WITH \$50M EXPANSION

**KENTUCKIANA Curb Co. Inc.**, a heating, ventilation and air conditioning company that does business as **KCC Manufacturing**, is investing \$50 million to expand its operations in Louisville. The expansion is expected to create up to 400 full-time jobs over the next 10 years.

KCC designs and manufactures commercial heating and air conditioning equipment focused on improved indoor air quality, as well as proprietary technology for indoor agriculture applications. Other products include metal and conventional roof curbs, stainless steel gutters, skylights, smoke vents, roof hatches, walkways and other roof products. The company established its headquarters in Kentucky in 1979 and currently employs 512 people at its existing Louisville facility. KCC also operates a facility in Tooele, Utah.

The expansion project involves building a 300,000-s.f. facility on Blankenbaker Lane in Louisville that will house corporate offices and manufacturing space. Production at the new facility will include the design and manufacture of HVAC equipment and sheet metal products.



*KCC Manufacturing currently employs more than 500 people in Louisville and plans to add 400 more as part of a recently announced \$50 million expansion.*

## STATE

### EQUINE COALITION FORMS TO IMPROVE SAFETY STANDARDS IN RACING INDUSTRY

A group of six leading Thoroughbred racing organizations have joined to create a coalition that will focus on developing new reforms to ensure the safety of the sport's equine and human athletes.

The **Thoroughbred Safety Coalition** founding members include **Breeders' Cup Limited**, **Churchill Downs Inc.**, **Keeneland Association Inc.**, the **New York Racing Association Inc. (NYRA)**, **Del Mar Thoroughbred Club** and **The Stronach Group**. Together they represent more than 85% of graded stakes racing in America.

The formation of the organization comes in response to an alarming increase in horse injuries and euthanization tied to racing at tracks across the nation. More than three dozen horses that have raced at California's **Santa Anita Park** have died over the past year and earlier this year, 10 racehorses died in the span of nine days in New York.

The coalition will set stricter guidelines for allowable medications, enact standards for crop use, encourage greater transparency and tracking of veterinarian exam records, and commit to the creation of new positions to implement and enforce the reforms.

"Protecting the health and welfare of our athletes is a complicated question that requires a multifaceted approach. That's why we are implementing significant measures across the sport from the quality of our track surfaces to ensuring horses are fit to run each and every time through medication reforms and enhanced veterinary examinations," said Bill Thomason, president and CEO of Keeneland Association Inc. "There is no single solution and we are committed to finding the right answers, wherever that may lead us."



Kevin Flanery, president of Churchill Downs Race Track, announces the formation of the Thoroughbred Safety Coalition.

## LEXINGTON

### BAPTIST HEALTH FILES PLANS TO BUILD SECOND LEXINGTON MEDICAL CAMPUS



**B**APTIST Health Lexington has filed plans with Lexington's city government to build a medical campus near I-75 in Lexington to better serve those in southeast Lexington and surrounding counties. (According to Baptist Health, approximately 60%

of its patients are from outside Fayette County.)

Plans for Baptist Health Hamburg include an outpatient surgery center, emergency department and some medical office buildings to be built first. Services provided there will include cancer care and diagnostic testing as well as emergency and urgent care treatment. Hospital officials say there are no immediate plans to build a new hospital at the Hamburg campus.

Baptist Health purchased the 129-acre property for \$29 million in 2009. The new campus is expected to open by early 2023 with 600 to 700 employees.

## BUSINESS BRIEFS



### LOUISVILLE

■ The **Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC)** has selected a design-build team led by **Hall Contracting** and **American Engineers Inc.** to design and construct the **I-Move Kentucky** interstate project, a four-year, \$180 million construction project that includes improvements to I-265, I-71 and I-64 through a heavily traveled corridor in Jefferson and Oldham counties. I-Move Kentucky is the largest single construction project in Kentucky since the **Ohio River Bridges Project** was completed in 2016. Construction on the project will begin in spring 2020.

■ **The State Group**, a North American multitrade industrial and specialty services contractor, has acquired Louisville-based electrical contractor **Delta Services LLC** for an undisclosed sum. Delta Services, founded in 2004, has operations in Kentucky, southern Indiana and surrounding states, and has over 230 union electricians and 35 employees.

■ **Norton Healthcare, UofL Physicians – Pediatrics** and the **University of Louisville School of Medicine** have officially signed a definitive agreement for an affiliation that will combine resources to strengthen and enhance medical care for children. Norton Healthcare will assume operations for pediatric and pediatric subspecialist offices currently managed under UofL Physicians – Pediatrics. Approximately 600 employees with 21 different practices will transition with the affiliation. UofL doctors will remain on the faculty of the school of medicine and will work clinically within a Norton Healthcare pediatric practice plan. The affiliation is slated to go into effect on Feb. 1, 2020.



■ **UPS** has announced major upgrades to its health-care warehouse and distribution network that includes adding 1.3 million s.f. of total distribution space in key U.S. markets. Among the largest upgrades will be a new 450,000-s.f. facility near the company's **Worldport** air hub in Louisville. Key features in the new facilities will include climate controls and validated coolers and freezers for customer products requiring strict temperature environments.

Jewish Hospital photo



■ With the **University of Louisville** assuming **KentuckyOne Health's** Louisville assets effective Nov. 1, former KentuckyOne hospitals have been rebranded to reflect the change in ownership. Because **Sts. Mary & Elizabeth Hospital** and **Our Lady of Peace Hospital** are no longer operated as Catholic facilities as they were

under KentuckyOne Health, the facilities are now operating as UofL Health – **Mary & Elizabeth Hospital** and UofL Health – **Peace Hospital**. **Jewish Hospital** and UofL Hospital are now operating as one hospital – UofL Hospital – **Jewish Campus** – with two locations. Physician practices that were previously part of the **KentuckyOne Medical Group** have been renamed under the **UofL Physicians** brand.

■ Louisville-based insurance company **Humana** plans to pare its workforce by 2% by the end of 2019 as the company implements measures to improve productivity and position itself for "long-term, sustainable success." The layoffs, which translate to approximately 800 positions, will impact operations both in Louisville and across several states. Humana is one of the largest providers of Medicare Advantage and currently employs approximately 12,000 people in Louisville and around 41,600 nationwide. Those affected by the layoffs will be able to apply for the approximately 2,000 open positions the company currently has nationwide.

## BUSINESS BRIEFS

### LOUISVILLE

■ **Frost Brown Todd**, a Louisville-based regional law firm, has opened a new office in Ann Arbor, Michigan, to better serve its existing clients. With the expansion, FBT now operates 13 offices in nine states.



■ Louisville-based architectural/ engineering firm **Luckett & Farley** is partnering with **IHG Boutique Hotels Worldwide** to renovate the former **Bank of Louisville** building in downtown Louisville to create a new boutique hotel. The 11-story building was built in the 1960s and encompasses approximately 200,000 s.f. Once the project – estimated at \$50 million – is complete, the hotel will feature around 195 rooms and be branded under the **Hotel Indigo** banner. The project has been approved by the **Louisville Metro Council** for tax increment financing (TIF), a public financing method that subsidizes redevelopment and community-improvement projects.



■ **Ford Motor Co.** will invest \$1.1 billion in its two Louisville plants as part of the company's recent contract agreement with the **United Auto Workers (UAW)**. The bulk of the investment - \$1 billion – will go to Ford's **Kentucky Truck Plant** over the next four years to support production of the all-new **Super Duty** pickup truck and the **Navigator** and **Expedition** models. Ford's **Louisville Assembly Plant** will receive \$100 million

to support continued production of the **Ford Escape** and **Lincoln Corsair**. Ford is one of Louisville's largest employers, with more than 13,000 employees.

■ The **Health Resources and Services Administration** has renewed the **University of Louisville's** \$3.75 million grant to expand its geriatrics workforce enhancement program throughout Kentucky. The previous funding awarded in 2015 focused on areas in and around Louisville; the new funding will help the institute reach all 120 counties in the commonwealth. The UofL Schools of Law, Medicine, Dentistry and Nursing and the Kent School of Social Work will be part of the program, which is designed to help individuals optimally age by intervening in multiple facets of care (patients, families and caregivers, interdisciplinary health professionals, practice models, health care systems and communities).

### MAYSVILLE

■ **Precision Pulley & Idler (PPI)**, an Iowa-based supplier of idlers, pulleys, bearings and other products for the major bulk and material handling components industries, has opened a \$10.75 million production facility in Maysville that is expected to create more than 100 full-time jobs over the next decade. The 105,000-s.f. building provides space for both manufacturing and distribution operations and gives the company a presence near some of its key customers. The employee-owned company is a division of Precision Inc., which has 16 locations worldwide.

### RICHMOND

■ Lexington-based **A&W Restaurants** has opened a new national learning center and restaurant in Richmond that will be home of **A&W University**, an educational resource center for new franchisees and team members from around the country. The new A&W University features a classroom setting along with hands-on experience in the Richmond restaurant, allowing participants to master A&W's operational standards.

### WHEELWRIGHT

■ Within a week of announcing the reopening of the **Southeast State Correctional Complex** in October, the state received almost 900 job applications for the nearly 200 available positions. The complex will be housed in an existing, privately owned, 650-bed facility and will provide much-needed space for medium-security inmates. The prison will be staffed and run by the state **Department of Corrections** under the same policies and procedures used in current state-owned facilities. New hires will be eligible for full state benefits, including health insurance, vision and dental coverage, retirement and paid leave time.

### EASTERN KENTUCKY

## INVEST 606 SELECTS 12 FINALISTS FOR \$50,000 ACCELERATOR/PITCH CONTEST

**INVEST 606**, a new business accelerator serving eastern and southern Kentucky, has announced 12 business finalists who have a chance to win over \$50,000 in prizes through its pitch contest.

The accelerator is the first of its kind to cover all of eastern Kentucky and provide support to the businesses with six months of training and services. A

\$10,000 grand prize, \$5,000 second prize, and \$3,000 third prize will be awarded to the 12 finalists completing the accelerator, along with thousands of dollars in other cash and in-kind prizes. To be eligible to apply, the finalists had to be based in the 606 area code. The selection process involved a competitive review among a panel of judges that are business and economic leaders in the state and region.

Combined, the 12 finalists employ nearly 60 people, generate more than \$1 million in annual revenue and represent eight different industries.

The finalists will complete an individualized and flexible training plan and will present their business to the public at a "Demo Day" on Jan. 18, 2020, in Pikeville. The final pitch contest will be held April 18, 2020, in Williamsburg.

### INVEST 606 CONTEST FINALISTS

- **City Perk Coffeehouse**, Jennifer Kopecky, Prestonsburg
- **Class Guard ReadShield**, Chris McNamee, Pikeville
- **Elevate Health & Fitness**, Susannah Zawko, London
- **Fact of Nature**, Kenny Miles, Mayking
- **Inquiry Technologies**, Scott Stuckey, London
- **Ky Lavender**, Allison Horseman and Mary May, Somerset
- **KYARTRAT**, Stef Ratliff, Rowan County
- **Moonlight Meat Shop**, Anne Bays, Williamsburg
- **Oak Hill Gardens**, Josh Samples, London
- **Old Homeplace Farm**, Maggie and Will Bowling, Clay County
- **Sassy TRASH**, April and Paul Collins, Harlan
- **Sprinkles of Hope**, Meagan Brannon, Maysville

### PARIS

## AGTECH SCIENTIFIC OPENS NEW INDOOR HEMP CULTIVATION, PROCESSING FACILITY



**A** **AGTECH Scientific** has opened its new 2 million-s.f. indoor hemp cultivation facility and ag processing center in Paris, part of an original \$5 million investment that will create more than 270 jobs.

AgTech currently employs over 100 full-time staff at the facility, exceeding 300 employees during peak season, and plans to reach the first phase of completion and implementation by early 2020, eventually adding 271 additional jobs.

In addition to AgTech's greenhouse, the company is also constructing a 50,000-s.f. extraction and manufacturing center less than 10 miles away, which is slated to be complete by the end of this year.

AgTech is also researching potential health benefits of hemp-based additives for animal food. AgTech plans to eventually begin manufacturing pet and equine foods, among other products, contingent on changes to regulations.

## LOUISVILLE

### \$300M PROJECT WILL ADD HISTORICAL RACING, HOTEL AT CHURCHILL DOWNS



A rendering of the planned hotel entrance at Churchill Downs.

**C**HURCHILL Downs has unveiled a \$300 million project that will add a hotel and historical racing machine facility at the iconic Louisville racetrack.

The project will also include new VIP guest experiences, including the construction of permanent stadium seating, and the renovation of Millionaire's Row.

The 156-room, seven-story hotel will feature trackside suites – all of which will offer private balconies and covered panoramic views of the entire track – as well as nontrack-facing rooms that will offer access to a second-floor party deck to watch racing. The hotel will also feature a penthouse banquet room, a 27,000-s.f. ballroom, meeting rooms, a 900-machine gaming floor, sports bar, and multiple year-round dining venues.

New permanent covered stadium seating for 4,700 will replace the 3,300 temporary grandstands historically located in that area and will provide approximately 5,500 new reserved seating options for the Kentucky Derby and Oaks.

The project is scheduled to begin in December with completion expected by the end of 2021.

## BUSINESS BRIEFS

### WURLAND

■ The **Greenup Joint Sewer Agency** has been awarded a \$2 million federal grant to make water infrastructure improvements at the Wurland Wastewater Treatment Plant that serves the EastPark Industrial Park. The grant will be matched with \$3 million in state and local funds and is expected to help create 132 jobs and generate \$403 million in private investment.

### STATE

■ Data traffic is now flowing through the first major segment of **KentuckyWired**, a state-run project that will eventually provide high-speed, high-capacity fiber optic cable in every county. Although cable construction of Ring 1A – the Louisville-to-Lexington-to-Cincinnati segment of the network – was complete in June, the flow of data could not begin until work was complete inside the main database centers in Frankfort and Florence. Completion of Rings 1B and 2 in Eastern Kentucky are expected to be fully operational before Christmas, with the entire 3,000 network scheduled to be complete by October 2020.



■ The **Kentucky Community and Technical College System's** board of regents has approved a 2020-2022 biennial budget request to expand **nursing programs** at all KCTCS colleges. The demand for registered nurses in Kentucky far exceeds the supply: Last year, KCTCS colleges awarded 840 nursing credentials, fulfilling only 31 percent of the state's total need. The funding request will allow the 16 KCTCS colleges to hire more nursing faculty and provide year-round course offerings, and is expected to grow the number of nursing graduates by almost 25 percent annually.

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# INTERSTATE LANE

Business news from Indiana, Ohio, Tennessee and West Virginia

## BUSINESS BRIEFS

### OHIO

■ **Eaton**, an Ohio-based power management company, has agreed to sell its lighting business to **Signify N.V.** for \$1.4 billion. Eaton's lighting business is one of the world's leading providers of LED lighting, with a broad range of products and systems designed to maximize performance and energy efficiency.



■ **Amify**, a Virginia-based strategy, operations and management partner for brands looking to increase sales and optimize their presence on **Amazon**, has established a second headquarters in Cincinnati. The Cincinnati headquarters will bring 90 new jobs to the area, representing more than \$8 million payroll. In addition to the new office, Amify has a warehouse in nearby Hebron, Kentucky.



### OHIO/TENNESSEE

■ **Cintas Corp.**, a Cincinnati-based company that specializes in business uniforms, supplies and safety materials, is investing \$20 million to open a regional operations center in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. The operations center will house management and production teams that will serve Cintas' regional accounts. The center will bring 144 new jobs with an average salary of \$65,000.

### TENNESSEE

■ Georgia-based **Mueller Water Products** is investing \$41 million to establish a facility in Kimball, Tennessee, approximately 30 miles west of Chattanooga. Mueller is a leading manufacturer of products such as water hydrants, meters, valves and leak detection systems. The Kimball operation, which will be housed in an existing 223,000-s.f. facility, will support Mueller's large casting foundry in Chattanooga. The company plans to hire up to 325 employees for the Kimball plant over the next five years.

■ **Allegiant Travel Co.** is investing \$50 million to establish a new base of operations at **Nashville International Airport** (BNA). The new base –

Allegiant photo



the 19th aircraft base for the Las Vegas-based air carrier – will create 66 new jobs and house two Airbus aircraft. Allegiant began operating out of Nashville in 2018 and currently offers 12 nonstop routes out of BNA. Citing Nashville as a “premier destination for visitors from all over the world” – the city hosted more than 15.2 million visitors in 2018 – and a diverse city attracting new residents, Allegiant Vice President Keith Hansen said, “Having locally based aircraft and crews will give us a wide range of operations for new service, meaning more opportunities for affordable and convenient nonstop flights.” Allegiant plans to begin its base operations in Nashville in mid-February.

### WEST VIRGINIA

■ Technology company **Infor**, which specializes in business cloud software, has opened a new office in Charleston, West Virginia, bringing approximately 100 new jobs to the area. Infor has been working alongside **Marshall University** and **West Virginia State University** through the company's Education Alliance Program to train students in cloud operations, software engineering and more to build a pipeline of talent in West Virginia that is suited to high-tech fields.

### INDIANA

## ABBOTT HIRING 450 FOR NEW WESTFIELD MEDICAL DEVICE MANUFACTURING PLANT

GLOBAL health care company **Abbott** has announced plans to locate a new medical device production site in Westfield, Indiana, that will bring more than 450 new jobs to the area over the next several years.



Abbott is investing more than \$37 million to build a 120,000-s.f. facility in the NorthPoint Industrial Park that will serve as the site for its structural heart business. The new space will house production of Abbott's **MitraClip** transcatheter mitral valve repair system – which is also manufactured in Menlo Park, California – enabling the company to increase production and better serve its global customers.

The MitraClip device is a small, clip-based device proven to repair primary and secondary mitral regurgitation without the need for open-heart surgery. To date, MitraClip has been implanted in more than 90,000 patients worldwide.

Founded more than 130 years ago and headquartered in Chicago, Abbott offers products in a variety of health care specialties, including medical devices, diagnostics, nutrition and medicines. Westfield Mayor Andy Cook said the addition of a Fortune 500 company like Abbott “is a big win not only for Westfield but for the state of Indiana.”

According to **BioCrossroads** and the Indiana Business Research Center, Indiana is the second largest exporter of life sciences products in the United States, with \$10.2 billion in total exports in 2018. Together, more than 1,750 companies support over 56,000 jobs in Indiana with average wages of approximately \$97,600 annually.

### TENNESSEE

## VOLKSWAGEN BREAKS GROUND ON NEW ELECTRIC VEHICLE PRODUCTION PLANT

CONSTRUCTION is now underway on **Volkswagen of America's** new electric vehicle production facility in Chattanooga, which will serve as the company's North American assembly base for electric vehicles.



Volkswagen's plant in Chattanooga will produce the company's new electric vehicle, the ID.CROZZ.

Volkswagen began long-range EV production in November in Zwickau, Germany, and plans to roll out assembly worldwide in 2020.

Volkswagen's investment of about \$800 million in the Chattanooga facility will require the addition of approximately 1,000 jobs. The production version of the **ID.CROZZ** will initially be assembled in Zwickau, with production set to begin in Chattanooga in 2022.

The expansion of the Chattanooga plant includes a 564,000-s.f. addition to the body shop. Volkswagen will build both internal combustion engine vehicles as well as battery electric vehicles on the same assembly line. The company also plans to build a 198,000-s.f. plant for the assembly of battery packs for EVs at the Chattanooga site.

Volkswagen currently builds the midsize **Atlas** SUV and the **Passat** sedan at the Chattanooga factory.



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Owen Electric   Salt River Electric   Shelby Energy   South Kentucky RECC   Taylor County RECC

# CORPORATE MOVES

New leadership for Kentucky businesses

## BIG MOVES

■ The Bank of the Bluegrass in Lexington has announced the following appointments:

**Jason Marshall**, universal banker II, has been selected to transfer to the bank's new Lexington location on Romany Road.



Jason Marshall

**Andrea Lawson** has been promoted to universal banker for the new Romany Road location in Lexington.



Andrea Lawson

**Corey Zacher** has joined the bank as assistant financial center manager of the 101 E. High Street location in Lexington.



Corey Zacher

**Katie Hicks** has joined the bank's loan operations department.



Katie Hicks

## PROMOTED LISTINGS

## ACCOUNTING

■ **Joe Johnston** has joined Dean Dorton Allen Ford as tax director of the firm's Louisville practice.

## ARTS

■ The Kentucky Center for the Performing Arts has promoted **Christian Adelberg** to vice president of marketing and communications.



Christian Adelberg

## BANKING

■ **Terry Pugh** has been appointed president and chief executive officer of First & Farmers National Bank in Somerset. Immediate Past President and CEO **Steve Morgan** will continue to serve as the bank's Albany Market President and as a director on both the First & Farmers National Bank and Albany Bancorp boards.



Terry Pugh

■ **Robert E. Cox** has been named vice president, commercial banker for WesBanco Bank. Cox will also serve as team lead for the Bourbon region (Anderson, Franklin and Mercer counties).



Robert E. Cox

■ **Jane Greer** has been named business development officer for First National Bank of Manchester's Lexington and Nashville areas.

■ **Brad Taber** has joined Field & Main Bank as director of information technology, vice president.



Brad Taber

## CONSTRUCTION

■ **Jim Hacker** has been promoted to president and CEO of Lexington-based construction management company Congleton-Hacker Co. He succeeds **Larry Cowgill**, who is retiring at the end of 2019. **Doug Hacker** has been named executive vice president.



Jim Hacker



Larry Cowgill



Doug Hacker

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

■ The Northern Kentucky Tri-County Economic Development Corp. (Tri-ED) has announced the following appointments: **Christine Russell** – vice president of strategy; **Brit Fitzpatrick** – director of entrepreneurship; **Abby Ober** – entrepreneurship community manager for Blue North (a Tri-ED program that focuses on building an entrepreneurial system in the region to connect young companies with mentors and partners); **Angela Mulberry** – business retention and expansion manager; **Devon Stansbury** – Tri-ED client services manager; and **Jeremy Worley** – Tri-ED client services manager.



Christine Russell



Brit Fitzpatrick



Abby Ober



Angela Mulberry



Devon Stansbury



Jeremy Worley

## EDUCATION

■ **Natasha Sams** has been named executive director of the Governor's School for Entrepreneurs program.



Natasha Sams

■ **David Schneider** has been named director of the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship at Northern Kentucky University, effective Jan. 6, 2020.



OJ Oleka

■ **OJ Oleka** has been selected as the new president of the Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities.

■ **Caroline Roberts Heine** has been named chief advancement officer for Spalding University.



Drew Fleming

## EQUINE

■ **Drew Fleming** has been named president and CEO of the Breeders' Cup Limited, which administers the Breeders' Cup World Championships.

## FOOD/SPIRITS/HOSPITALITY

■ Louisville-based Papa John's International has announced the following new appointments to its management team: **Max Wetzel** – chief commercial and marketing officer; **Jim Norberg** – chief operating officer, North America; and **Jack Swaysland** – chief operating officer, international.

## HEALTH CARE

■ **Marea Aspillaga** has been named chief compliance officer for Baptist Health. Aspillaga succeeds **Donald R. Riggs**, who is retiring at the end of 2019 after serving 27 years with the health system. **Will Renda** has been appointed to replace Aspillaga as system director of compliance and privacy.



Marea Aspillaga



Donald R. Riggs



Will Renda

## MANUFACTURING

■ **Steve Eddy** has been appointed senior vice president of sales for GE Appliances in Louisville. Eddy succeeds **Robert Rogers**, who is retiring at the end of 2019. Other new appointments include **John Boyd**, who has been named vice president of retail sales, and **Dan Goldstein**, who has been named vice president of contract sales.

## MEDIA

■ **Dale Woods** has been named president and general manager of WDRB Media in Louisville. He succeeds **Bill Lamb**, who left the position to lead KTTV and KCOP in Los Angeles.

## RETAIL

■ **Brannon Dixon** has been appointed chief executive officer of Feeders Supply Co., a Louisville-based retailer of pet food and supplies.



Andy Treinen

## TOURISM

■ **Andy Treinen** has been named president and CEO of the Frazier History Museum in Louisville.



Kurt Stafford

## UTILITIES

■ Kentucky American Water has appointed **Kurt Stafford** director of engineering for American Water's Southeast division.

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# ON THE BOARDS

Kentuckians named to organizational leadership roles

## AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

■ **Dr. Timothy W. Mullett** has been named chair-elect of the Commission on Cancer of the American College of Surgeons. Mullett is medical director of the University of Kentucky Markey Cancer Center.



Timothy W. Mullett

## BLUEGRASS COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

■ **Olivia Johnson Scholz** has joined the board of directors of Bluegrass Community and Technical College. Scholz is founder of the Bluegrass Business Cooperative, which serves small businesses throughout the region.



Olivia Johnson Scholz

## FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

■ **Heather Gate** has been named to serve on the Advisory Committee on Diversity and Digital Empowerment for the Federal Communications Commission. Gate is director of digital inclusion for Bowling Green-based Connected Nation.

## FOUNDATION FOR A HEALTHY KENTUCKY

■ **Garren Colvin** has been appointed to the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky board of directors. Colvin is president and chief executive officer of St. Elizabeth Healthcare in Northern Kentucky.



Garren Colvin

## GATEWAY FOUNDATION BOARD

■ **Andre Durojaiye** has joined the board of the Gateway Community and Technical College Foundation. Durojaiye is vice provost of undergraduate affairs at Northern Kentucky University.

## HISTORIC LANDMARKS AND PRESERVATION DISTRICTS COMMISSION

■ **Morgan Ward** has been appointed to serve on Louisville Metro Government's Historic Landmarks and Preservation Districts Commission. Ward is an attorney with Sites & Harbison PLLC.



Morgan Ward

## KENTUCKY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

■ **Brian Cromer** has been elected to the board of directors of the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce. Cromer is a member (partner) with the law firm of Stites & Harbison, based in the Louisville office.



Brian Cromer

## KENTUCKY ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF

■ **Gary Crase** has been elected to the board of directors of the Kentucky Association of the Deaf.

## KENTUCKY DERBY MUSEUM

■ **Jill Baffert**, **Bill Beam**, **Eden Bridgeman**

**Skienar**, **Todd Spencer** and **Gene McLean** have been named to the board of directors of the Kentucky Derby Museum. **Chris Whelan** has been appointed board chair, with **Glen Haygood** serving as vice chair.



Jill Baffert



Bill Beam



Eden Bridgeman Skienar



Todd Spencer



Gene McLean



Chris Whelan



Glen Haygood

## KENTUCKY EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BOARD

■ The following individuals have been appointed as members of the Education Professional Standards Board: **David L. Dalton**, Somerset; **Melinda Ellen Goble**, Richmond; **Johnathan Clay Gay**, Flemingsburg; **Adam Dewayne Smith**, Richmond; **Ashley Hughes Vice**, Carlisle; **Elizabeth J. Smith**, Midway; **Sherry Wilson Powers**, Lexington; and **Steven Robert Thomas**, Campbellsville.

## KENTUCKY FACULTY ADVISORY NETWORK

■ The Council on Postsecondary Education has appointed 13 faculty members to the newly created Kentucky Faculty Advisory Network. The network will provide faculty input on state-level policies and initiatives, and advise CPE President Aaron Thompson on innovative solutions to accelerate student success. Members include: **Shannon Hankins**, Ashland Community and Technical College; **Beth Polin**, Eastern Kentucky University; **Diane Gibson**, Hazard Community and Technical College; **Kyle Mahan**, Jefferson Community and Technical College; **Joe Moffett**, Kentucky State University; **Flint Harrelson**, Morehead State University; **Melony Shemberger**, Murray State University; **Becky Lee Meadows**, Northern Kentucky University; **Rhonda Creech**, Southeast Community and Technical College; **Luke Bradley**, University of Kentucky; **James Christopher Foreman**, University of Louisville; **Tyra Henderson**, West Kentucky Community and Technical College; and **Andrew Mienaltowski**, Western Kentucky University.

## KENTUCKY INFRASTRUCTURE AUTHORITY

■ **Kurt Allen Stafford**, of Lexington, has been appointed to the Kentucky Infrastructure Authority.

## LEXARTS

■ LexArts, a nonprofit organization that works for development a strong arts community in the central Kentucky area, has elected seven new members to its board of directors: **Lauren Case**, Fayette County Public Schools; **Colin Doherty**, Hook Interactive; **Ken Gish**, K&L Gates; **Emmy Hartley**, Team Cornett; **Jill Hall Rose**, Rose Law Office and Don Hall GM Supercenter; **Chad Rudzik**, Fifth Third Bank; **Camden Skidmore**, Republic Bank; **Robin Thomerson**, Dinsmore & Shohl, LLP; and **Yajaira Aich West**, PNC Bank.



Lauren Case



Colin Doherty



Ken Gish



Emmy Hartley



Jill Hall Rose



Chad Rudzik



Camden Skidmore



Robin Thomerson



Yajaira Aich West

## MIDWAY UNIVERSITY

■ Midway University has named four new members to its board of trustees: **Dr. Ardis Hoven**, UK College of Medicine; **Billy Van Pelt**, American Farmland Trust; **leasha Allen**, Lexmark; and **Dr. J.J. Housley**, UK Healthcare.

## PRICHARD COMMITTEE FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE


■ The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence has announced seven new members and elected new officers: Chair – **Wynn Radford**, Hopkinsville; Vice Chair – **Clay Ford**, Owensboro; Secretary/Treasurer – **Carol Lamm**, Berea; **Leo Calderon**, director of Latino programs and services at Northern Kentucky University, has been named to the committee's board of directors. Joining the committee as new members are: **Khamari Brooks**, Louisville; **Heather Crabbe**, Independence; **Kimberly Green**, Bowling Green; **Christian Motley**, Lexington; **Marvin Swann**, Danville; **Afi Tagnedji**, Louisville; and **Don Trowell**, Louisville.



Wynn Radford

## UNIVERSITY OF THE CUMBERLANDS

■ **Michael Mountjoy** has been named to the board of trustees at the University of the Cumberlands. Mountjoy is a founding partner at MCM CPAs & Advisors in Louisville.



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# LANE ONE-ON-ONE

Kentucky's leaders express their opinions



## Kent Oyler

Kent Oyler was named president and CEO of Greater Louisville Inc. in June 2014. He previously was CEO of OPM Services Inc., a financial services and investment firm. After earning University of Louisville business and MBA degrees, Oyler worked for a predecessor to PNC Bank then joined a large manufacturer where he became CFO. In 1992 he founded OPM Services and began a career as a serial entrepreneur, launching 19 new ventures in a variety of industries. In 1997 he co-founded broadband internet provider High Speed Access Corp., whose 1999 IPO still ranks as Kentucky's largest. Oyler has served on many civic and philanthropic boards, including the University of Louisville, the Kentucky Chamber and GLI. Recognitions include *Cashflow Magazine's* Treasurer of the Year, E&Y Master Entrepreneur and Kentucky Entrepreneur Hall of Fame. He resides in Louisville with his wife, Kathy, and has adult daughters.

## LOUISVILLE CHAMBER ADAPTING TO MEET CHANGING BUSINESS NEEDS

With entrepreneur Kent Oyler as its CEO, GLI is applying modern strategies to traditional goals to create the nation's best chamber

BY MARK GREEN

**Mark Green:** You brought personal entrepreneurial experience to your current job as CEO of Greater Louisville Inc. (GLI), the metro chamber of commerce. How has that impacted the way you have taken on the challenges of heading GLI?

**Kent Oyler:** I think like an entrepreneur, which tends to be: How can I take this particular problem, take a different approach and come up with a solution? I probably brought a little more risk-taking to the organization than it traditionally had. I'd like to believe that there's creativity involved. I tend to generate a lot of ideas, which I'm told is a good thing – you have to generate a lot of ideas because most of them are bad ideas! Randomly, some of them will be good enough. And I was a CFO before I launched my entrepreneurial life; it brought a financial discipline and awareness. Being an entrepreneur, you wear every hat in an organization, especially small organizations, and we're not big. I've had companies from two or three people to 600 people. Being able to bring the multidisciplinary approach to the organization was helpful.

**MG:** What business categories did you work in previously?

**KO:** I started in banking with what's now PNC and transferred into a heavy

manufacturing organization. Jumped into and started a railroad company that did well; started an internet company that did well and got bigger; a couple of other internet companies. Worked in consumer research, a company we started. Another manufacturing company in packaging. It's interesting to learn a new industry, but I would recommend that new entrepreneurs stick with your industry. Every job has a three-year learning curve.

**MG:** New technology has always come along to disrupt the way business is conducted: electricity or cars or flight, whatever. Today "disruption" as a result of the internet and digitalization is the watchword for business. What has been the most impactful change to GLI's operations in your tenure?

**KO:** It's leadership. There's been a huge change in the model of (civic) leadership in this city and across the country. GLI themes its years, and next year will be about leadership. The whole model is already changed and continues to shift.

You're going from this model we've had here for years, which worked for the iconic leader – David Jones Sr. (the late founder of Humana), who's the best example we have here. [He was] a leader of leaders kind of person who could say, "I've looked at it, this is what we're going to do. Let's get in line."

The CEOs, the "towers," are typically now folks who have demands on them as CEO that don't allow them to spend much time on civic stuff. The (leadership) model is moving towards one that involves needing to have more leaders coming to the table.

The big leaders before used to have a constituency, usually meaning a company with lots of people. They assigned people to specific tasks and commanded their corporate resources. And they had the ability to write checks; not that they funded it all, but they would seed things and get them moving. And the third thing, they have a love of city-building; they're driven to make the city better. Mr. Jones was a perfect example of that. He had all three of those, and was very effective at it. Plus his personality was driving.

Today you find people who have two of the three, but it's hard to find all three. You have to gather the folks with two of those things and try to get them all singing in harmony – same handbook, same page, in harmony. If you do that, you can get things done. It's harder to do than the benevolent leader (approach). It is messier. It's also far more democratic, and some might say it's better. We're evolving in that direction. It's passion-driven.

And there are examples that are more technology-driven, like MeToo. There's no headquarters for MeToo, there's no president of the MeToo movement. It just is, but it's very powerful.

**MG:** The head of GLI wears several hats depending on the day and hour. Your website cites main activity areas of economic development, careers and workforce, basic chamber of commerce, and advocacy. Can you give us brief descriptions of each?

**KO:** Those are the four things we do actually. One error I made when I first came was to have staff get everything we do and put it in a word cloud. It had maybe 50 different words. We put that on the cover of the piece I used to explain what we do, and all it did was confuse people – because when you do everything, you do nothing. I tell people today we do four things.

We're the chamber of commerce, which is about connections. It's about you selling more stuff and us celebrating your business and making it easier for you to do business. We do advocacy, which is being the voice of business, trying to advocate for public policy for a better business climate and economic development at federal, state and local levels. The hot button now is around workforce talent, so we do talent attraction and workforce issues.

We do economic development in terms of business attraction and creation. We're marketing the region in various ways to attract businesses to bring their operations here. We did a site visit last week with a company we entertained and showed all over the region. And entrepreneurship is a piece of that too. That's the business creation side.

**MG: With that wide portfolio, how can you as an organization and as an individual go so many directions? How do you ride herd over that?**

**KO:** We have a good staff. Our COO and chief of staff, Sarah Davasher-Wisdom, manages a lot of the internal wrangling. Most of the staff reports through her and she's a very organized person. Between organic turnover and organizational change, somewhere around 90-95% of the staff is new since I came. It's not that we got rid of everybody. People leave and things happen, turnover-wise. Some of it's been good, some of it's harder. It's taken 5 years to arrive at the organization we have today that was capable of the Chamber of the Year win.

I have a full-time scheduling person whose job is almost all setting appointments, moving them around and dealing with my calendar. It's a relationship business; you have to get in and get meetings with people. The CEO meeting (I have) tomorrow has been rescheduled three or four times; busy people are next to impossible to meet. If I was trying to do that myself it would take a lot of time. She also handles GLI board meetings.

There are several hundred meetings a year – not just the standing meetings, but those where I'll say, I need to meet with this CEO, or that official, or pull a group together about this. We've got everywhere from small groups to one next week where we've put 111 people on a committee.

We used to be answering phones, but nobody calls on the phone anymore. It's actually rare. I get, on average, 30 or 40 LinkedIn connection requests a day. A lot of people want to reach out because (I'm) the face of the chamber.

**MG: What public policy changes are being sought by GLI – locally, in Frankfort and in Washington?**

**KO:** Generally speaking, it's business-friendly things that make it easier and better to do business. We dislike, generally, regulation. We don't like taxes, particularly in certain areas.

The pension system is something we've spent a lot of time on, as has the Kentucky Chamber, because it is such a huge problem. And we spend time

advocating for infrastructure; we were successful last session with changing up and helping the road plan move ahead. It's also direct flights. It's broadband. Education is infrastructure. And local control (is an advocacy priority). Whether it's being able to do the LIFT (local investments for transformation) tax or control our own fate, Louisville is a different environment than much of the rest of the state. The (rest of the state) needs to be able to control their fate, and we'd like to have more control over our own fate. That's a state issue we spend a lot of time working on.

Locally, it's about development. The big push is development, development, quit resisting development. I'll say TopGolf (a proposed complex at Oxmoor Center) is our current best example of that, but One Park (a proposed \$250 million mixed-use development at Grinstead Drive and Lexington Road) is coming to a vote soon. We want to be much more pro-development.

**MG: Workforce development and talent attraction to provide an adequate supply of appropriately skilled workers for business is at the top of every community's agenda. What are GLI's workforce development strategies?**

**KO:** The biggest one we're engaged with would be the Academies of Louisville at Jefferson County Public Schools. We have a leadership position in partnership with JCPS Kentucky in the works to expand and grow the career-themed academies in public high schools. That's been very successful: 154 partnerships (between businesses and schools) have been forged.

Adjacent to that is talent attraction and retention. Our workforce has actually been shrinking somewhat. The key 24- to 54-year-old range is contracting. We're having fewer kids, and kids take a long time to mature into workers. But we have a lot of retirees exiting the workforce. There's a crunch.

We've spent a lot of time around barriers to workforce. What do you do for people who could work but for various reasons don't? So, transportation, and we've done a lot of work on public policy around expungement and bail reform. If you're in jail because you don't have cash to pay bail on a nonviolent crime, it's hard to hold a job. We want to get your record expunged so you can get a commercial driver's license.

**MG: How important to the Louisville business community's success is recruitment of new residents?**

**KO:** It's one of the most critical priorities and challenges of this metro area. Our population growth has been

anemic. It's growing much, much slower, to even flat. It's declined some years slightly. You can't grow your economy with the exact same number of people. We need additional people coming in to fill the positions. We have 27,000 open jobs. If all the people to fill those jobs lived here already, they would find their way to those jobs, but that's not the case. We need to have people moving into the city, whether it's international or in-state or out-of-state. You can't be a vibrant city if you're not growing. Do you have to grow as fast as Nashville? No. But you can't be flat.

**MG: What is being done now to recruit people?**

**KO:** Our primary initiative right now is Live in Lou, a talent attraction brand we've built with the help of a lot of grants. It's a toolbox for employers to sell the city. What we've found is that they can sell their company, but then Louisville's not well known if you're living in Chicago and don't have a connection here. We help sell the city. There are websites, a bunch of digital media and marketing outbound to hit people when they might be thinking about jobs here.

There are some talent retention things. We do sponsorships of events. They just did the Louisville Trifesta 2019 by (promoter) Danny Wimmer Presents of Hometown Rising, Bourbon & Beyond, and Louder than Life, three big country and rock music concerts. And we did the Live in Lou XC Cross-Country Classic, which books in thousands of college and high school students who were in town. We worked the IRONMAN Louisville. It was a great demographic to try for talent attraction. We use digital media, geofencing and things to try to reach those folks. We're trying to use the assets we have to target people while they're here and sell them on the city.

**MG: In targeting talent attraction, is GLI projecting out to certain regions and certain countries?**

**KO:** We go out about 500 miles plus New York City. We had a big IQS Research project done and found that that's about our reach. You get much farther than that, and it's just too far (for talent attraction). [But] if I'm in Chicago (and move to Louisville) I can still get home to my family; I can drive home in half a day.

**MG: GLI works on economic development regionally, which can get really complicated. Please describe GLI's approach. How many counties does it work with, and how does it get activated and managed?**

**KO:** We count a 15-county region: five in Indiana, 10 in Kentucky. We basically surround Jefferson County. About half the population lives in Jefferson and half in the other counties. GLI has an economic development partnership that includes officials from all the counties that have (ED) staff.

Our role is primarily an overlay for business-attraction purposes, marketing the region. For example, we have organized a familiarization tour and brought 10 economic development site selectors to town; this is the second or third time. We squire them all over, meet the different economic development partners, show them a good time, show them the region.

**MG:** Louisville has significant new transportation infrastructure in the form of the two Ohio River bridges and a streamlined “Spaghetti Junction.” Are they impacting productivity as hoped, and what physical infrastructure improvements is GLI advocating?

**KO:** My experience with the bridges is that it’s a whole lot faster to get back and forth to Indiana and we don’t have the bottlenecks I used to see. I would watch it back all the way up I-71, I-64 all day. People are spending less time stuck there, but now they’re stuck elsewhere, so we’ve been working heavily on the Gene Snyder Freeway (I-265) and I-71 corridors. Those are an infrastructure traffic bottleneck. We’re working on getting the state road funding formula to work for high-traffic roads; right now it’s by number of miles of road versus miles traveled on the roads, which would make a lot more sense.

We spend a lot of time on direct flights. The Louisville-Los Angeles flight (that began April 2) was a victory this year, and we were involved with that and other direct flights with the airports. That’s infrastructure. Education is quite honestly infrastructure. You’ve got to have it. And broadband. It was sad to see Google Fiber pull out (of Louisville), but it did stimulate competition and people like AT&T and Spectrum have stepped their game up. We have a lot of folks who are remote workers in town, and if you’re a remote worker, broadband is very important. If you’re stuck with service that is too slow or it’s not reliable, it’s hard to hold a job.

**MG:** GLI is the reigning national Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE) Chamber of the Year in the top large category. It involved what your board chair called “a tremendous turnaround story since 2014.” What were the keys?

**KO:** It’s great to be national champion. To get there, we made some good staff

changes early on, bringing people in like Sarah Davasher-Wisdom (COO and chief of staff). I also credit the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives. There’s a peer group of metro chamber CEOs there and I embraced that because I did not come in as an experienced chamber executive. I was a business guy. They were really helpful in saying, “This is what chambers are.”

Another thing we did was go to the ACCE national meeting – where we won this year – and looked at those books. When you apply for Chamber of the Year you create an application binder full of all your best practices, your story, your sponsors. You can see what excellent is. We said, ‘We want to be National Chamber of the Year.’ We were a long way from that five years ago, but we set that as a North Star and kept working. The first couple years we weren’t even eligible, then we applied and didn’t get finalist, then we applied and got finalist and didn’t win, applied again and got finalist and did win. We learned from the process a lot.

**MG:** What were some of the specific steps that you implemented?

**KO:** First, we rationalized our whole spending and financial house; we were losing money. We began to diversify our income streams. We were doing a lot of things, but I couldn’t point to the one that we were really good at, so we chose policy. We didn’t have a policy department in 2014. There was nobody there until we hired Sarah; she came in as the first public policy person.

So we set our mind to building a strong public policy apparatus. We started going back to Washington, D.C. on DC fly-ins; we hadn’t been there forever.

We went through an entire re-missioning: Why do we exist? Lots of early work to re-envision the organization. We rebranded also. It was a soft rebrand; we didn’t change the name of the organization, but all the graphics, the mission statement, all that other stuff changed out early on in 2014.

**MG:** What is GLI’s budget and revenue model today, and how has it changed in recent years?

**KO:** It has changed significantly. Our budget hovers around \$6 million. Since 2014, we’ve added several revenue streams that did not exist. We’ve added grants. We were not grant-writing our own purposes. We’d do a grant “in administrat” and be a fiscal agent. We wrote several grants, and it’s now into the millions we’ve received that support our growth initiatives.

We launched the capital campaign and have raised \$7 million so far on a \$7.5 million goal.

We raised our prices. It’s a tiered dues structure where for various levels of investments in a chamber you get certain benefits. We had had the same pricing structure for years. We didn’t lose very many people even though we doubled the minimum.

A big item was launching the Humana Health Solutions plan. Having this health insurance product is very important to companies. We’re saving them, on average, about 20% on their health insurance, so that’s a very compelling reason to join. We have a fee associated with that.

And we have an entire committee dedicated to finding other alternative earned income sources. We have several more we’ll work on rolling out next year.

**MG:** How much has social media replaced or changed the traditional networking services that chambers of commerce provide?

**KO:** It’s supplemented but not replaced it. GLI has big presences on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We have 1.5 full-time equivalent people keeping up with the social media. I don’t do Facebook, but I do LinkedIn. We have a big presence on Instagram, which is a hot thing with the younger folks. We very much drive our Live in Lou campaign, which is our talent campaign, through social media. So social media’s been a big supplement. We use it for lots of purposes. We push out messaging for members, we push out our own messaging. We reciprocate by liking their messages, retweeting them.

**MG:** But you don’t see people’s interest in chamber networking events falling away because of social media?

**KO:** No, I think they still want connections. They want the face-to-face.

**MG:** What issues do GLI members come to you seeking help with most often?

**KO:** One of them is the advocacy. It can be anywhere from local zoning or development to a big issue in Frankfort or Washington. The other is connections. We’re very proactive about that, trying to connect you to you so you two can do business together.

**MG:** Why do members say that they join?

**KO:** They join for peer-level networking. We try to have events or opportunities for networking at all levels, from purely CEOs of big companies to the folks who are doing sales at street level. We try to have opportunities for them to peer-network, and then big events where they cross-network. We do events primarily to allow people the opportunity to network.

**MG: Is the networking function and participation the primary value proposition for chambers, or is that changing?**

**KO:** I think (networking and participation) is the primary value proposition. That and getting something done through the group, so they can make a difference. They believe they can come in, have a seat at the table and help drive the public agenda. That's why it's important to have a good agenda.

Our first and foremost value we have to provide is to help our members improve their businesses. Part of business is trading with each other, and that's the connections stuff. Part of business, though, is creating an environment where they can do business. That could be having a business-friendly environment politically or policy-wise.

**MG: What are the major short- and longer-term goals on GLI's agenda currently?**

**KO:** We have to deal with issues of organizing leadership better. We have fractures within the community, different silos that need to be addressed. We're in the process of writing a comprehensive strategic plan and hiring a company in Ohio to work with us and that's really

advancing. We're currently going into the fifth year of a five-year plan in 2020, so we'll have a new set of priorities coming.

**MG: In addition to Chamber of the Year, what recent accomplishment is GLI happiest about?**

**KO:** We just won another award for the 2019 Year of Tech initiative. We're trying to bring awareness around the need for innovation in technology to the community. There's a lack of that. We're trying to start up a Louisville tech cluster. We just got the first draft of a huge report on the technology sector in our region that (finds) we have 1,900 companies – we thought it was 1,300. [So] we have a bigger tech sector than we thought. The economic impact is \$33 billion. And that's the fastest-growing sector we have. It's not the biggest – health care and manufacturing are still bigger – but that's the fastest growing. And it's a lot bigger than we thought.

**MG: The city and UofL have recently announced partnerships with Microsoft and IBM. Is that a reflection of the tech sector that we're just realizing is here?**

**KO:** I think so. Both the IBM and Microsoft announcements, while they

were totally independent of each other, are a reflection. We're not trying to be Silicon Valley, but every business is tech-enabled in one way or another. Given time and awareness and nurturing, we're trying to set up a robust tech network in town. There's lots of stuff going on in that sector.

**MG: What is your top advice to businesses and public officials who want to improve the region's economy, income levels and wealth creation and quality of life?**

**KO:** If I had one piece of advice, it would be "E Pluribus Unum" (Out of many, one). We have "many." One county can't go at it alone; it's not big enough. We need to pull together. The city of Louisville resides in a small, relatively poor state. But we've got to pull together. Otherwise you're fighting over "small ball" spoils. We shoot ourselves in the foot by behaving in that way, which we do more than we should. Let's be more forward-thinking looking at 2020, pull together and get a common vision. ■



*Mark Green is executive editor of The Lane Report. He can be reached at [mark@lanereport.com](mailto:mark@lanereport.com).*



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## Giving is High Tech and High Touch

Colleges and universities are pairing new data tools with traditional fundraising to turn school spirit into much-needed revenue

BY SHANNON CLINTON

**L**OOK around and it's easy to see many worthy causes asking for financial support, from environmental, political, religious or nonprofit groups to crowdfunding campaigns for those whose lives have been upended suddenly.

Colleges and universities have long been among those asking friends and alumni to donate to help their campuses grow and stay up to date for new generations of students. Today, though, development and engagement officials whose job it is to keep those dollars

flowing in say it's not just school spirit that keeps donors engaged and giving generously.

Of necessity, they're finding and creating new, personalized strategies, leveraging technology and using increasingly creative (yet institutionally genuine) means to stand out when making compelling pitches to prior and would-be benefactors.

**Tech tools provide data, communication**  
"Instead of maybe changing our tools, we're just adding to our toolbox ... with

new technologies," Murray State University Executive Director of Development Tina Bernot said of her department's fundraising tactics.

Bernot, who is responsible for leading all fundraising work at the university, has been with MSU for 11 years and in her current role for four. Development staff members, she said, have worked hard to implement new strategies and best practices, including prospect research technology, which helps fundraisers identify potential donors, their motivations and giving potential through means like social media.

A software program called GiveSmart is used during some special events, providing MSU with an online format for hosting silent and live auctions to bring in new and additional dollars.

To thank major donors, Bernot said, MSU uses software called ThankView to make and share videos illustrating the impact of donors' gifts, such as interviewing a scholarship student about how donated money impacted their educational opportunities. Her department can track open rates for the videos and whether they motivated recipients to click links to give again.

Both traditional and newer modes of communication were used for MSU's annual Week of Giving campaign in late November and early December.

During the week, donors are encouraged by their degree majors to challenge colleagues or classmates to contribute. An all-out media blitz featuring social media, website, email and direct mail prefaced the event, Bernot said, with the goal of raising \$100,000 for needs-based scholarships.

"It'll be this huge compilation of solicitation platforms," she said.

Other universities are also using technology to enhance special event promotions and donor relations capabilities, including Eastern Kentucky University.

EKU Vice President of University Development and Alumni Engagement Betina Gardner said her department uses a communications management tool called iModules that launched in 2016 to develop great websites, compile better information and



*Tina Bernot,  
Executive  
Director of  
Development,  
Murray State  
University*



*Betina  
Gardner,  
Vice President  
of University  
Development  
and Alumni  
Engagement,  
Eastern  
Kentucky  
University*

conduct social media initiatives in tandem with the university's marketing department.

#### Many sizes ... fit all

EKU's development department website offers an informative Guide to Giving so donors can match their means with the correct contribution conduit, such as annual gifts or matching gifts of donations of real estate, stocks or property.

More traditional means of communicating with alumni and donors still remain, like *EKU Magazine*, which is produced in print and online formats, she said, as well as an e-newsletter.

Though Campbellsville University uses web, social media and video appeals, face-to-face interaction with major donors still has an important role by being more direct and personal, Vice President of Development Benji Kelly said.

"(That's) where you can really sit down with the donor, and maybe the president comes along and shares the vision," Kelly said.



*Benji Kelly, Vice President of Development, Campbellsville University*

In Lexington, Transylvania University uses a software database system to keep track of donor information, Vice President of Advancement Steve Angelucci said. It's a wealth screening program that helps assess someone's capacity and propensity to give and find out where Transy's donors and best prospective donors live by area code. Two receptions will be held soon based purely on this software's information, Angelucci said.

At the University of the Cumberlands, in Williamsburg, Director of Development Bill Stohlmann said there's been a big investment in fundraising development software, and a new interactive, planned-giving website has been unveiled. The first-ever Give Day was held in April, with a goal of bringing in 400 donors. An online U.S. map showed the reach of the campaign and its progress.



*Steve Angelucci, Vice President of Advancement, Transylvania University*



*Bill Stohlmann, Director of Development, University of the Cumberlands*

## Who Gives and How

In 2018, giving to education-based charities was up 6.2% to \$58.9 billion (14% of all donations).

**84% of millennials** give to charity, donating an annual average of \$481 across 3.3 organizations.

Emails prompted **31% of online donations made by Gen Xers**, and 49 percent of this generation is enrolled in a monthly giving program.

**72% of baby boomers** give to charity, donating an annual average of \$1,212 across 4.5 organizations.

**88% of the Greatest Generation** gives to charity, donating an average of \$1,367 across 6.2 organizations each year.

Source: <https://nonprofitsource.com/online-giving-statistics/>

Social media and online payment information is available to appeal to younger donors, he said, although many major donors are older and prefer traditional means of communication.

"You can't completely transition to electronic is my point, so the traditional ways of giving are still in place – direct appeals, face-to-face, phone calls," Stohlmann said.



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**Transparency, creative engagement required**  
Emblazoned with the slogan “See What Kentucky Can Inspire,” the University of Kentucky’s online philanthropy site features various areas of impact potential donors can click on and donate to based upon personal interests such as student success, research, and arts and humanities.

The site prominently features testimonials on how past donations are being used.

“This campaign is about stories,” UK Associate Vice President for Campaigns and Major Gifts Brent Pieper said. “We talk a lot from day one: It’s about people telling their stories.”

In late August, UK celebrated its highest one-year gifts and commitments giving total of \$212.1 million from 45,145 donors, a second straight record year topping \$200 million.

It’s part of an effort dubbed “Kentucky Can: The 21st Century Campaign,” which launched in 2018 and will continue a few more years with a goal to raise \$2.1 billion. Those funds, Pieper said, will ultimately increase opportunities for research, health care, athletics, student success and strengthening the alumni network.



**Brent Pieper,**  
*Associate Vice President for Campaigns and Major Gifts, University of Kentucky*

While testimonials put real peoples’ faces on the impact of giving, donors often want to designate funds to an area they’re personally passionate about, Pieper said. One recently completed example is modernizing the UK Law Building, a two-year, \$56 million project toward which alumni gave generously.

In recognition of one alum’s \$20 million gift, the gutted and rebuilt structure was designated as the J. David Rosenberg College of Law at its Nov. 19 ribbon cutting.

“We see very few (gifts that are) completely discretionary, undesignated giving,” he said.

Since 2007 a formal Women in Philanthropy program at UK has awarded nearly \$1.8 million in grants to students, research projects and programs that members collectively decide upon after each donating \$1,000 a year into a special fund, according to Pieper and the program’s website.

At ECU, Gardner said transparency is also a factor in fundraising, as donors want to be assured the university is being a good steward of their donations. In the past few years, more information is being made accessible to donors, such as reports on endowed accounts.



“We’re trying to provide more information about gift performance, the gift impact, and we’re doing that in different ways with our donors,” she said.

At the University of Louisville, rather than sending someone who created an endowment a standard financial statement, “impact reports” convey expected numerical info as well as detailed outcomes, Vice President of University Advancement Brad Shafer said.



**Brad Shafer,**  
*Vice President of University Advancement, University of Louisville*

Instead of telling a donor their funds went toward a professorship or a scholarship, it provides information about what a professor was able to do with the funding – attend a conference, finish research or write a book, for example. Donors are given scholarship student bios and testimonials, and sometimes lunches between donors and these students are arranged, Shafer said.

An online donor portal debuted in recent months where users can log in to view general funds, gifts, and their uses and returns if they’re invested/endowed, Shafer said.

“So, relative to the transparency and the impact they have, we’re providing much more detail,” he said.

At Centre College in Danville, Vice President for Development and Alumni Engagement Shawn Lyons said traditional mailers and phone drives don’t provide the same level of support as they once did, but they remain crucial.



**Shawn Lyons,**  
*Vice President for Development and Alumni Engagement, Centre College*

“They are still our most productive ways of receiving gifts,” he said.

Even those traditional donors are encouraged to donate online since it reduces collection costs.

Centre donor lists are segmented by giving history and interest, Lyons said. He’s seen a shift in why and how people give, from more of what he calls “loyalty giving” to “impact giving.”

In the 1980s, more than 70% of Centre alumni could be counted on to donate, he said, and now that figure hovers around 40% – still better than the 10% or so national average.

In the past, if people had a good experience and they felt the college was headed in the right direction, they gave,

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Lyons said. Now there's more competition for giving and more ways to give, including Venmo, PayPal and text-to-give, all of which Centre offers.

These days, many donors want to support a particular academic or athletic program and be shown how gifts of any size will make a difference, a mandate Lyons' department works hard to fulfill whether by email, online, social media or face-to-face interaction.

"If you can't do that, there are other organizations out there that are just as deserving that will do that for them," he said.

## Face-to-face thank-you's remain important

Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green has a new twist on recognizing donors for their generosity with the Summit of Excellence awards, which debuted in mid-October 2019. This event consolidated different awards programs into one recognizing alumni, friends, faculty, staff and students for major contributions, including the 2019 Philanthropist of the Year, the Belle Lady Hunt award that formerly was bestowed in a standalone event.

"We felt like bringing prominence to that award at a more open event would give more recognition to that individual and more prominence to that award," WKU's Vice President of Development and Alumni Engagement Amanda Trabue said.

Trabue said other ways the university keeps donors engaged is through its extensive slate of annual homecoming activities, phone-a-thons, direct mail solicitations and through the efforts of a strong leadership annual giving team that constantly evaluates practices for improvement and ensures new potential donors are in the pipeline to give. A new Day of Giving fundraising event will debut in spring 2020, she said.

At Murray State University, Bernot said different departments from athletics to alumni relations and the president's office embark on a two-week, donor-sponsored Racers Roadshow, stopping in nine towns and visiting with 1,200 constituents to chat about campus life and cultivate new giving sources.

Fresh off a record year of donations and donors from its 2019 Day of Giving fundraiser in October, University of Louisville has a variety of ways to thank major donors, Shafer said.

Donor appreciation weekends may include principal or major gift donors being treated to a behind-the-scenes VIP tour of something they're interested in, he said, something money can't buy. It might be an event on campus, such as

a one-on-one "short course" with a faculty member working in a subject area of interest.

UofL is getting more creative with alumni and donor appreciation banquets and awards ceremonies, Shafer said, finding it better received to transform an on-campus space instead of holding events off campus at a hotel, for example. Meanwhile, this year's alumni awards event was streamed live online and viewed by more than 350 people.

Three-plus years ago Transylvania University launched Together For Transy, a 24-hour fundraising challenge event in which different groups of alumni, faculty, staff and students challenge each other to give. This year the event resulted in more than 600 gifts, Senior Director of Donor Engagement Susan Ware said.

On- and off-campus events enable Transy to convey both its responsible stewardship of funds and gratitude to donors, Ware said.

During homecoming each spring, reunion classes, alumni and friends of the university are recognized for achieving set goals. A one-day event for those who graduated 50 or more years ago brings them back to campus for a visit, and other alumni events are held around the country. A lecture series with high-caliber speakers is ongoing, and departments like athletics have their own recognition programs.

"I feel like you need to thank a donor more than sending them a receipt in the mail, so that they really feel it," Ware said.

## Sharing best practices

As many of her peers also reported, Bernot said her department at MSU shares information about successful fundraising with other universities, and they reciprocate freely.

"There's just no better way to learn about what might work for you," she said. "...At end of the day, when people are giving everybody wins, right?"

In his role at Campbellsville University, Kelly said fundraising is truly a meaningful, inspiring profession, one he's proud to be a part of.

"You get to talk to people who love your alma mater or love the school that you're working for," he said. "Whenever you work with someone and you hear their passion and you're able to link that with an opportunity on campus, that's a beautiful thing." ■



*Susan Ware, Senior Director of Donor Engagement, Transylvania University*



*Amanda Trabue, Vice President of Development and Alumni Engagement, Western Kentucky University*

*Shannon Clinton is a correspondent for The Lane Report. She can be reached at [editorial@lanereport.com](mailto:editorial@lanereport.com).*



*Amazon Prime Air has its first hub under construction at the Cincinnati Northern Kentucky International Airport in Erlanger at an investment cost of \$1.5 billion. Prime Air began creating a fleet of aircraft in 2016 when it leased 40 Boeing jets from Atlas Air Worldwide Holdings and Air Transport Services Group. Shown here is one of the first Boeing 767's used for the air cargo network.*

# Continuing Economic Growth and Opportunity

Kentucky leaders see mostly bright prospects in the coming year, making it a good time to better position commonwealth for the future

**T**HE U.S. and Kentucky economies continue along in an economic expansion that last July became the longest in national history – more than 10 years – and the state's wise men and women sense that 2020 will be another year of growth. They also see the state being on the cusp of much better things if it channels the benefits toward solving its problems.

The broad retail trend of growing e-commerce benefits logistics-intensive Kentucky. The state continues to leverage a geography that allows for quick delivery to the majority of a U.S. market that remains the largest and strongest in the world. UPS Airlines and Worldport operations in Louisville are expanding, as is DHL Express and its Americas Hub in Northern Kentucky.

And anticipation mounts as e-commerce behemoth Amazon is in the process of establishing its first Prime Air hub facility across the street from DHL at Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG). The state's logistics mega-assets are attracting other business and jobs as well, making the commonwealth's management of its transportation infrastructure ever more important. This growth will feed ongoing demand for more single- and multifamily home building, a sector that in turn creates business for everyone from construction companies to appliance and mattress retailers.

Today's key economic competition is for talent, a workforce with the new skills businesses need in the increasingly digital and data-driven world of commerce. That makes the current role of the state's

universities and colleges even more crucial – and heightens the significance of Louisville's partnership with Microsoft to establish a cluster for artificial intelligence and big data used in solving health care and other problems.

Vehicle manufacturing is going through a transition as that industry continues its 'lightweighting' trend and eyes a future that includes more electric power for cars and trucks. But for the nation's No. 3 car and light truck manufacturing state, this already has meant hundreds of millions of dollars in plant modernizations with more to come. And it is generating billion-dollar investments in metals operations.

Agribusiness, too, is poised for progress as industrial hemp rapidly grows into a new cash crop and the commonwealth positions itself to attract ag-tech operations. The dark cloud on the scene is U.S. trade conflict, which is limiting markets for Kentucky agriculture exports and could cap growth in the state's bourbon boom.

## COVER STORY



**Karen Finan**  
*President/CEO  
Northern  
Kentucky  
Regional  
Alliance*

"Economic activity seems to be pointing in a positive direction for 2020, with strong returns expected from our manufacturing, high-tech and health care industries. Our ability to attract and retain talent throughout the commonwealth is critical for industry expansion and success as well as that of our educational institutions to produce the targeted skill sets necessary for our workforce. Our appetite for industry innovation and excellence will fuel the possibilities. Continued focus in the small-business sector – those employers who create jobs and invest capital into our communities

– is a fundamental necessity for a strong economy in Kentucky and throughout the nation. It will be important for Northern Kentucky, as a significant part of the Cincinnati MSA (metropolitan statistical area) and commonwealth, to speak with one voice on business issues of importance as we move our community forward through transformative initiatives in health, education, job growth and vibrancy."



**Steve Stevens**  
*Chief Executive  
Officer  
Kentucky  
REALTORS*

"Kentucky's housing market has continued its strong performance in 2019 and the outlook for 2020 is quite optimistic. In Kentucky during the past year, inventory has steadily declined, but languishing numbers of homes available for sale have not dampened the 2019 sales figures. In fact, year-to-date numbers through October show Kentucky is nearly 900 units ahead of the record sales year of 2017. Nationally, new and existing home sales are expected to increase 3.6-3.7% in 2020.

With mortgage rates low and the economy in a job-producing mode, more and more first-time home buyers are getting into the market. The issuance of housing permits has hit its highest level in over a decade and is nearly to the level needed for the long haul. If construction follows the number of permits, our previous inventory woes should be diminished. Construction-related business activities will churn the economy and we expect another promising year for real estate in Kentucky."



**Candace McGraw**  
*President/CEO  
Cincinnati-  
Northern  
Kentucky  
International  
Airport*

"According to the just-released ACI Annual World Airport Traffic Forecasts, global traffic demand will double by 2037 based on a projected growth rate of 3.8% a year. Locally, the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport is poised to continue its growth trajectory as one of the fastest growing airports in the U.S. for both passenger and cargo traffic. In 2020, CVG will continue to focus on offering additional carrier partners and routes to maintain its position as the lowest airfare airport in the region. On the cargo front, Amazon will continue with construction of its Prime Air hub, while DHL Express will continue to

operate from its CVG superhub for the Americas. E-commerce will remain strong. A key focus for all Kentucky airports will be ensuring the state's commitment to maintaining the infrastructure necessary to support the growth of its airports, including on-airport, highway and bridge investments."



**Anthony "Tony" Campbell**  
*President/CEO  
East Kentucky  
Power  
Cooperative*

"In 2020, EKPC and our 16 owner-member co-ops will continue working to strengthen the local economies across the 87 counties we serve. Our co-ops have worked hard to improve the competitiveness of rates and reliability, which are vital to households as well as business and industry, whether existing or prospective. Our 16 owner-member cooperatives are taking the lead in helping the communities they serve to expand and retain existing businesses while rolling out the welcome mat for new businesses. Kentucky offers tremendous opportunities. Likewise, sustainability is critical to our long-term viability. We are taking a hard look at our operations to ensure we meet the changing expectations of owner-members and other stakeholders, including workforce, regulators and lenders. To that end, EKPC is in the midst of a multiyear, \$262 million project to ensure our largest power plant remains compliant and ready to serve Kentucky."



**Mary Ellen Wiederwohl**  
*Chief,  
Louisville  
Forward*

"America is now in the longest economic expansion in history, and the Louisville region has benefited tremendously, including 83,000 new jobs and 3,000 new businesses since 2011. In 2020 this winning streak should continue with more success in our historic economic strengths like manufacturing and logistics as well as our accelerating efforts in the aging care innovation and technology sectors. To support this, our LouTechWorks initiative will aim towards a quintupling of our projected growth of tech jobs in the next few years, boosted particularly by our new partnership with Microsoft to make Louisville a regional hub for artificial intelligence, internet of things, and data science – all of which will engage with employers in health care and manufacturing. AI and data will soon change our world as much as the smartphone and the internet did 10 and 20 years ago. In 2020, Louisville will be defining the future of work and positioning the region for greater prosperity."



**J.D. Chaney**  
*Deputy  
Executive  
Director,  
Kentucky  
League  
of Cities*

"Cities are the economic engines of Kentucky, responsible for approximately 75% of the state's economic footprint. The people who live and work in our cities expect vital services, but finding the money to pay for these needs is increasingly difficult for city leaders. Pension costs alone have more than doubled in the past 20 years. Unfortunately, state law restricts how cities collect funds, compounding the challenge as expenses skyrocket. The legislature needs to modernize how it allows cities to collect revenue and give local elected leaders the options necessary to determine what is best for their communities. As Kentucky looks to grow its economy, it's vital that cities have the economic foundation and reliable infrastructure that corporations expect."



**Bob Jackson**  
President  
Murray State  
University

"Murray State University responds to the educational, workforce and economic development needs of our region and commonwealth and has a profound economic impact statewide, generating \$495 million in economic activity in one fiscal year, according to a 2016 impact report. We are very optimistic about 2020 and our region's continued growth. We see growth in most sectors of our economy during the months ahead and are excited about the university's response with new, high-impact academic programs and centers, such as logistics and supply chain management, cybersecurity, civil and sustainability engineering, the Center for Agricultural Hemp, Center for Economic/Entrepreneurial Development, occupational therapy and other health care programs. We are actively addressing the teacher shortage issues across the state, particularly in rural areas, through our College of Education and Human Services. Murray State is recognized as one of America's best value colleges and for 29 consecutive years as a top-tier university by *U.S. News and World Report*, accolades that will assist our continued growth to address the many opportunities awaiting our region."



**London Roth**  
Bold Goal  
Advisor,  
Humana

"2020 is an important year for assessing the outcomes of Humana's population health strategy to improve the health of the communities we serve 20 percent by 2020 and beyond. Humana has partnered with public and private agencies to address the needs of the whole person, and we've measured our progress with the CDC's Healthy Days survey. We recognize the avoidable waste and costs of health care delivery associated with unmet gaps in social determinants of health. Humana is committed to identify these basic unmet needs among our members and community residents, leveraging technology to connect individuals to resources to support those needs, scaling solutions and measuring associated outcomes. Humana is proud to participate in the United Community initiative, led by Metro United Way. Louisville is the first city in the nation to connect the health, education and human services sectors via a digital community service coordination platform."



**Sherry Murphy**  
Executive  
Director  
Bowling Green  
Area  
Convention &  
Visitors Bureau

"In Bowling Green, we continue to capitalize on our community becoming a motorsports playground. Event promoters from around the state and nation continue to book events at historic Beech Bend Raceway Park and the NCM (National Corvette Museum) Motorsports Park. In 2019, our community saw a record number of event attendees. We expect those event numbers to continue to grow over the next few years, as we work on developing new attractions for off-road motorsports enthusiasts."



*Louisville's ongoing hotel construction boom is crowned by the 30-story \$315 million Omni Louisville Hotel that opened downtown in 2018 with over 600 deluxe rooms, multiple dining options, three bars, a four-lane bowling alley and more. Louisville now has more than 20,000 rooms in the metro area with more on the way.*



**Ashli Watts**  
President/CEO  
Kentucky  
Chamber  
of Commerce

"Kentucky has seen welcomed economic growth the past few years, as witnessed by our record business investments, new job announcements and exports. But whether Kentucky continues these trends or falls to the bottom of states will be highly dependent on our elected officials' ability to make bold decisions on our biggest challenges – pensions, infrastructure, Medicaid, education and corrections. Kentucky is not alone in facing these challenges, and what will separate us from the rest of the states is a mix of the right reforms and meaningful investment. Kentucky is well on its way to achieving the view of itself we all share: a place where there is economic opportunity, high quality of life and a bright future."



**Ryan Quarles**  
Commissioner  
of Agriculture  
Commonwealth  
of Kentucky

"Kentucky agriculture in 2020 will be at the mercy of macro-economic factors outside our control, including unfair retaliatory tariffs against our farm families. Kentucky's hemp industry enjoyed a record year in 2019 with nearly 1,000 growers and some 26,000 acres planted, and we expect even bigger things in 2020. We look for continued growth of Kentucky Cattlemen's Ground Beef, an all-Kentucky beef product sold in supermarkets across the commonwealth. As I write this, we are still waiting for Congress to do its job and pass the USMCA (United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement) trade agreement, which, if ratified, will ensure Kentucky farmers of near-tariff-free trade with our closest neighbors."

## COVER STORY



**Kent Oyler**  
President/CEO,  
Greater  
Louisville Inc.

“Talent is a major driving factor for bringing jobs and population growth and will continue to be a major focus for 2020 as employers throughout the commonwealth compete with major metro areas for employees. Louisville is the driving economic engine for the state. That’s why Live in Lou, a talent attraction and retention initiative is important. Employers must speak together as one regional voice on what are the community assets and selling points for their region. Louisville is focusing on attracting professionals with an associate’s degree or higher between the ages of 25 to 54 and driving them to LiveinLou.com as an important part of economic development.”



**Susan Elkington**  
President  
Toyota Motor  
Manufacturing  
Kentucky

“Looking toward 2020, TMMK is uniquely equipped to continue our legacy of producing some of the best-selling vehicles Toyota has to offer. While industry trends show a rise in popularity of SUVs and trucks, we firmly believe passenger cars are still an important part of the market. Over the next few years, Toyota (overall) will introduce 31 new, redesigned or refreshed models, many of which will be sedans. To kick off 2020, TMMK will add production of the RAV4 Hybrid to our line-up, supporting a Toyota commitment that by 2025 every product will have a dedicated electrified model or an electrified option. With a string of recent investments, the foundation is in place to drive Toyota Kentucky into the next 30 years of manufacturing in the Bluegrass.”



**Nick Rowe**  
President,  
Kentucky  
American  
Water

“Kentucky American Water is an investor-owned utility providing quality water and wastewater services to rural and urban customers in portions of 14 counties, and investing in water system infrastructure remains a priority. In 2020 we plan approximately \$25 million worth of system and facility updates such as upgrading aging pipes and treatment plants. Communities depend on the services we provide for the basic needs of life as well as for fire protection and industry. In short, we help keep their lives flowing, and we take this responsibility seriously. We remain focused on controlling operational expenses, providing a fair return to investors, and expanding our footprint in the commonwealth to bring our unique experience, expertise and commitment to additional communities.”



**Eli Capilouto**  
President  
University  
of Kentucky

“As the University of, for and with Kentucky, we are reimagining what’s possible, not only for our institution, but for the commonwealth and its future. As Kentucky’s economic engine, we are preparing today’s entrepreneurs, professionals and employers so they can address tomorrow’s questions. As such, it remains critical that we cultivate and sustain partnerships with local, state and federal governments along with the private sector. Through our high-tech research enterprise – contributing \$725.5 million to Kentucky’s economy – and commercialization infrastructure, we are at the forefront of innovation in health care, drug development, energy and agriculture. As we build a brighter economic future for Kentucky in an evolving 21st-century economy, we are asking ourselves: What’s wildly possible?”



**Mary Quinn Ramer**  
President  
VisitLEX

“For Lexington’s hospitality sector, 2020 will be a landmark year of cornerstone projects and international events. City Center, a \$220 million mixed-use development in the heart of the city, will be open and fully operational in January. The Krikorian Premiere Theatre at South Broadway and West High Street will open in the spring. Phase One of the Lexington Convention Center expansion project will be complete by the fall. This \$250 million project will allow our destination to compete for 90% of the national meeting business (up from 65% currently). Equitana, a three-day equine event and the world’s largest equine trade fair, is coming to the Kentucky Horse Park for the first time in September. And Lexington once again will welcome the Breeders’ Cup to Keeneland Race Course in November. The hospitality industry anticipates another solid year for economic development and progress throughout 2020.”



**Mike Kmetz**  
Executive  
Director,  
Jeffersonstown  
Economic  
Development  
Authority

“The City of Jeffersonstown expects to see strong job growth continue into 2020. In 2019 Jeffersonstown’s JOBS Program saw five companies qualify for the incentive, with projected job growth totaling 924 new employees at an average annual salary of about \$75,000. Employment increases by sector include 408 jobs in manufacturing, 56 headquarters jobs and 460 IT-related jobs. Additionally, restaurant and entertainment offerings continue to grow in the Gaslight Square District and other parts of the city, including the Plainview and Stonybrook areas. These businesses are attracting patrons from throughout the Louisville region, strengthening Jeffersonstown’s position as an entertainment destination. A goal for 2020 is to establish plans with a private-sector partner to develop a 2.38-acre site adjacent to Gaslight Square.”



**Jared Arnett**  
Executive  
Director  
*Shaping Our  
Appalachian  
Region Inc.  
(SOAR)*

"To achieve outcomes that have never been realized, you must do things that have never been done. We believe 2020 has the potential to be a year of transformation on many fronts across Appalachia Kentucky. This year will bring opportunities for us to leverage connectivity like never before by complementing the KentuckyWired network to build on the more than 2,500 remote-work jobs created in the region since 2015 and our work to connect small businesses and startups to new markets through the digital economy. We also believe 2020 will be the year that we take

the first steps of being the Ag-Tech Capital of America with the construction of AppHarvest's more than 2.5 million-s.f. greenhouse near Morehead."



**Ashish Vaidya**  
President  
*Northern  
Kentucky  
University*

"Kentucky higher education institutions finally have pension reform for 2020 in House Bill 1. While evaluating and implementing the options in the bill that will take precedence in early 2020, there are other factors that impact the economic outlook for higher education in Kentucky. Enrollment and competitive pressures, combined with a focus on maintaining affordability, will limit revenue growth for state colleges and universities. The commonwealth must come together to ensure that more diverse learners attain

degrees and credentials in order to improve the economic outlook for all sectors across the commonwealth, including higher education."



**Paul W. Thompson**  
Chairman/  
CEO/President,  
*LG&E and KU*

"Empowering economic vitality and quality of life in our communities is our vision and one of our top priorities. Transforming our vision into a reality takes shape in many ways. By providing safe, reliable energy at some of the lowest costs in the nation, we're helping attract new businesses to Kentucky and working with existing partners to expand, create jobs and bring economic benefits to the commonwealth. Our programs help businesses of all sizes meet their

sustainability goals, and we partner with local and state economic development personnel to improve Kentucky's inventory of prospective sites for new businesses. As we enter another decade of service, we remain steadfast in our commitment to help Kentucky's light shine."



**Dan Mann**  
Executive  
Director  
*Louisville  
Regional  
Airport  
Authority*

"Following the busiest year in the history of Louisville Muhammad Ali International Airport (SDF), we expect to maintain this momentum into 2020. Passenger capacity for next year is strong as we continue to celebrate the success of new direct Los Angeles (LAX) service from American Airlines and new nonstop destinations from Allegiant Air and Southwest Airlines. Area travelers will begin to see progress on more than \$200 million in improvements at SDF. As the world's seventh busiest cargo airport (and third busiest in North America), Louisville's airport will continue

to play a significant role in national and global economic activity. The future for the region's air service and cargo operations is bright."



**Lee Crume**  
President/CEO,  
*Northern  
Kentucky  
Tri-ED*

"We expect 2020 to build on the economic momentum of 2019. Significant investment at the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport continues with Amazon Air constructing its \$1 billion hub and Atlas Air building a new facility nearby. We expect those trends to continue and are working to attract technology and logistics companies that align with their presence in the region. Northern Kentucky saw strong expansion activity across many industry sectors in 2019, with existing

companies announcing new additions to their facilities and adding new employees. We expect our business retention and expansion projects to continue driving the economy in the region in 2020. This year we are focused on growing Northern Kentucky's entrepreneurship ecosystem with our partners, Northern Kentucky University and St. Elizabeth Healthcare."



**Russell F. Cox**  
President/CEO,  
*Norton  
Healthcare*

"Increasing access to care and attention to patient experience will be areas of focus for health care in 2020. Norton Healthcare, along with the industry as a whole, continues to see an increase in patient volume and demand for services across all generations. I expect to see even greater emphasis on technology. Norton Healthcare continues to invest in 24/7 virtual visits so patients can receive care at a time and location convenient for them.

We're also expanding our reach of outpatient centers to give more patients health care options close to home. Patients have a choice in where they seek medical care, and health care organizations must evolve to meet consumer expectations."



*Aluminum producer Aleris ships automotive body sheet from its facility in Lewisport, Ky., to North American customers after a \$400 million expansion that added automotive sheet heat treatment and finishing capabilities, a new wide cold mill and two continuous annealing lines.*



**Spencer Bruce**  
President/CEO  
Louisville  
Water Co.

“Louisville Water Co.’s liquid assets continue to give the Louisville region a strong platform for growth. In 2020, we expect to deliver 33.6 billion gallons of water to nearly 1 million people in Louisville and six surrounding Kentucky counties. We’re investing over \$100 million in the region’s economy with infrastructure and technology projects to ensure a high-quality and affordable supply of water. As the only water utility in the nation to trademark tap water, the

Louisville pure tap® message appears in popular tourism and business destinations, highlighting our connection to quality of life and economic growth.”



**Ronald Bunch**  
President/CEO,  
Bowling Green  
Area Chamber  
of Commerce

“In 2019, we were blessed to be identified as The Best Place to Live in Kentucky by *Money* magazine, as well as honored by *Site Selection* magazine as No. 1 in its highlight of The Top Metros in the U.S. for new and expanded facilities, marking six consecutive years being nationally ranked. Our targeted businesses announced over 900 new jobs and almost \$350 million in capital investment in Bowling Green and Warren County this year, as a testament to our exceptional business climate. We are very thankful for our public and private

leadership that contribute to an exceptional quality of life for our community each year. Looking at our pipeline, we expect this wonderful momentum to continue into 2020.”



**Linda Gorton**  
Mayor,  
City of  
Lexington

“Driven by the new opportunities – 250 acres now open for economic development on Coldstream Research Campus, University of Kentucky brainpower, high-tech agriculture and a growing community of entrepreneurs – our economy continues to grow and expand in sectors that signal a bright future. Working to attract good jobs is a top priority for me. And we are also focusing on workforce development, so we meet the needs of our business community and of citizens who want to improve their skills.”



**Jack Moreland**  
President,  
Southbank  
Partners in  
Northern  
Kentucky

“If 2019 was a boom year for the river cities of Southbank Partners in Northern Kentucky, then 2020 is going to be an explosion. In Newport, work is continuing on the \$100 million rebuild of Newport on the Levee. New apartments, office buildings and parking lots are planned or underway in Covington. And the redevelopment of the IRS site will be announced next year. Young professionals continue moving in to Bellevue’s historic neighborhoods, while the city’s bustling Fairfield Avenue has attracted new restaurants, breweries, bars and shops.

Hundreds of single-family homes and multifamily units are being built in Dayton. A six-story, mixed-use residential and retail building is under construction in Fort Thomas’ business district. And finally, a distillery and brewery have opened in Ludlow’s historic downtown.”



**Greg Fischer**  
Mayor,  
Louisville  
Metro

“As we begin a new decade, Louisville’s economic renaissance is in full swing. Since 2011, we’ve added 83,000 jobs and 3,000 businesses and more than \$14 billion in capital investment in the last five years alone, including nearly \$1 billion in neighborhoods west of Ninth Street. You see transformation in our skyline with new landmarks like Omni Hotel Louisville and Lynn Family Stadium, which is opening in 2020 as the home of Louisville City FC and future home of Proof Louisville FC. This

renaissance is happening across our city, from the Norton Sports Health Athletics & Learning Complex to the restored Colonial Gardens, and the Northeast Regional Library. Growth of bourbon tourism – Bourbonism – has built two dozen hotels, renovated Kentucky International Convention Center and added Trifesta to our calendar, all of which help attract 16 million visitors annually. Partnerships with JPMorgan Chase and Microsoft are fueling our high-tech training efforts and helping Louisville companies harness the power of tech tools like artificial intelligence, data science and the internet of things. In 2020, Louisville will become a city of greater equity and compassion, with access to opportunity and abundant resources, where everyone in every neighborhood has every chance to reach their full human potential.” ■



# Public Incentives Net Thousands of Private Jobs

Kentucky counts 60,000 jobs, \$23.5B in investment  
from 1,200 incented projects in four years

BY GREG PAETH

**B**UILDING a steel mill in Brandenburg, 45 miles southwest of Louisville, with a price tag of \$1.35 billion and a start-up workforce of 400? How about a plant expansion at Dippin' Dots in Paducah that will increase payroll by 28 people, or a \$34 million bourbon barrel manufacturing facility in the Edmonton-Metcalf County Industrial Park?

The thread that binds these three disparate projects together is found only in Frankfort, where the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development can thumb through a catalog of incentives designed to attract new companies, nurture existing businesses and, in both

cases, create new jobs throughout the commonwealth.

The administration of outgoing Gov. Matt Bevin claims his four years in office have been spectacularly successful in attracting \$23.5 billion of business investment that has or will create an estimated 60,000 jobs throughout Kentucky. While Bevin has been Kentucky's CEO, some 1,200 individual projects involving state incentives got a green light.

Many other projects involving thousands more jobs went forward without benefit of incentives, which do have performance strings attached.

For those involving public benefits, Cabinet for Economic Development

statistics show each job created from 2010 to 2017 (the last year for which comprehensive data is available) cost the state \$2,408 in incentives.

That price tag would be substantially higher – easily twice as much – if companies actually claimed all the credits they were entitled for beefing up payrolls in Kentucky.

For example, only 46 percent of the \$39.3 million in credits “earned” by companies in 2015 were claimed, state figures show. State incentives are often spread over 10 or 15 years and must be claimed annually.

The range of incentives at the state level, coupled with those that might be available through federal, county or city sources, can make business decisions quite complex when companies evaluate all the options on the table in the commonwealth and perhaps in neighboring states competing for that same project.

“By far, the most-often used incentive program is the Kentucky Business Investment (KBI) program,” said Jack Mazurak, a spokesman for the Cabinet for Economic Development. To determine the size of an incentive offer, KBI uses a formula that includes the amount of a company's investment, the number of full-time jobs being created and the average hourly wages paid, Mazurak said.

“Those three targets are how the company's performance is monitored over the 10- or 15-year course of the incentive agreement,” he explained.



*Jack Mazurak,  
Spokesman,  
Cabinet for  
Economic  
Development*

## \$270 million in credits this decade

From 2010 until October 2019, the cabinet approved up to \$270.3 million in corporate tax credits for KBI projects. Approved companies achieved their three targets often enough to “earn” \$234.1 million in credits.

One reason they hit those targets frequently is that applicants are thoroughly screened. Cabinet staff does plenty of preliminary research before a project is presented to the Kentucky Economic Development Finance Authority (KEDFA) board, which makes the final decision on incentives, according to Erran Persley, commissioner of business development for the cabinet.

The KEDFA board is comprised of six business people from throughout the state and Secretary William Landrum, who heads the Finance and Administration Cabinet.

“All our incentives are performance based,” Persley stressed, and contingent on the company annually hitting the targets Mazurak identified.

“We roll up all of our dollars and incentives into one spreadsheet that goes before KEDFA. There are different pockets of funding and we work with different agencies to get funding, but the KEDFA board has final approval of the package that moves forward,” Persley said.

More often than not, companies are enamored of the KBI corporate tax credit that allows them to reduce their future income taxes or their payments to the state for payroll and occupational taxes.

For example, Kentuckiana Curb, a Louisville company that handles heating and air conditioning and roof system products, received preliminary approval from KEDFA on October 31 for a \$6.5 million tax credit over 10 years if it fulfills plans to spend \$50 million on a new plant and create 400 jobs that pay at least \$29 an hour over the life of the agreement.

KEDFA approved providing Kentuckiana Curb with up to \$500,000 in incentives through the Kentucky Enterprise Initiative Act (KEIA), which allows the company to recoup Kentucky sales and use tax for construction costs, building fixtures, equipment used in research and development and electronic processing.

The KEIA program is the second most popular, especially for companies new to the state that may be investing millions of dollars in a new building and new equipment, Mazurak said.



*Erran Persley, Commissioner of Business Development, Cabinet for Economic Development*

## Kentucky's Economic Development Incentives

The Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development provides a huge variety of incentive programs for new and expanding industries. Some of the more popular are:

### Kentucky Business Investment Program:

The state's most popular incentive provides tax credits up to 100% of corporate income tax or limited liability entity tax as well as a “wage assessment” of up to 4% of the taxable wages paid employees. The employee receives credits against their state income tax and local occupational tax so there is no direct impact on the worker.

### Kentucky Enterprise Initiative Act:

Refunds Kentucky sales and use tax for building and construction materials and for eligible equipment used for research and development, data processing equipment or flight simulation equipment. KEIA is the second most popular incentive.

### Direct Loan Program:

Provides business loans to supplement other financing at below-market interest rates for fixed asset financing for agribusiness, tourism, industrial ventures or the service industry. Retail projects are not eligible.

**Industrial Revenue Bonds:** IRBs issued by state and local governments in Kentucky can be used to finance manufacturing projects and their warehousing areas, major transportation and communication facilities, most health care facilities, and mineral extraction and processing projects.

### Community Development Block Grant

**Loans:** Federally funded low-interest loans made available through the Department for Local Government.

### Bluegrass State Skills Corp.: BSSC

provides a maximum \$500 Skills Training Investment Credit per trainee to companies creating at least 12 new full-time jobs for Kentuckians paying at least \$12.51 per hour, including benefits. A second program, Grant-In-Aid, requires three trainees and covers 50% of the cost with a maximum of \$2,000 per employee.

### SBIR-STTR Matching Funds:

Kentucky aggressively matches up to 100% of federal Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer grants to companies with promising research and development efforts to commercialize their findings. The company must locate in Kentucky. Other states' matches top out at 50%.

## Workforce, the ultimate incentive

The finance authority also said the company is eligible for assistance from the Kentucky Skills Network, which can help a company recruit and train employees. This incentive, which comes in many forms, is probably the third most popular, Mazurak said.

As might be expected, all of this assistance comes with some strings attached. The cabinet doesn't just grab its overcoat and head for the interstate after photos have been taken at the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Once the project is up and running, companies are monitored to ensure that they deliver on the promises they made to secure the incentives.

The state's Revenue Cabinet oversees compliance for state incentives and those made available from other government sources such as Louisville Metro, according to Mazurak and Rebecca Fleischaker, director of the Economic Development Department for Louisville Forward. The Cabinet for Economic Development also scrutinizes the numbers, providing a second level of review for the state.

Fleischaker pointed out that Louisville Forward oversees the city's economic

development efforts, real estate development, land use, permitting and planning and design operations. Because of its comprehensive makeup, she said, her department can “bring all of the regulatory agencies around the table at the same time to discuss site development plans. We also work with the state to identify tax incentives that companies may qualify for.”

“We participate in the state incentive program, withholding (and foregoing) up to 1% of our occupational wage tax,” Fleischaker said, adding that the city's “incentive threshold is at least \$18 per hour.”

Both Mazurak and Gina Greathouse, executive vice president for economic development for Commerce Lexington, pointed out that cities are required to contribute to incentive deals the state cabinet has put together.

Other economic development organizations throughout the state don't provide loans, grants or tax breaks to companies but do provide truckloads of information to businesses, make introductions to key people, open the doors to other incentive sources and do their best to establish a good relationship and make prospects feel welcome.



*Rebecca Fleischaker, Director of the Economic Development Department, Louisville Forward*



*Gina Greathouse, Executive Vice President for Economic Development, Commerce Lexington*

# Opportunity zones: A vehicle for investing in Kentucky's road map

BY ROLF PROVAN, VICE PRESIDENT OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & MARKETING, LUCKETT & FARLEY

## Tax incentives spur private sector investments in 84 Kentucky counties

Choosing to invest your capital in local opportunities offers you a unique chance to build a legacy in the place you call home. But with so many needs out there, the real challenge is knowing where to begin.

To spur long-term private sector investments in low-income urban and rural communities and help identify where those investments are most needed, Congress established the Opportunity Zones program as part of 2017's Tax Cut and Jobs Act. New investments in opportunity zones receive preferential tax treatment, including zero tax on gains earned from the opportunity zone fund, deferred payment of capital gains originally invested into the fund, and reducing owed taxes on the original fund investment by up to 15%.

Kentucky has established 144 tracts designated as opportunity zones in 84 counties. This presents a wide range of opportunities for our community's leaders to invest around the state and make an impact that can last for generations.

### Transformation of communities brings more than a financial return

Investing in an opportunity zone brings additional profits, but it also brings improvements to the communities we live in. In Louisville, we've seen how the revitalization of old, abandoned neighborhoods can bring people and businesses back, allowing them to flourish. Opportunity zones provide incentives and safety nets for investors to spread their wealth outside of the usual areas and into communities that need improvements.

### Investment guided by design: Lockett & Farley Opportunity Zone Fund

We understand the value of local investments and know that a well-designed building can give an entire neighborhood new character. That is why we formed an opportunity zone fund built on a foundation of design geared toward local impact.

Lockett & Farley's opportunity zone fund will target a range of real estate

projects that leverage Lockett & Farley's knowledge across its verticals: Civic, Corporate Commercial & Hospitality, Distilled Spirits, Government, Higher Education, and Industrial. At this time our primary focus is on the many CRE, hospitality, and multi-family unit opportunities in our chosen tracts.

### Investing in the architectural integrity of tomorrow

Since 1853, Lockett & Farley has been shaping the future of architecture and design. When you invest in Lockett & Farley's opportunity zone fund, you're placing your trust in the largest architecture firm in the state. With architecture, interior design, engineering, procurement, and master planning all in-house, we're ready to take on new developments with a host of experts to help guide the selection, planning, and design process.

We also have under our umbrella Lockett & Farley Development, LLC, dedicated to helping our partners identify needs, verify a project's financial feasibility, execute it through vetted acquisition, and manage the asset throughout the life of the investment with our property management firm. All of this comes in addition to the design and construction management skills Lockett & Farley has built its reputation on.

### Louisville focus. Regional impact. Global reach.

The current target projects we're moving forward on are focused in Kentucky but carry the potential to have a wider impact on the people we can serve and attract to these areas:

- Urban hospitality — Renovation of existing iconic building located within the urban center in close proximity to an entertainment district. Potential programming opportunities include restaurant, office, apartment, and hotel spaces.
- Urban mixed-use — Mixed-use opportunity to partner with local urban college. Renovation of existing building and retention of currently occupied tenant. Programming

potential to include retail and academic office space.

- Rural mixed-use — A newly constructed mixed-use hotel to support regional industry and a local university. Programming opportunities include restaurant, conference center, and hotel for growing campus as well as growing local business community.

Lockett & Farley is proud to be leading the way with these new opportunity zone funds. If you are interested in learning more, please reach out to Rolf Provan at [rprovan@luckett-farley.com](mailto:rprovan@luckett-farley.com) or Gant Hill at [gant@ganthill.com](mailto:gant@ganthill.com).



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

One such organization is Commerce Lexington, the Chamber of Commerce for the region that radiates out from Lexington.

"We're the convener," Greathouse said. "We don't provide any direct incentives. We help coordinate the process so that when we have a (prospective) economic development client, my team and I manage those projects from the beginning to the end. Always at the table with us is Kevin Atkins from the (Lexington) Mayor's Office of Economic Development," she said, referring to the city's chief development officer.

### Good relationships are gold

"We organize the visit, set up the meetings, the roundtables, one-on-ones and organize property searches. Sometimes they might say they need 7,000 s.f. of eclectic office space because they want their engineers to be in a cool environment," Greathouse said. "You want to get to know them better...build a relationship, because a lot of time that's what it takes (to close a deal)."

"You definitely don't want to give away things you don't have to," said Greathouse, who worked for the state cabinet earlier in her career. "Some companies don't even want incentives, but most of them do."

In Louisville, Deana Karem plays a similar role for Greater Louisville Inc. as that chamber's senior vice president for regional economic growth. GLI's economic development region includes 10 counties in Kentucky and five in Indiana.

"The most common way that we get the opportunity to sell our community to companies," Karem said, "is through site selectors."

These consultants advise companies on the best options for locating operations based on factors that include property size, cost, infrastructure, ease of access to raw materials and their end customers, skilled workforce availability, and how cooperative local and state officials are.

When companies want to find the right site, "99% of them may be looking for something (important to them) but they're not looking at county lines," Karem said. "They want to meet with us and find out the options. When they start narrowing it down to a site, that's when they start looking at incentives."

Mazurak said one company that "really gets it" in terms of working with the state is Mubea, a German company that makes

automotive components in Florence and Elsmere in Northern Kentucky.

Going back to 1999, the company has received state incentives worth about \$21 million for six expansion projects and has obtained hundreds of thousands of dollars from the state for training thousands of employees for Bluegrass State Skills Corp. programs. Mubea has gotten training incentives 45 times, according to state reports.

### Workforce, good sites outrank incentives

There is no one standard path most companies take to arrive at their first meeting at the offices of Northern Kentucky Tri-County Economic Development Corp. (Tri-ED) in Fort Mitchell, said Lee Crume, president and CEO of Tri-ED. All economic development professionals interviewed for this story concurred.

When they meet with companies looking for a growth location, Tri-ED representatives regularly deal with businesses already inside its home base of Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties as well as with those from outside Northern Kentucky, Crume said.

The state of Kentucky sends leads to Tri-ED, Crume said, as does REDI Cincinnati, which works on economic development projects on both sides of the Ohio River and a corner of southeast Indiana.

However, in terms of raw numbers, he said, site selection consultants have proven to be the best single source of business prospects.

Prospects typically first ask about available sites and "want to know what the workforce looks like in Northern Kentucky," Crume said.

"Sometimes you have to be creative in finding these workforce solutions," said Kimberly Rossetti, Tri-ED vice president of economic development. To find people who could work with their hands for one prospect whose jobs required manual dexterity, Rossetti said, she phoned around to nail salons and dentist's offices to talk with dental assistants. She found potential workers, but the company wound up locating elsewhere in the state.

A talented workforce and good sites were mentioned over and over again as top priorities for new and expanding companies.



*Lee Crume,  
President &  
CEO, Northern  
Kentucky  
Tri-ED*



*Deana Karem,  
Senior Vice  
President for  
Regional  
Economic  
Growth,  
Greater  
Louisville Inc.*



*Kimberly  
Rossetti, Vice  
President of  
Economic  
Development,  
Northern  
Kentucky  
Tri-ED*

Persley and Mazurak made it clear where the cabinet stands on this issue.

"The No. 1 question across the country is workforce – do you have the workforce to support our company? Can we get a good talented workforce if we come to Kentucky? Site and workforce go together, but at the end of the day let's be honest: A lot of the sites are going to be similar," Persley said. "Labor force is really No. 1 in a lot of peoples' minds. And Jack made a great point: No amount of incentives is going to fix the fact that you don't have the workforce."

Meanwhile, low wages stand out as the reason why some companies are not offered incentives.

"The typical reason Louisville does not participate in (offering a prospect) incentives is low wages," said GLI's Fleischaker.

"We always tell people," Greathouse said, "if they want to come in here and try to pay \$8 an hour, A, they won't incentivize you to do that, and B, you're not going to find anyone for \$8 an hour. So Lexington might not be the best fit for you. If you can't hire people to do the job for you, why come here?"

Rosetti, who took her Tri-ED post earlier this year after more than a decade at Commerce Lexington, agrees.

"If the company across the street is offering \$2 more an hour, you're not going to be successful," she said, explaining why some companies' incentive proposals get rejected.

"Our job is not just to get more projects to the state, but the quality of the projects matters," Persley said. "If a project is not paying a good wage and we know it can't be successful...we will tell them this is not the best place for them to establish their project. With a low (current) unemployment rate, you have to be competitive with the market. If a company fails at the end of the day, that doesn't help anybody – it doesn't help the company; it doesn't help the state."

### Large companies still want incentives

Few people are openly critical of state economic development incentive packages, even when these government deal sweeteners sometimes go to companies that don't seem to need assistance.

Amazon, rated by *Forbes* as the world's 28th largest publicly held company with estimated 2019 revenue of \$275 billion, broke ground in May in Northern Kentucky for its Prime Air hub. It is expected to have a final price tag of about \$1.5 billion and create at least 2,000 new jobs. When the project was announced in 2017, the state said if the online shopping giant hits agreed-



# New Politics for Budget Session



Leaders cast as equals tasked  
with governing Kentucky in 2020

BY BOB BABBAGE AND JULIE BABBAGE

**D**ORIS Kearns Goodwin captured the unexpected alliances of Lincoln's presidency in her masterpiece "Team of Rivals." Borrowing a version of this phenomenon, the dynamics of 2020 in Frankfort might be called "team of equals."

Democratic Gov.-elect **Andy Beshear** faces a Republican House and Senate. When the divide becomes too great, the decidedly GOP legislature supermajority can always override the chief executive, settling the debate at hand. In this sense, Senate President **Robert Stivers** and House Speaker **David Osborne** wield equal and historically heavy gavels.

Still, the new governor is adding allies who were once challengers, starting



Gov. Andy Beshear



Senate President Robert Stivers



House Speaker David Osborne

with long-time House member **Rocky Adkins** in the role of senior advisor. Adkins spent 14 years as House majority leader before the Republican takeover, then ran against Beshear in the 2019 Primary.

Adkins will lend considerable understanding of the legislative process and provide a valuable conduit to Rep. **Derrick Graham** and Rep. **Joni Jenkins** in their roles as Democratic leaders. Both have given input as part of the administration's transition team.

Former Lexington Mayor **Jim Gray** will head Transportation, a surprise move. Gray had been talked about for a governor's race but chose the congressional Democratic primary against Amy McGrath. With a strong



Rocky Adkins



Derrick Graham



Joni Jenkins



Jim Gray

Kentucky's famed Beaux Arts style Capitol will be at the center of a political whirlwind when the 2020 session of the General Assembly convenes to come up with a new biennial budget. New Democratic Governor Andy Beshear and a slate of new Cabinet secretaries will work with a House and Senate that have Republican supermajorities.

background in building buildings with his family's Gray Construction, he will now direct building roads.

Lt. Gov.-elect **Jacqueline Coleman** will become secretary of education and workforce development. It's been a quarter century since a person in the second spot served in the cabinet. Coleman, an educator, becomes a more equal lieutenant governor.



Lt. Gov. Jacqueline Coleman

Guiding the House floor is Rep. **Bam Carney**, also an educator. In this role, Carney covers the entire range of issues. Speaker Pro Tempore **David Meade**, Whip **Chad McCoy** and Caucus Chair **Suzanne Miles** round out the GOP leadership. In a surprising move, the House has invited Beshear to their annual retreat – an expression of goodwill both ways.



Bam Carney



David Meade



Chad McCoy



Suzanne Miles

Balancing major power in the Senate are President Pro Tempore **David Givens** and Majority Floor Leader **Damon Thayer**. Frankfort observers see Thayer as a prospect for higher office. Leadership also features Majority Whip **Mike Wilson** and Caucus Chair **Julie Raque Adams** working to keep the GOP Senate in sync.



David Givens



Damon Thayer



Mike Wilson



Julie Raque Adams

constitutional officers. Agriculture Commissioner **Ryan Quarles** enters his second term with a large mandate at the polls. State Auditor **Mike Harmon** and Treasurer **Allison Ball** were also re-elected by wide margins.

Newcomers hold the two remaining



**Ryan Quarles**



**Mike Harmon**



**Allison Ball**

statewide spots. **Daniel Cameron**, former general counsel to U.S. Senate Majority Leader **Mitch McConnell**, became the first Republican to win the attorney general's seat in seven decades and the first African American to hold this position. The role has proven to be prominent and pivotal during Andy Beshear's term. Republican election lawyer **Michael Adams** is secretary of state, a seat that's alternated parties back-to-back four times now.

Other scenarios for leaders in roles



**Daniel Cameron**



**Mitch McConnell**



**Michael Adams**

considered equal also emerge.

Creating the state's two-year spending plan is a tough task, and 2020 is a budget session. Beshear will present the governor's budget on Jan. 21.

Then House Appropriations & Revenue chair, **Steven Rudy**, works over the document. Next comes the Senate, where **Christian McDaniel** is chair. In many ways the arduous budget job never stops for these leaders.

Rivals in sports but close peers in their professional calling, university presidents will make a budget appeal. **Neeli Bendapudi** of UofL and UK's **Eli Capilouto** have recently accented teamwork in support of higher education.

School safety was a celebrated



**Neeli Bendapudi**



**Eli Capilouto**

accomplishment in the 2019 session, but now comes the funding piece estimated to be more than \$300 million for the two years. Sen. **Max Wise** and Rep. **Regina Huff** will be front and center on this. The issue is a good example of the local impact spread across regions for what comes out of Frankfort.

Equally concerned about policy impacting cities are mayors of Kentucky's two largest cities: Mayor **Linda Gorton** of Lexington and Mayor **Greg Fischer** of Louisville, now co-chair for former New York City Mayor **Michael Bloomberg's** presidential campaign.

Rep. **Kim Moser** chairs the Health and Welfare Committee, a forum for key issues, leading to hard work in the off-season known as the interim session. Public health transformation is a bill pre-filed by Moser after much work from a coalition of stakeholders over the summer.

Her Senate counterpart, Dr. **Ralph Alvarado**, was Gov. Bevin's running mate. Alvarado's active Senate panel means that he manages numerous proposals.

Always top of mind in the health category is Medicaid – a significant budget factor with billions to manage, the majority being federal funds. Leaders on this are Sen. **Steve Meredith** and Rep. **Dan Elliott**, chairs of Medicaid oversight.

Rare cooperation on a proposed new gun law has originated in the Senate, led by **Paul Hornback** (R) and **Morgan McGarvey** (D) and joined by **Julie Raque Adams**. All



**Max Wise**



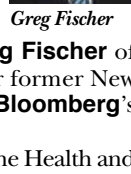
**Regina Huff**



**Greg Fischer**



**Linda Gorton**



**Kim Moser**



**Ralph Alvarado**



**Steve Meredith**



**Dan Elliott**



**Paul Hornback**



**Morgan McGarvey**

three hold important leadership roles in the 38-member chamber. Called ERPO, or Extreme Risk Protection Order, similar laws in other states are being used as examples.

Northern Kentucky itself is a team of equals with a cadre of committee chairs. In addition to McDaniel and Moser, Sen. **John Schickel** and Rep. **Adam Koenig** manage active, parallel licensing and occupations committees.

Koenig is also a vocal proponent of sports betting, an issue Beshear has pushed as part of his revenue plan.

Additional funding considerations will require significant effort.

The pension issue looms large now and will for years to come. Rep. **James Tipton** and Rep. **Jerry Miller** have led the charge from the GOP with Rep. **Joe Graviss** taking the lead for the Democrats.

Of ever-increasing weight is the road fund, as infrastructure updates are



**James Tipton**



**Jerry Miller**



**Joe Graviss**

badly needed around the state. Sen. **Jimmy Higdon** and Rep. **Sal Santoro** oversee numerous requests for transportation funding.

Being an election year to boot, 2020 is one for the books. Never before has Kentucky faced the political conditions in which it currently finds itself. Perhaps an extraordinary era of equals will result in extraordinary outcomes. ■



**Jimmy Higdon**



**Sal Santoro**



*Bob Babbage and Julie Babbage are with government relations firm Babbage Cofounder.*



# The Power of Influencers

How to work successfully with those who can persuade your customers

BY GATHAN BORDEN

**T**HE influencer marketing industry is set to reach \$10 billion by the year 2020.

While influencers are all the rage at marketing meetings and roundtables across the

world, influencer marketing isn't new – it's just grown exponentially in recent years through the power of social media.

As an '80s baby, I grew up watching TV shows like "The Cosby Show," "Saved By The Bell," "Diff'rent Strokes,"

"Family Ties," "Full House," "Growing Pains" and "Alf." I wore brands like Adidas (with the fat laces), Eastlands, Ocean Pacific and Swatch. A lot of my decisions on what I purchased were based on the commercials I saw watching celebrities from my favorite shows: Michael Jordan and Wheaties, Bill Cosby and Coca-Cola; even Tony the Tiger had me wanting to try Frosted Flakes. Those celebrities and others were the original influencers.

Fast forward to present day, and the conversation around influencer marketing is still prevalent and relevant. Only this time, the influencers are your next-door neighbor or the tech-savvy friends of your kids.

We define influencer marketing as a form of marketing that involves celebrities or influential industry experts tasked with selling a product. The rise of social media has given birth to the term "social media influencer," where brands work with people who have huge followings on various social media platforms to sell a product.

Studies show that 74% of people trust social networks to guide purchasing decisions, so now companies are seeking to understand the impact of influencers and how to work with them. But let me offer you this one piece of advice when it comes to influencers, and it will be the most important thing you read in this article:

"There is no ONE WAY to work with influencers."

Oftentimes companies will reach out to their industry colleagues to get advice on how best to work with influencers, but given the varying budgets, staff sizes and resources available, each company will give them a different answer, which is why I always say there is no one way to work with influencers. Instead, allow me to give you some advice and insight that can help you define how your company can work with influencers.

Here are five tips to help you:

**1. Make sure your company has an internal consensus for how you define**



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**an influencer.** In today's marketplace, anyone can be an influencer. The key is really determining if you think they can actually "influence" someone to purchase your product. With 49% of consumers depending on influencer recommendations, I am of the belief influencers are a big part of the marketing funnel, and their greatest asset is content creation. I actually define them as content creators and use them in that capacity versus solely relying on them to influence people to purchase because, let's be honest, ours is not the only product they are selling.

**2. Create a specific contract with deliverables for each influencer.** Before you begin, start with the end in mind. You need to have a clear vision of what you want from each influencer you work with. Each influencer has a niche in terms of content they cover and assets they can create for various platforms. The key here is finding what you are missing and working with them to fill your content holes. If you are missing photography, put a greater emphasis on that. If you are missing written articles, then put a greater emphasis on that. In the end, the contract should be mutually beneficial.

**3. Decide what your office can and will offer in terms of compensation.** To pay or not to pay? That is the question. Compensation is monetary and non-monetary, and while some companies pay in the form of money, others pay in the form of products, tickets and access to events. Whatever it is, you need to make it clear not only within the office, but with the influencer you are working with. Again, there is no right or wrong way to do this, but I think we can all



agree that no one in this world works for free.

**4. Don't ignore the people in your own backyard.** Because of social media, there is now a rising class of influencers you can tap into locally, termed as "micro-influencers." These are individuals who may not have huge followings in terms of numbers, but have highly engaged followers and they are local to the community in which your company does business. Finding local influencers can be relatively easy, because most of them could be existing customers, and would be more than happy to assist you in your marketing efforts.

**5. Cultivate your influencer relationships for future opportunities.** We are all familiar with the idea of "6 degrees

of separation," and I would even argue that within the influencer world that number is even smaller. Most influencers travel with and know other influencers, so use those relationships to build more relationships with influencers across the world. You can work with your local influencers to help connect you with out-of-market influencers.

Remember, marketing is a marathon, not a sprint. Influencers are now an additional water stop during the race, so whether you are beginning your journey into influencer marketing or even if you've been doing it for years, just remember: "There is no ONE WAY to work with influencers." ■

*Gathan Borden is vice president of marketing for visitLEX.*



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# EMERGING LANE

Kentucky's young professionals and creatives



Shop Local Kentucky owners Rick and Joni Paynter at their Bowling Green store, one of three locations. The store also has a website, [theykshop.com](http://theykshop.com).

## Shop Local Kentucky

### Spreading joy one T-shirt at a time

FROM branded ballcaps and socks to seasonally themed sweatshirts and irreverent message tees, promoting Kentucky with fun and joy is an important aspect of the Shop Local Kentucky business model – as is providing an opportunity to donate proceeds to charities.

Owners Rick and Joni Paynter sell merchandise through their online store ([theykshop.com](http://theykshop.com)) and retail locations in Lexington, Bowling Green and Covington.

"I love that we get to work together," Joni said. "Spreading joy one T-shirt at a time, we hope we do that. We hope we make people smile."

Most of their business comes from online orders, and they ship to all 50 states, 25 countries and to military personnel through APOs. Production takes place in-house at the Lexington headquarters.

With the job title of "Chief Kentuckian," Rick Paynter oversees "a little bit of everything," he said. He works with the design team, production, garment sourcing and marketing. Joni is hands-on with the customer experience and makes sure everything behind the scenes is coming together with the company's two dozen employees.

"We're very much of the mindset that kindness rules everything," Rick said. "We're super nice to our customers. They

have a nice dialog with us about what they want and how they want it."

Instead of creating a product and promoting it to customers, the Paynters do it the other way around more often than not, asking their social media followers what they want.

"How can we provide something you think is a cool garment?" is an underlying marketing message from Shop Local Kentucky. To date, best sellers are "anything relating to Southern life or Kentucky living," according to Rick.

When Rick Paynter graduated from the University of Kentucky with a degree in psychology, he was prepared to enter several different fields. Unfortunately, it was during the 2009 recession, so there weren't a lot of positions available. He worked in a tire store, found himself coding and designing websites, then landed a job as marketing director with the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce.

A native of Winchester, Paynter has an innate love of the commonwealth, so he started an Instagram account highlighting all things Kentucky, like restaurants, scenery, activities and cool places. His wife, Joni, grew up in Owensboro. They soon amassed 20,000 followers on Instagram and one day decided to design a T-shirt and donate 100% of the proceeds to The Toy Chest, a children's charity based in Lexington.

"We took the shirts online on a Friday

morning at 10 a.m. and sold out in 10 minutes flat," Rick said. He and Joni discussed what it would look like as a business opportunity, to create themed T-shirts and sell them online and at local festivals. They bought a screen-printing press, put it in their Georgetown home and grew the business grassroots-style, pounding the pavement.

"We did that out of our garage for two years," he said.

They opened a seasonal Christmas shop in 2014, then found a permanent retail space in nearby Lexington the next year – until a car drove through the building in summer 2017. Shortly after, Shop Local Kentucky opened a shop in the Shelby Park area of Louisville – and a vehicle drove through it as well, less than six months after the Lexington incident. The Louisville building was condemned, but the Lexington building was repaired and Shop Local Kentucky still has a retail shop there on Woodland Avenue, near the UK campus.

The owners of Shop Local Kentucky spent 2018 and most of 2019 concentrating on their Lexington store, e-commerce business and social media presence. The shop has more than 141,000 followers on Instagram and 257,000 on Facebook.

In October 2019, the Paynters opened a store on State Street in Bowling Green, and in November they opened in Covington on Pike Street, next to Braxton Brewery.

"There's a ton of action there," Rick said of downtown Covington. "The area is up and coming with young entrepreneurs and businesses."

Weathering the ups and downs (and drive-throughs) of retail, Rick and Joni Paynter are in it for the long haul. "We love what we do every day," he said. Because, as one of their best-selling designs says, "Life is better in Kentucky." —Kathie Stamps





Brothers Jameson (left) and Ben McBrayer

## McBrayer Digital: Brothers in Business

**A**RE you still using the term “Google AdWords”? If so, you might note that the tech giant actually renamed its paid search program in the summer of 2018 to “Google Ads.”

Keeping up with digital marketing is a full-time job, one that brothers Ben and Jameson McBrayer are having a blast doing in Lexington with their own company, McBrayer Digital. (The digital company is not affiliated with the well-known McBrayer law firm, although their dad is a distant relative of the namesake attorney.)

Ben started the business in the summer of 2017. His younger brother, Jameson, joined him in January 2019 and said, “I haven’t looked back.”

Ben echoed the sentiment. “I won’t ever go back to a regular desk job if I don’t have to,” he said.

Digital marketing extends beyond the internet to ads on smart TVs and streaming services, mobile apps and games.

“We lay out the strategy and placement, arranging the flight dates and the size of the buy,” Ben said. And they analyze data. So much data. “With digital, everything is tracked.”

“There are so many variables,” Jameson said, noting that it’s important to stick with your marketing company for more than a month at a time. “What digital marketing does is allow you to track all those variables.”

In addition to Google Ads, the McBrayer brothers run ad campaigns for their clients on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Shopify, among other platforms, and can help set up Amazon stores and e-commerce. They’ve worked with the Lexington-based Fazoli’s chain, Jefferson County Public Schools, the Kentucky Bourbon Trail and small family-owned businesses. McBrayer Digital subcontracts other professionals for graphics, branding and other projects that fall outside their main focus.

“The people receiving the ads are the ones most likely to be interested in it,” Ben said. “This is not the ‘90s, and we are not programming pop-up ads. We’re advertising businesses only to the people who would be the most interested in them.”

As founder and owner, Ben McBrayer handles in-platform setup, campaign strategy, digital media placement, and back-end tracking and implementation, while Jameson is in charge of the project management software and keeping things on task.

Born and raised in Georgetown, the brothers graduated from the University of Kentucky four years apart – Ben with a degree in communications and Jameson with a marketing degree – and both wound up working at Big Ass Fans in Lexington at different times. Ben completed his MBA while working there.

The best do-it-yourself advice the brothers have for Facebook marketing is to have a content calendar and post regularly, boosting certain posts to get attention and gain traction.

“When you really want to start using advanced targeting techniques and putting the scientific method behind advertising, that’s when we’ll step in,” Ben said.

Facebook rolled out a major update in late summer 2019 for its ad platform along with regulations on what can and cannot be used in an ad.

“If you post without knowledge of what you should and shouldn’t put on there you could get your ad account shut down, which is a big process to get opened back up again,” Jameson said. “The minutiae does matter.”

Another tip for small businesses is to make sure you’re on Google My Business.

“If you look up your own listing and it says ‘own this’ or ‘claim this,’ you’d better claim it,” Ben said. “Take the steps to be officially recognized on Google My Business.”

With the whole world online, digital marketing has quickly become a tool for laser-focused local marketing. The brothers of McBrayer Digital are happy providing a personal touch to local clients.

“Kentucky, and Lexington in particular, is a really good business environment,” Ben McBrayer said. “It’s great for entrepreneurs; there’s a lot of collaboration and innovation happening. Businesses are growing left and right.”

Their website is [mcbrayer.digital](http://mcbrayer.digital) or the old standby, [McbrayerDigital.com](http://McbrayerDigital.com).—Kathie Stamps

## UofL Consortium to Drive AI Use in Business

**T**HE University of Louisville College of Business has founded the AI Innovation Consortium (AIIC) with participation from industry leaders that include Amazon Web Services, General Electric Appliances, Amgen, V-Soft Consulting and other Fortune 1000 companies.

The AIIC is a Louisville-based think tank of IT and advanced technology thought leaders focusing on how AI can propel organizations and the community forward. Specifically, the AIIC will build standards and best practices that help drive AI adoption, evolve privacy, data governance and bias, guiding principles and effectively align AI evolution.



The AIC recently hosted its inaugural event, with contributions from IT leadership from top local, regional and global companies. The event featured design-thinking sessions, a presentation on the AI landscape and workshops on AI chatbots and image/video detection systems.

In 2020, the AIIC plans to open its InnovaLab, which will contain industry-specific incubators to provide a practical platform from which pharmaceutical, oil and gas, financial, health care and industrial manufacturing companies can explore and accelerate AI development.

“The AI InnovaLab will provide a grass-roots development environment where consortium participants can leverage the consortium experts, design engineering tools and AI rapid solution delivery platforms to see their AI concepts come to life,” said Konrad Konarski, AIIC founding member and co-chair and V-Soft consulting AI & IoT practice head. “These solutions will not only demonstrate AI technology, but will do so with value and specific industries in mind.”

Alongside established and recognized Fortune 1000 companies, the students at UofL will also play an important role in supporting research and development work. UofL’s bachelors, masters and Ph.D programs will support efforts ranging from AIIC training and crowdsourcing to next-generation AI research.

# THE LANE LIST

## KENTUCKY'S LARGEST 2019 NEW AND EXPANDED INDUSTRIES

These are the top new and expanding industry announcements in Kentucky for 2018 through November 2019. The Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development website ([thinkkentucky.com](http://thinkkentucky.com)) indicates that for January through September (reporting date Oct. 23) of this year there were 133 projects totaling \$4.365 billion in investment, supporting 8,190 new full-time jobs.

INVESTMENT	FACILITY	PRODUCT	NEW FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES (BEGINNING)	NEW FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES (FULL)	LOCATION (CITY, COUNTY)
\$1.358 billion	Nucor Corp.	Steel plate manufacturing mill	400	400	Brandenburg, Meade
\$550.000 million	Ford Motor Co. Louisville Assembly Plant	Ford Escape & Lincoln MKC assembly	185	185	Louisville, Jefferson
\$250.000 million	Corning Inc.	AMLCD glass substrate for mobile devices	–	–	Harrodsburg, Mercer
\$238.000 million	Toyota Motor Manufacturing Kentucky	Toyota Avalon, Avalon Hybrid, Camry, Camry Hybrid, Lexus ES350, Engines axels, blocks, crankshafts	–	–	Georgetown, Scott
\$200.000 million	Phoenix Paper Wickliffe LLC	Pulp & brown paper packaging	na	na	Wickliffe, Ballard
\$111.933 million	CMWA	Steel & aluminum automotive wheels	145	145	Paris, Bourbon
\$100.000 million	Georgia Pacific Consumer Operations LLC	Paper plates	50	50	Bowling Green, Warren
\$100.000 million	Pinkerton Tobacco Co. LP	Chewing tobacco, moist snuff	120	120	Owensboro, Daviess
\$82.680 million	Meggitt Aircraft Braking Systems KY	Manufacture & distribution of carbon brake discs, brake assemblies & components for aircraft	83	83	Danville, Boyle
\$81.497 million	Henkel Corp.	Manufacture detergent & warehouse/distribution	–	–	Bowling Green, Warren
\$65.075 million	Bendix Spicer Foundation Brake LLC	Develop, manufacture & distribute air brake systems	94	94	Bowling Green, Warren
\$50.000 million	Rabbit Hole Spirits LLC	Bourbon distilling & other spirits	28	28	Campbellsburg, Henry
\$50.000 million	Alpla Inc.	Bottling & packaging	60	60	Bowling Green, Warren
\$34.414 million	Pennington Stave & Cooperate	White oak staves & barrels	126	126	Edmonton, Metcalfe
\$21.759 million	Richmond Auto Parts Technology Inc.	Automotive transmission gears, chassis & transmission components	20	20	Richmond, Madison
\$21.024 million	Tower International Inc.	Automotive structural components	50	50	Shepherdsville, Bullitt
\$20.000 million	More Than A Bakery	Commercial bakery of cookies, snack crackers & crumbs	90	90	Versailles, Woodford
\$19.400 million	Ale 8 One Bottling Co.	Manufacture & distribution of soft drink beverages	40	40	Winchester, Clark
\$18.835 million	RKW-North America	Polyethelene films for packaging	30	30	Franklin, Simpson
\$17.744 million	Heaven Hill Distilleries Inc.	Whiskey & distilled spirits bottling, headquarters	–	–	Bardstown, Nelson

Source: [ThinkKentucky.com](http://ThinkKentucky.com)

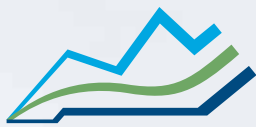
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*Left: The parlor at Maple Hill Manor in Springfield.*

*Below: Guests at Fairyhouse Hall in Lexington are treated to the culinary creations of owner and executive chef, Shane Haffey.*



## Rooms with a View

Kentucky inns offer a charming escape

BY KATHERINE TANDY BROWN

ONE thing Kentucky has in abundance is gorgeous scenery, and you don't have to look far to find it. The following three getaway spots offer comfy lodging, lots to do and of course, wide porches to settle on and simply gaze into the lovely countryside, should you choose to chill. And all are ideal for family vacations, girlfriend and guyfriend getaways, and/or corporate retreats.

Nestled right in the middle of Bluegrass Thoroughbred country, **Fairyhouse Hall** in Lexington is appropriately named for Ireland's famed Fairyhouse Racecourse, home to the Irish Grand National Steeplechase. Owner Shane Haffey, a former steeplechase jockey in the Emerald Isle, serves as executive chef and promises guests a marvelous culinary/epicurean experience. His wife, Heather, is in charge of marketing.

Rife with old-world English and Irish charm, this grand, Georgian-inspired estate is a working sustainable farm — the couple raise their own beef, poultry, pigs, ducks, turkey and guinea hens for serving guests — complete with stone-walled formal gardens and easy access to the Kentucky Bourbon Trail.

Event capacities include up to 60 for

an indoor meeting, 250 outdoors for a cocktail reception, 40 for a food pairing, and up to 50 for a bourbon tasting at the property's 500-s.f. bourbon tasting room. Up to 16 can stay overnight for a family/friends outing or corporate retreat.

"Corporate groups," says Haffey, "can gather around an after-dinner bonfire with cigars and brandy. Keep in mind, we're not a B&B."

Concierge services can arrange bourbon tours, cooking classes, mystery dinners and visits to Keeneland Racecourse and other area attractions.

Not far from Lexington down I-75 in the Richmond area, **Jordan Hill Farm** specializes in providing its guests with "comfort and serenity" in an original 1800s-era, two-story log home that accommodates four to 12 guests. Set on 85 acres of beautiful, rolling acreage with lush landscaping, a flowing creek and stocked ponds for catch and

release, the farm also features a brand-new barn that can seat 100 for an event and a wide front porch with breathtaking views of the countryside.

Overnight accommodations include a big, fully equipped country kitchen for guests to prepare their own breakfasts. (All food for your first breakfast is provided. Then you can dive into your own provisions and cook on a spacious Garland stove or outdoors on a charcoal or gas grill.) An outdoor cleared area has a fire pit, barbecue pit and picnic tables. Miles of trails for hiking and/or horseback riding meander past the barn and through a meadow below.



*A warm, cozy fireside seat beckons guests at Jordan Hill Farm near Richmond.*

*Jordan Hill Farm overlooks 85 acres of rolling Kentucky countryside.*



At the end of the day, a porch and a deck offer swings and rocking chairs for viewing horses and hummingbirds. There is also a five-person “soft,” extra-comfy hot tub.

Joyce Green and husband Joe Foland built Jordan Hill into the retreat and event space it is today. Joyce can work with corporate groups on retreat specifics, such as optional catering. There’s free WiFi and groups can teambuild via badminton, volleyball, croquet and water guns.

Another luscious, peace-filled spot with years of experience hosting families, friends, honeymooners and corporate retreats is the historic, award-winning **Maple Hill Manor Bed and Breakfast** in Springfield, near Bardstown, the Bourbon Capital of the World.

Considered one of the best preserved antebellum homes in the commonwealth, the 1851 red-brick, Greek Revival plantation house, owned by Todd Allen and Tyler Horton, has seven elegant guest

rooms with antique furnishings, some with Jacuzzis and fireplaces. Maple Hill is on the National Register of Historic Places and is a designated Kentucky Landmark – as is their other property, Bourbon Manor in Bardstown (but that’s another story!). Recent kudos include *Bourbon Review Magazine’s* Top Places to Stay on the Kentucky Bourbon Trail, and Most Romantic B&B in Kentucky, along with many national accolades.

In this stately columned, 7,000-s.f. gem, a full “country gourmet” breakfast will be served on fine china and is guaranteed filling and delicious, as Chef Tyler has won Bedandbreakfast.com’s Best Breakfast Recipe in the World Contest. In addition to its to-die-for breakfasts, Maple Hill Manor is a 15-acre working llama and alpaca farm with a store where guests can purchase soft alpaca-wool products and

#### Ogle the Views

- **Maple Hill Manor Bed and Breakfast, Springfield**  
maplehillmanor.com (859) 336-3075
- **Fairyhouse Hall, Lexington**  
fairyhousehall.com (859) 552-7388
- **Jordan Hill Farm, Richmond**  
jordanhillfarm.com (859) 623-0807

wooly little tabletop critters and, in season, pick apples, pears and plums from the orchard.

A meeting room seats 30, and a formal dining room accommodates 25, which can be expanded to 50 dinner guests. Lunch and dinner meals can also be served on the outdoor patio, flower garden or gazebo area, and event barn. (No llamas allowed.) The property has free WiFi and internet throughout, and teambuilding can be a hoot at a murder mystery dinner.

Tours of area attractions, such as bourbon distillery visits and tastings in nearby Bardstown, can be easily arranged. Sip to your heart’s delight, then return to a sturdy Maple Hill porch rocker to watch the sun set over fuzzy alpacas and llamas grazing on luxuriant bluegrass.

Only in Kentucky. ■

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

*During nice weather, the patio at Jordan Hill Farm is a lovely place to while away some time.*



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## Make a Difference by Participating in Research



BY LINDA RICE

**H**EALTH research changes lives. It's how we learn more about health conditions and make discoveries to improve treatments, care and diagnostics. Every medicine or device we use – from aspirin to pacemakers – was developed through a process of research. But research needs people like you in order to move forward. All too often, studies are forced to end early or don't enroll enough participants, causing many important questions go unanswered.

At the University of Kentucky, doctors, nurses and researchers are

working diligently to advance discoveries that improve health, and we invite you to join us. You can make a difference by participating in research. Participating is a way to help others by “giving forward,” and it's also an opportunity to learn more about your own health.

Whether you are healthy or have a medical condition, there are opportunities for you to participate. Health research is more than clinical trials for rare diseases. Sometimes it's as simple as a questionnaire, a screening, or testing a type of exercise. Many studies compensate participants.

Health research also includes extensive protection for participants. The ethical and legal codes that govern medical care also apply to research, which is further regulated with safeguards for participants. UK, like every research institution, also has a review board that evaluates all research to ensure protection of participants' rights and welfare. Every study follows a carefully controlled plan of what researchers will do and what is asked of participants, and this plan is explained in detail before you decide to join. Participants are free to leave a study at any time.

There are many ways to learn more and get involved in the process of

discovery, all available at [UKClinicalResearch.com](http://UKClinicalResearch.com):

- **Explore Current Studies at UK:** To explore opportunities to participate in groundbreaking research at UK, click on “Current Studies.” Browse opportunities by topic, like Alzheimer's, diabetes, cancer, healthy volunteers, women's health, drug and alcohol use, and many others.

- **Join UK's Wellness, Health & You (WHY) Program:** WHY seeks to learn more about factors affecting Kentuckians' health and connects you with research opportunities that may interest you.

- **Join the national ResearchMatch program:** To join this national database of research opportunities, visit [ResearchMatch.org/uky](http://ResearchMatch.org/uky). ResearchMatch is an easy, secure, registry that unites people who are interested in research with active studies.

To learn more about health research and opportunities, visit [UKClinicalResearch.com](http://UKClinicalResearch.com). For questions about participating in research, contact [UKClinicalResearch@uky.edu](mailto:UKClinicalResearch@uky.edu) or (859) 257-7856.

*Linda Rice is director of clinical operations at the University of Kentucky Center for Clinical and Translational Science.*

## Feeding the Mind and the Body

**B**LUEGRASS Community and Technical College held a ribbon cutting in early November to celebrate the opening of The Heart of BCTC, a food pantry and career closet for students. The idea was born from the dream of a BCTC graduate and the work of staff and faculty who supported that dream by Helping Everyone Attain Resources Together (HEART).

“When students are hungry or their family is in need, this creates a barrier to their academic success,” said Palisa Williams Rushin, BCTC vice president for Student Development and Enrollment Management. “With students at the heart of our mission at BCTC, we are working to alleviate these obstacles as they advance toward their better lives.”

To meet the challenge, BCTC has joined with community partners and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) to establish a pantry that will provide food, toiletries and baby items at no cost to students.

In addition, The Heart of BCTC will offer professional clothing, donated by community members, to students entering the workplace and preparing for job interviews. After meeting with a career counselor to discuss career goals, create a resume and prepare for an interview, students will be able to shop for interview attire in the BCTC career closet. Not only will students go to an interview mentally prepared to shine, but their wardrobe will give them an extra boost of confidence.

Community partners in the venture include the Community Action Council, Newport Cleaners and New Vine Baptist Church.



*Pictured here at the unveiling of BCTC's new food pantry and career closet for students are (left to right) Maintenance and Operations Facilities Management Specialist Grant Cox; Career Development Counselor Catherine Rogers; Director of Student Development Dianna Golphin; Director of Counseling Services Anita Nelums; Student Activities Coordinator Regina Shank; Career Development Counselor Bryan Hayden; Associate Vice President of Student Retention and Success Tania Gross; Vice President of Student Development and Enrollment Management Palisa Williams Rushin; and BCTC President Koffi Akakpo.*

To make donations to the program, contact [Regina.Shank@kctcs.edu](mailto:Regina.Shank@kctcs.edu).

## Jefferson County Development a National Finalist for 'Best Community Award'

**N**ORTON Commons, a walkable urbanist community in Prospect, Kentucky, has been named a finalist in the 2019 "Best Mixed-Use, Single Family Community" category of the 2019 Best In American Living awards by the National Association of Home Builders.

Norton Commons is a 600-acre traditional planned development focused on walkability. It is built on the neighborhood model of a mixture of uses and housing types in a connected network of streets. The community is currently home to over 1,400 residences, 70-plus businesses, three schools, and dozens of parks, pools and green spaces.



Norton Commons broke ground on the South Village in 2003. North Village construction began in 2015, and it is already one of the largest residential geothermal communities in the nation. Both are built around traditional town centers focused on restaurants, services and retail. Perhaps most notable, Norton Commons will include a total of 160 acres

of green and civic spaces, including miles of nature trails, a rose garden, three dog parks, a community vegetable garden and a wildflower meadow.

This year has been one of recognition for the growing community. In May, Norton Commons won the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) Charter Award, the preeminent award for excellence in urban design that embodies and advances the principles of the Charter of the New Urbanism.

"Getting back to basics, and recreating the aesthetics of Louisville's great older neighborhoods in a new development has been the secret sauce for us with Norton Commons," said developer David Tomes.

## EKU Unveils Permanent POW/MIA Honor Chair

**E**ASTERN Kentucky University has added a new seat at Roy Kidd Stadium, one that holds memories for thousands but will remain forever unfilled.

A Prisoner of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) Honor Chair was unveiled on Nov. 14 as a permanent reminder of soldiers who never came home and who remain lost on the field of battle in overseas wars. Fourteen Kentucky Vietnam veterans remain classified as missing in action. One was an EKU graduate.

The chair represents months of work on the part of EKU Director of Military and Veteran Affairs Barbara Kent and Rolling Thunder Kentucky Chapter 5.

"For me, today, this chair has a very personal, important presence in my heart," said Cathy Stringer Robinson, whose father, Capt. John Curtis Stringer II went missing in Vietnam in 1970. Stringer is a graduate of EKU like her father was. "I don't think he missed many games while he was here at Eastern. He loved Eastern. He loved his ROTC program, and I feel that this is a very special chair."

Cindy Stonebreaker is the daughter of Lt. Col. Kenneth Stonebreaker, who went missing in Vietnam on Oct. 28, 1968, and now sits on the board of directors for the National League of POW/MIA Families in Washington, D.C. "My focus is now on the 1,587 veterans who never returned from Vietnam."



## Stelised, Alltech Honored with 2019 Manufacturer Awards

**S**TELISED Inc. and Alltech Inc. were presented with the Kentucky Association of Manufacturers (KAM) 2019 Annual Manufacturer of the Year Award at the association's annual Excellence in Manufacturing Summit in October.



Stelised, the winner in the small business category, is a Simpsonville-based company that specializes in mold making, plastics injection molding and contract manufacturing. Nicholasville-based Alltech, winner in the large business category, focuses on animal nutrition and also has brewing/distilling operations.

The winners were selected based on the following criteria: innovative and entrepreneurial leadership with regard to products, production method, or services; leadership in making a key contribution to the quality of life in the commonwealth and their respective communities; and active involvement in organizations that advance industry and manufacturing.

Dennis Dio Parker, a Toyota North American regional talent development consultant in Georgetown, was selected as the 2019 Employee of the Year. The Employee of the Year nominees were judged based on innovation, teamwork, community service and leadership.

## Bourbon for All!

**K**ENTUCKY'S signature bourbon and distilled spirits industry set two modern era records last year by filling more than 2.1 million barrels of bourbon and aging 9.1 million total barrels of spirits, according to statistics released by the Kentucky Distillers' Association. That's the highest inventory in the 52 years that barrel inventory records have been kept at the nonprofit trade group. It's also the first and only time since 1967 that distillers filled more than 2 million barrels of America's only native spirit. Kentucky now counts two barrels of bourbon and aging spirits for every person living in the commonwealth, according to the latest U.S. Census projections that estimate the state's population at 4.5 million residents.

## KENTUCKY PEOPLE

### CRESTVIEW HILLS

#### THOMAS MORE 2019 ALUMNI AWARDS RECOGNIZE FOUR FOR CONTRIBUTIONS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Three alumni and one faculty member were recently presented with the Thomas More 2019 Alumni Awards for their accomplishments in and around the community. Pictured here (left to right) at the presentation are Thomas More President Joseph L. Chillo; Jeffrey Mando, '80 (Professional Achievement Award); Thomas More English professor Sherry Cook Stanforth (Lasting Influence Award); Steven Luthenhoff, '71 (Citizenship Award); and Alumni Association Vice President Dave Macke, '81. Not pictured is Jeanne-Marie Tapke, '91, recipient of the Service Award.

### WASHINGTON, D.C.

#### DOUG FLYNN HONORED BY HOPE FOR THE WARRIORS ORGANIZATION FOR SERVICE TO MILITARY FAMILIES



Lexington native and former Cincinnati Reds baseball player Doug Flynn was recently honored by the Hope For The Warriors organization at their annual gala in Washington, D.C. Flynn and fellow Reds player Johnny Bench were awarded the Gary Sinise Community Service Award, presented to individuals who serve military families and raise awareness of the needs of the military community. Flynn occasionally fills in as a broadcaster for Reds games, appears on University of Kentucky baseball games carried on the SEC Network, and is the regular host of the Kentucky Life program on KET. Pictured here at the presentation are (left to right) Gary Sinise, Doug Flynn, Johnny Bench and Robin Kelleher, co-founder and CEO of Hope For The Warriors.

### LOUISVILLE

#### DIANE PORTER RECEIVES 2019 LOUISVILLIAN OF THE YEAR AWARD



The American Advertising Federation – Louisville recently honored Jefferson County Public Schools Board Chair Diane Porter with its 2019 Louisvilleian of the Year Award in honor of her work with both the public school system and the community as a whole. Pictured here with Porter (right) are 2018 honorees Mary Gwen Wheeler and David Jones Jr.

### CARLISLE COUNTY

#### KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU SELECTS STEVE KELLEY AS FARMER OF THE YEAR



Steve Kelley has been selected as the 2019 Kentucky Farm Bureau Farmer of the Year. Kelley has raised cattle and row crops on his Carlisle County farm since 1973 and also operates a solar farm, has timberland to produce saw logs and leases land for duck, deer and turkey hunting.



# KET LEGISLATIVE COVERAGE



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