





#### Civic Engagement IS MORE IMPORTANT NOW THAN EVER

The following is an op-ed from Kentucky Chamber President and CEO Ashli Watts



**ASHLI WATTS** PRESIDENT & CEO Kentucky Chamber of Commerce

I love politics. I always have. I remember growing up in the 90's watching presidential debates between Bill Clinton, George Bush and Ross Perot, and was a college freshman during the Bush/Gore election and learning all about "hanging chads." This part of history was so formative for me that I received not only a bachelor's degree, but a master's degree, in political science.

Being a student of politics, I learned to appreciate civil discourse, differing views of arguments and spirited, passionate debate. I learned that we arrive at better decisions if we hear the other side. Unfortunately, a lot has changed over the past few decades. I'll be the first to admit, politics is not as much

fun as it once was. Gone are the days of disagreeing

with someone on a policy issue but still walking away with respect, and dare I say, friendship. More and more young people are turned off from government and politics because of the increasing divisiveness. We see proof of this in the Edelman Barometer, where it shows trust in government has plummeted among Americans and further proof is voter turnout. In 2022, only 19% of Kentuckians voted in the primary election, with some counties seeing turnout under 10%, meaning some legislative seats were decided by a few dozen votes.

And though these trends are disturbing, I believe our democracy is worth fighting for, and we must take action to reverse this concerning downturn in civic engagement. It's not only the right thing to do, but our responsibility as Americans.

The Kentucky Chamber has taken a larger role in this space because, over the course of the last few decades, civics education has lessened. We believe civics education is an essential part of the solution, as it offers the ability to provide young people with the knowledge, skills, and disposition they need to be engaged citizens in a democracy.

**SEE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT, PAGE 2** 

#### **KENTUCKY CHAMBER PAC ANNOUNCES**

#### **Endorsed** Candidates in 2024 Primary Elections

The Kentucky Chamber Political Action Committee (PAC) has announced endorsements of several legislative candidates involved in the primary elections on Tuesday, May 21, 2024.

Candidates selected by the Kentucky Chamber PAC for endorsement have demonstrated their dedication to making Kentucky more competitive, which will lead to job growth, economic development, and a higher quality of life for the citizens of their districts and the Commonwealth.

Endorsements are based on the candidate's understanding of business issues, past voting records, and answers to the Kentucky Chamber PAC's 2024 legislative candidate

SEE 2024 PRIMARY ELECTIONS. PAGE 2

#### **CHAMBER FOUNDATION, TRUIST CHARITABLE FUND LAUNCH INTERNSHIP PROGRAM FOR**

### First-Generation College Students



The Kentucky Chamber Foundation's new Rising Leaders Program, in partnership with the Truist Charitable Fund, aims to provide first-generation college students the knowledge and skills they need to become effective leaders while gaining experience in their chosen career field.

The Foundation is building a network of employers that are interested in offering internships to students in the fall 2024 or spring 2025 semester. For any questions, please contact Dorian Moe at dmoe@kychamber.com.



#### Rising Leaders **Program:**

Empowering Kentucky's Next Generation



FROM THE FRONT

### Civic Engagement

This is why the Chamber has held the National Civics Bee Kentucky State Finals over the last three years, where over 800 Kentucky middle school students have competed to be the state civics champion.

This past legislative session, the Kentucky Chamber was a strong supporter of House Bill 535, sponsored by Rep. Robert Duvall, which will enhance civics education in our public schools. The measure passed with broad bipartisan support. Currently, 39 other states require civics education as a year-long or semester-long course, and I am optimistic this bill will be a step in the right direction for Kentucky.

With the Kentucky primary election being held on May 21, Kentuckians have an opportunity to make their voices heard. Big issues are decided at the state legislative level, and we all should do our part to ensure we are represented. And the good news is, voting is easier than ever before in Kentucky thanks to early voting, giving citizens more options on how and when to vote.

In addition to voter resources, the Kentucky Chamber is encouraging employers to help their employees vote by providing resources and incentives to show their level of commitment to our democracy.

As we approach election season, let us remember the power of civil discourse and the importance of every single vote. Register to vote, take time to learn about the candidates running for office in your district, ask them questions, look at their policy positions, and engage in respectful dialogue, especially with those who may disagree with you.

As a lifelong student of politics, my hope is that we can try to mute the "noise" surrounding politics and see that our nation was built on the cornerstone of civil

discourse. Although we may disagree on issues, we are all Americans working toward a common goal — a healthy and thriving democracy.



#### **LEARN MORE**

View the Chamber's Voter Resources at kychamber.com/vote.

FROM THE FRONT

# Endorsed Candidates in 2024 Primary Elections

These endorsements are for the May primary election. Only candidates who submitted answers to the Kentucky Chamber PAC's legislative candidate survey and are in contested primaries were considered for endorsement. General election endorsements will take place in the fall.



The following candidates have received the endorsement of the Kentucky Chamber PAC for the 2024 primary election:

- House District 2: Representative Richard Heath
- House District 19: Representative Michael Meredith
- House District 24: Ryan Bivens
- House District 45: Representative Killian Timoney
- House District 47: Mark Gilkison
- House District 49: Representative Thomas Huff
- House District 50: Andy Stone
- House District 55: Representative Kim King
- House District 60: Chris Pavese
- House District 62: Tony Hampton
- House District 64: Representative Kim Moser

- House District 66: Ed Massey
- House District 69: Diane Brown
- House District 86: Representative Tom Smith
- House District 91: Darrell Billings
- Senate District 1: Senator Jason Howell
- Senate District 5: Senator Steve Meredith
- Senate District 7: Ed Gallrein
- Senate District 11: Duane Froelicher
- Senate District 17: Matt Nunn
- Senate District 33: Senator Gerald Neal

The Kentucky Chamber PAC is the independent political arm of the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, the largest broad-based business organization in Kentucky.

# Chamber foundation creates new initiative to Connect Educators to Key Industries

Recently, the Kentucky Chamber Foundation has hosted multiple events to connect educators with key industries in the state. As educators are looking to engage students in career exploration, employers are sharing the various career paths available in their industry, the skills needed in those careers, and how students can get started in the industry.

#### **LEARN MORE**

Get involved at kychamber.com/educators-guide-industry.









### KENTUCKY LEADERS SHARE INSIGHTS FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT AT CHAMBER'S

## Inaugural Young Professionals Summit

#### PRESENTED BY **Deloitte**

The Kentucky Chamber hosted more than 300 young leaders from across the Commonwealth for the Inaugural Young Professionals Summit in Louisville for networking, professional and leadership development, and celebrating the Chamber's first-ever Young Professional of the Year award recipient.

Jacqueline Pitts, senior vice president of communications and marketing for the Kentucky Chamber, shared "Kentucky's Winning Strategy," a unifying plan to make the Commonwealth the best state in the nation to live, work, and do business. A key part of that plan is focused on talent attraction and retention to grow Kentucky, she said, and that is why it is essential to engage young professionals.

Louisville Mayor Craig Greenberg welcomed the group and said he wants Louisville to be a destination not just for people who are born here, but for those across the country.

During the Summit, Grammy Award winner Teddy Abrams, music director of the Louisville Orchestra, shared his career journey in music, what brought him to Kentucky, and much more.

"There's no better symbol for humanity than an orchestra. It's an example of when people bring their best talents, intentions, and capabilities and allow something greater to unfold," Abrams said.

Shady Rays Founder and CEO Chris Ratterman also spoke on his career journey of starting a major sunglass brand headquartered in Louisville.

A panel of Kentucky Chamber Board leaders detailed their diverse career journeys to becoming the CEOs of top education, health care, and supply chain companies in the Commonwealth at a young age. The panelists shared their advice for young leaders: seek mentors who will act as champions, be in the room as much as possible, and establish a sense of trust among coworkers.

Closing the Summit, Young Professionals Association of Louisville Executive Director Cassidy Hyde spoke on the many ways young leaders can get engaged in their communities across the Commonwealth.

















#### **KENTUCKY CHAMBER RECOGNIZES 14 LEGISLATORS AS**

### MVPs of the 2024 General Assembly



Senate President **Robert Stivers** 



Speaker of the House **David Osborne** 



Senate Majority Leader **Damon Thayer** 



**Steven Rudy** 



House Majority Leader Senate Majority Caucus Chair Julie Raque Adams



**Amanda Mays Bledsoe** 



Representative **Adam Bowling** 



Representative **Josh Branscum** 



Representative **Josh Bray** 



Representative **Daniel Elliott** 



Representative Samara Heavrin



Senator **Jason Howell** 



Senator **Chris McDaniel** 



Representative **Jason Petrie** 

The 2024 General Assembly saw important progress on several critical priorities of the Kentucky business community. Following the legislative session, the Kentucky Chamber has announced the recognition of 14 legislators who displayed conspicuous actions to ensure Kentucky's growth, strengthen businesses across the Commonwealth, and improve competitiveness throughout the state.

The pro-growth policies passed during the 2024 legislative session saved Kentucky businesses an estimated \$1 billion, roughly \$589 for each employee in the Commonwealth — marking the fifth year in a row of savings equal to more than a billion dollars for the business community — thanks to the General Assembly and the Chamber's aggressive advocacy.

Recipients of the 2024 Kentucky Chamber MVP Award showed strong leadership for the business community by sponsoring or carrying Kentucky Chamber priority legislation to final passage, showing leadership on passage of critical legislation to improve Kentucky, or by taking hard votes in defense of business.

Below are the legislators selected for this year's MVP awards and highlights of how they went to bat for the business community this session:

- Senate President Robert Stivers provided leadership in passing business-friendly legislation and defeating harmful bills. He also sponsored Senate Bill 1, legislation to establish endowed research fund consortiums between public universities.
- Speaker of the House David Osborne provided leadership in passing businessfriendly legislation and defeating harmful bills. He also carried Senate Bill 299 in the House, legislation to establish the Kentucky Horse Racing and Gaming Corporation.
- Senate Majority Leader Damon Thayer provided leadership by bringing probusiness legislation to the Senate floor. He was also the primary sponsor of Senate Bill 299, establishing the Kentucky Horse Racing and Gaming Corporation. Leader Thayer is retiring from the Senate in 2024 having won the Chamber MVP Award nine times.
- House Majority Leader Steven Rudy provided leadership by bringing probusiness legislation to the House floor. He was also the primary sponsor of House Bill 443, which ensures that local laws relating to subdivision plats and development are in the form of objective standards.
- Senate Majority Caucus Chair Julie Raque Adams played a key leadership role throughout session, influencing major bills to pass the Senate in 2024. She also was a vocal advocate for child care funding that passed in the biennial budget.
- Sen. Amanda Mays Bledsoe, vice chair of the Senate Appropriations and Revenue Committee, was an advocate for securing funding for child care. She also carried House Bill 179 on the Senate floor, authorizing paid family leave as a form of insurance in Kentucky.
- Rep. Adam Bowling sponsored House Bill 739, which would have allowed employers to seek a workplace violence protective order from a court when a customer, employee, or former employee threatens violence on a business premise.

- Rep. Josh Branscum sponsored House Bill 15 to provide data privacy protections to consumers in Kentucky that align with surrounding states.
- Rep. Josh Bray sponsored House Bill 7, setting up a regulatory framework to authorize autonomous vehicles to operate in Kentucky.
- Rep. Daniel Elliott, chair of the House Judiciary Committee, was the primary sponsor of House Bill 320, which reforms Kentucky's statute of limitations to bring the Commonwealth in line with competitor states.
- Rep. Samara Heavrin, chair of the House Families and Children Committee, sponsored House Bill 561, establishing "Certified Child Care Communities" by encouraging local communities to address barriers to new child care services, and House Bill 179, authorizing paid family leave as a form of insurance in Kentucky.
- Sen. Jason Howell carried House Bill 320 on the Senate floor, which reforms Kentucky's statute of limitations to bring the Commonwealth in line with competitor states.
- Sen. Chris McDaniel, chair of the Senate Appropriations and Revenue Committee, led efforts to pass a responsible biennial budget that invests in workforce, education, and economic development and aims to set Kentucky on the path to further reduce its income tax.
- Rep. Jason Petrie, chair of the House Appropriations and Revenue Committee, led efforts to pass a responsible biennial budget that invests in workforce, education, and economic development and aims to set Kentucky on the path to further reduce its income tax.



#### **LEARN MORE**

View the Kentucky Chamber's 2024 Results for Business publication online, detailing top priorities of the business community that passed, scoring votes of legislators on important issues, and showing missed opportunities.







Leadership Institute for School Principals Class of 2024 met with the program's board of managers in February to share insights, experiences, and more

## Principals from Across the Commonwealth Chosen for Executive-Level Leadership Training Through the Kentucky Chamber Foundation

The Kentucky Chamber Foundation has announced more than 40 principals from across the Commonwealth that will participate in the Leadership Institute for School Principals Class of 2025.

This executive-level leadership training course, usually reserved for the nation's top CEOs, is offered to Kentucky school principals through the Kentucky Chamber Foundation's partnership with Truist Leadership Institute. The principals were chosen by business leaders and school superintendents that make up the Kentucky Chamber Foundation's Leadership Institute for School Principals Advisory Board.





Elementary, middle, and high school principals from across Kentucky representing both public and private schools applied for the institute, which is provided at no cost thanks to donations from Truist, businesses, and business leaders across the state. Over the past 13 years, more than \$3.8 million has been invested in over 550 **principals from 111 Kentucky counties** since the program began.

#### Leadership Training Provided by HH Truist Leadership Institute

#### Below are the principals chosen for the Leadership Institute for School Principals Class of 2025:

- Aaron Baldwin, East Carter Middle School, Carter County
- Jenna Blair, Perryville Elementary School, Boyle County
- Shannon Brickler, Sherman Elementary School, Grant County
- Lindsay Brunner, Mason County Intermediate School, Mason County
- Ryan Burch, Florence Elementary School, Boone County
- Laquetta Carter, Hartstern Elementary School, Jefferson County
- Danielle Cassady, James T. Alton Middle School, Hardin County
- Cory Coble, Union County Middle School, Union County
- Mindy Coleman, Kenton Elementary School, Kenton County
- Dana Corson, Camden Station Elementary School, Oldham County
- Gwen Courtney, Jefferson Elementary School, Henderson County
- Jenn Crase, Kenwood Station Elementary School, Oldham County
- Jennie Currin, Valley High School, Jefferson County
- Ryan Dixon, Flaherty Primary School, Meade County
- John Eveland, Bardstown Primary School, Nelson County
- Melissa Farris, Sublimity Elementary School, Laurel County
- Kristy Field, Tates Creek High School, Fayette County
- Emily Girten, John Paul II Catholic School, Union County
- Casey Greene, Mapleton Elementary School, Montgomery County
- Emily Hamilton, Grant's Lick Elementary School, Campbell County
- Jameelah Henderson, Kenwood Elementary School, Jefferson County James Hood, Rodburn Elementary School, Rowan County

- Shamika Johnson, Newburg Middle School, Jefferson County
- Sabrina King, GR Hampton Elementary School, Knox County
- Caitlin Lawson, Bowling Green Independent Preschool, Warren County
- Scott Loscheider, Paul Laurence Dunbar High School, Fayette County
- Curt Merrifield, Thomas Nelson High School, Nelson County
- Erika Moore, Mason County Middle School, Mason County
- William Noble, Lee County Middle/High School, Lee County
- Amanda Nokes, Bullitt Lick Middle School, Bullitt County
- Shannon Pfaff, Southside Elementary School, Shelby County
- Lacey Ramirez, Sinking Fork Elementary School, Christian County
- Christy Reliford, Cannonsburg Elementary School, Boyd County
- Kenley Ringstaff-Hefner, North Livingston Elementary School, Livingston County
- Jessica Sekulski, Nelson County High School, Nelson County
- Diana Smith, James Lane Allen Elementary School, Fayette County
- Robin Stephenson, Carroll County Middle School, Carroll County
- Jeremy Stone, Hardinsburg Elementary School, Breckinridge County
- Ben VanderHorst, Glendover Elementary School, Fayette County
- Sarah Velotta, Audubon Elementary School, Daviess County • Kelly Workman, Clark Elementary School, McCracken County
- Leslie Workman, Fairview Independent Elementary School, Boyd County

If you are interested in learning more about the program or want information about becoming a donor and supporting a leader in your area, contact Jordan Deschamp-Young at jdyoung@kychamber.com.



#### Thank you for your investment.

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

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

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**WORK IN KENTUCKY** 

### Award Winners Announced









The Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, the Kentucky Society for Human Resource Management (KYSHRM) and CHI Saint Joseph Health announce the 100 companies (in alphabetical order) that made the 20th Annual Best Places to Work in Kentucky list. The winner rankings will be announced at an awards dinner Thursday, June 13, 2024, at the Central Bank Center.

Winners from across the state have been selected in three categories: small companies of 15-149 employees, medium companies of 150-499 employees and large companies consisting of more than 500 employees (categories based on number of U.S. employees, only Kentucky employees surveyed). The selection process, managed by Workforce Research Group, is based on an assessment of the company's employee policies and procedures and the results of an internal employee survey.

The competition is a multi-year initiative designed to motivate companies in the Commonwealth to focus, measure and move their workplace environments toward excellence. Numerous studies show a strong correlation between profitability and creating a good place to work.

#### **VIEW 2024 WINNERS**

View the complete list of winners at bestplacestoworkkentucky.com/awards/winners.

#### Mark Your Calendars

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

July 16, 2024 | Inclusive Workforce Webinar - Virtual

July 23, 2024 | 27th Annual Kentucky Environmental Permitting & Reporting Conference - Lexington

August 5, 2024 | 11th Annual Navigating Sales and Use Tax in Kentucky - Lexington & Virtual

August 13, 2024 | OSHA Fall Protection Competent Person Certification - Louisville

August 14-15, 2024 | Supervising & Managing People - Louisville

August 15, 2024 | OSHA Forklift - Train the Trainer - 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 78th Annual Meeting Dinner - Louisville

September 30, 2024 | Annual Kentucky Inclusive Workforce Summit – Lexington

October 16-17, 2024 | Supervising & Managing People - Bowling Green

October 17, 2024 | OSHA Forklift - Train the Trainer - Bowling Green

October 18, 2024 | OSHA Recordkeeping and Reporting - Bowling Green

November 14, 2024 | Kentucky Entrepreneur Hall of Fame - Lexington

November 18, 2024 | 2025 Kentucky Legislative Preview - 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



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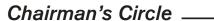






































































































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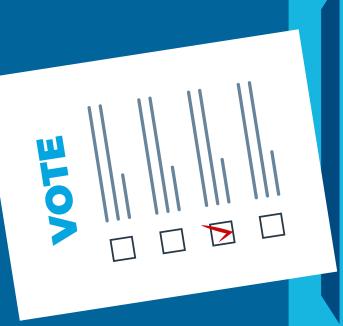
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