



STATE LEADERS PRESENT KENTUCKY'S PROGRESS AND OPPORTUNITIES AT *Kentucky Chamber Day Dinner*

PRESENTED BY 

At the 2024 Kentucky Chamber Day Dinner in February, sponsored by Fidelity, Chamber President and CEO Ashli Watts began by highlighting a sense of optimism and a commitment to the fact that there is “far more that unites us than divides us.”

Kentucky Chamber 2024 Board Chair Candace McGraw, CEO of CVG Airport, reinforced how much stronger the business community is working as one.

Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear shared similar sentiments about the ways the state is moving forward and touted the state's recent successes in his address.

House Speaker David Osborne noted that taxpayers have more than \$1.2 billion in savings thanks to tax reforms passed by the General Assembly and

“There is far more that unites us than divides us.”
— Kentucky Chamber President and CEO Ashli Watts

supported by the Chamber. He emphasized the importance of focusing on child care, education, and other issues because “tomorrow’s workforce is in the classroom today.”

Senate President Robert Stivers noted the progress that has been made on the Kentucky Chamber’s priorities since 2016 through work with the legislature that has made the state more competitive.

In his final Kentucky Chamber Day speech, retiring House Minority Leader Derrick Graham spoke on the need to focus on Kentucky’s education system and support those who are leading the future workforce of the Commonwealth.

Senate Minority Leader Gerald Neal commended the work of the Kentucky Chamber:

“Seriously, your mission in supporting a prosperous business climate in the Commonwealth, and in promoting business retention and recruitment is essential to our collective future,” Neal said.

[SEE KENTUCKY CHAMBER DAY, PAGE 3](#)

Child Care Drives **WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The Kentucky business community’s top priorities include improving the Commonwealth’s economic competitiveness and addressing workforce challenges. Thanks to the efforts of state policymakers, Kentucky has made progress in both areas. 2024, however, presents both a challenge to this momentum and a unique opportunity to give us a competitive advantage over other states and support workforce participation – and it all centers on high-quality child care.



ASHLI WATTS
PRESIDENT & CEO
Kentucky Chamber of Commerce

[SEE CHILD CARE, PAGE 2](#)

BALANCING SPEED AND RISK WHEN UTILIZING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) FOCUS OF

Kentucky Chamber Conference

PRESENTED BY **Deloitte.**

The Kentucky Chamber hosted its inaugural Kentucky AI Summit, sponsored by Deloitte, to discuss the impact AI is having on the economy, the importance of balancing speed and risk when implementing this technology, opportunities to improve efficiency for employees, as well as emerging AI policy at a state and national level.

The Summit featured conversations with industry leaders from Deloitte, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Google Cloud Government Technology, the University of Kentucky, the University of Louisville, as well as state lawmakers.



Trey Conatser, PhD, of the University of Kentucky Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching, Mark Costin of Google Cloud, Ben Reno-Weber of the University of Louisville Health Equity Innovation Hub, and Jamia McDonald of Deloitte Consulting LLP



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FROM THE FRONT

Child Care

High-quality child care – often referred to as early childhood education too – improves outcomes for children, but it's also an economic issue. We know employers need workers, and just as important, workers need safe environments for their children to learn and receive care while they work.

As a mother of two school age children, I know this is a challenge for all working parents but especially for the tens of thousands of non-working Kentucky parents who might otherwise participate in the workforce if they had better access to child care. Last October, an estimated 62,733 non-working Kentucky adults cited “caring for children not in school or daycare” as their main reason for not working, according to a U.S. Census survey.

This number is astounding when we consider the fact that Kentucky had 43,715 fewer workers in December 2023 compared to December 2019, and our workforce participation rate has fallen from 59 percent to 57.0. Of course, access to early childhood learning opportunities is not the sole cause of these unsustainable declines – multiple factors are involved – but it must be part of the solution. If we could address barriers facing even half of those 62,733 non-working adults in the Census survey, we could recover 71 percent of the workforce we have lost since 2019.

While the limited availability of child care has long been a known drag on workforce participation, it has become more pressing in recent years. The pandemic put tremendous strain on the child care sector. All states – Kentucky included – leveraged federal resources to support child care providers and working families, which benefited our economy and businesses. But those resources will fully run out later this year, leaving many child care providers, families, and employers to wonder – what is next?

This dynamic presents both a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge is that we risk losing child care services throughout the state and other supports for working parents as federal resources are exhausted. Without question, this will result in even lower workforce participation and an ever smaller overall workforce.

The opportunity is that all states are struggling with this same challenge, but Kentucky could lead the way with a transformative solution. The states that succeed in overcoming this challenge will have a competitive edge when it comes to workforce growth and business attraction.

The question isn't if we should address this challenge but how. The Kentucky Chamber is working with a coalition of nearly 50 organizations to advance consensus-driven, common-sense solutions. We are encouraging a bold but fiscally sustainable strategy centered on priorities like maintaining recent improvements to the Child Care Assistance Program to ensure low-income families can afford care; supporting more in-home family child care providers to increase access in rural areas; incentivizing innovative employer-based care options to expand options for workers, K-12 teachers, and college students; strengthening the Employee Child Care Assistance Partnership to support middle-income workers; solving challenges in the early childhood workforce through scholarships and innovations like subsidized care for child care teachers; and collaborating with local governments to address potential zoning barriers.

As with most complex issues, there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Instead, we need a multifaceted approach. Of course, deeper conversations over the future and sustainability of high-quality child care in Kentucky are warranted – and the Chamber is committed to helping drive them. But for the 2024 legislative session, we know what needs to be done. Let's invest in children, strengthen working families, and grow our workforce.

Kentucky Chamber

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR 2024

AWARD FINALISTS



ALEXANDRIA ABELL
Vice President & Commercial Banking Relationship Manager,
PNC



TEDDY ABRAMS
Music Director,
The Louisville Orchestra



SETH CUTTER
Vice President of Public Affairs,
CVG Airport



COLBY HALL
Executive Director,
Shaping Our Appalachian Region, Inc. (SOAR)



SHELLEY PORTER
Director of Engineering,
Kentucky American Water



REUBEN WATSON
Director of Outreach & Advancement,
Sunrise Children's Services

HELP US DECIDE!

VOTE ON THESE PLATFORMS
VOTES = LIKES & SHARES

Kentucky Chamber

INAUGURAL KENTUCKY YOUNG PROFESSIONALS SUMMIT

April 23, 2024
Louisville Marriott East

Learn More. Register Here.



President and CEO Ashli Watts addresses attendees of the 2024 Kentucky Chamber Day Dinner

FROM THE FRONT

Kentucky Chamber Day Dinner

PRESENTED BY  Fidelity INVESTMENTS



Governor Andy Beshear



Senate Minority Leader Gerald Neal



Attendees connect during the 2024 Chamber Day reception



Senate President Robert Stivers



Speaker of the House David Osborne



Taylor Phillips of Spectrum Reach speaks with Jeremy Riggs of My Old Kentucky Home State Park



House Minority Leader Derrick Graham



Mike Norman, CEO, Kentucky Science Center



Renee Shaw, Public Affairs Director and Moderator at KET

*Photos by Tim Webb Photography

Kentucky Sales Tax Modernization:

Keeping the Sales Tax on Sales, Not Production



OPPORTUNITIES FOR KENTUCKY SALES TAX MODERNIZATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH DETAILED IN *New Tax Foundation Report*

Ensuring that Kentucky's sales tax excludes business transactions would support economic growth and strengthen recent state tax reform efforts, a new report by the Tax Foundation argues. "Kentucky Sales Tax Modernization: Keeping the Sales Tax on Sales, Not Production" highlights the pro-growth tax reforms pursued by Kentucky lawmakers but stresses the importance of not including business purchases in the state's sales tax base.

"Kentucky's recent pro-growth tax reforms remain the envy of lawmakers in many other states," the report says. "But as policymakers continue efforts to improve Kentucky's tax structure and competitiveness, they should keep in mind that not all offsets are created equal. Applying the retail sales tax to major new categories of business inputs would transform Kentucky's sales tax from a relatively well-designed tax on final personal consumption into an economically harmful, ill-designed tax on in-state production."

The Tax Foundation is a nonpartisan research organization that has served as one of the nation's leading voices on pro-growth tax reform. The report – produced independently by the Tax Foundation – was supported by a grant from the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, Commerce Lexington Inc., Greater Louisville Inc., and the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce.

"Kentucky Sales Tax Modernization: Keeping the Sales Tax on Sales, Not Production" marks the Tax Foundation's second major report on tax reform in the Commonwealth.

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Read more at kychamber.com.

10 SEASONS PLAYING FOR OUR CITY



LOUCITY.COM



Kentucky Chamber President and CEO Ashli Watts welcomes attendees of the first-ever Military Hiring Academy

KENTUCKY CHAMBER FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES GRADUATION OF INAUGURAL

“Military Hiring Academy” Cohort

PRESENTED BY  CVG
CINCINNATI/NORTHERN KENTUCKY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

To bridge the gap between employers seeking talent and the military community, the Kentucky Chamber Foundation has announced the completion of its inaugural “Military Hiring Academy,” with 40 business leaders of all industries and sizes graduating from the program in February.



Launched at the beginning of 2024, the Military Hiring Academy equips businesses with the tools and resources needed to recruit, hire, and retain military talent effectively. Through a comprehensive curriculum and hands-on experience, participants had the opportunity to gain insights from other businesses, forge key connections in the military community, and learn about the many local, state, and federal resources available to support employers in this effort.

“Our military community has made the ultimate sacrifice to protect and defend our nation. A small way we can show our respect to their service is helping them and their families transition to civilian life,” said Kentucky Chamber Chair and CVG Airport CEO Candace McGraw. “Thanks to the Military Hiring Academy, we can now equip employers with the knowledge, services, and relationships to create meaningful workforce opportunities for our service members, veterans, and military spouses.”



Kentucky Department of Veteran Affairs Commissioner Whitney Allen

The Kentucky Chamber Foundation will select another cohort of employers to participate in next year’s Military Hiring Academy.



Alex O'Daniel of UPS graduates from the inaugural Military Hiring Academy



Callie Miracle of the Kentucky Chamber Foundation, Gina Stough of CVG Airport, Marc Quesenberry of Wal-Mart Distribution Center, Kellie Burke of Humana

LEARN MORE

To learn more about the Military Hiring Academy, visit kychamber.com/militaryhiringacademy.

Kentucky Chamber presented by FIFTH THIRD BANK

4th Annual WOMEN'S SUMMIT

June 26, 2024
Central Bank Center

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9th Annual Kentucky WORKFORCE SUMMIT Presented by Kentucky Career Center

May 14-15, 2024 | Central Bank Center | Lexington



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Thank you for your investment.

The following is a list of new Kentucky Chamber members. Please help us thank these companies for investing in the Chamber's mission by giving them your business.

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KENTUCKY CHAMBER NEWS

For address changes and subscription information, call **502-848-8723**.



Pictured above: Kentucky Chamber's 2023 Board of Directors.

Nominations FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS DUE

The nomination process is now open for Kentucky Chamber Board of Directors seats beginning on Oct. 1, 2024. Nominations should contain name, title, organization, city and a brief statement of leadership activities.

For more information, or to nominate an individual, contact **Candy Keeton** at ckeeton@kychamber.com or **502-848-8741**.

Nominations are due by April 15, 2024.

Mark Your Calendars

- March 26-27, 2024** | 22nd Annual Kentucky Environmental Conference – Lexington
- April 10-11, 2024** | 36th Annual Human Resources Update – Lexington & Virtual
- April 23, 2024** | Kentucky Young Professionals Summit – Louisville
- May 7-8, 2024** | OSHA 10-Hour General Industry Voluntary Compliance Course – Louisville
- May 7-10, 2024** | OSHA 30-Hour General Industry Voluntary Compliance Course – Louisville
- May 9, 2024** | Advanced Workers' Comp Seminar – Louisville
- May 14-15, 2024** | 9th Annual Kentucky Workforce Summit – Lexington
- June 5-6, 2024** | 13th Annual Kentucky Energy Management Conference – Lexington
- June 13, 2024** | Best Places to Work in Kentucky – Lexington
- June 26, 2024** | 4th Annual Women's Summit – Lexington
- July 11, 2024** | Kentucky Healthcare Innovation Summit – Louisville
- August 27-29, 2024** | 40th Annual KYSHRM Conference – Louisville
- September 4 – November 20, 2024** | SHRM Certification Prep Course – Virtual
- September 18, 2024** | Kentucky Chamber 77th Annual Meeting Dinner – Louisville
- November 14, 2024** | Kentucky Entrepreneur Hall of Fame – Lexington
- December 10-11, 2024** | OSHA 10-Hour General Industry Voluntary Compliance Course – Lexington
- December 10-13, 2024** | OSHA 30-Hour General Industry Voluntary Compliance Course – Lexington
- December 12-13, 2024** | Supervising & Managing People – Lexington
- January 9, 2025** | 30th Annual Kentucky Chamber Day Dinner – Lexington



REGISTER OR SPONSOR AN EVENT

To register for an event visit kychamber.com or contact **Lori Jo Goff** at **502-848-8727** or lgoff@kychamber.com.

Sponsorship opportunities are available for many of these events. To learn more, contact **Andrea Flanders**, Director of Sponsorship Relations, at **502-848-8786** or aflanders@kychamber.com.



Candace McGraw of CVG Airport, Dr. Ryan Quarles of KCTCS, Ashli Watts of the Kentucky Chamber, and KCTCS Chair Barry Martin of Primary Care Centers of Eastern Kentucky



CHAMBER HOSTS RECEPTION HONORING *KCTCS President Dr. Ryan Quarles*

In January, the Kentucky Chamber hosted board members, members of the General Assembly, and Kentucky Community & Technical College System leaders from across the Commonwealth for a celebration to honor new KCTCS President Dr. Ryan Quarles.

KENTUCKY CHAMBER ANNEX
Office Available for Rent

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JOE HSU AT JHSU@KYCHAMBER.COM

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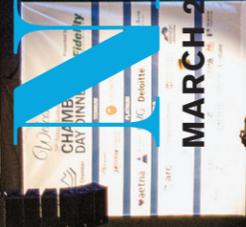
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Kentucky Chamber



MARCH 2024



KENTUCKY
CHAMBER DAY
DINNER SEES
RECORD CROWDS OF
2,000 LEADERS